

Two Poems

by [Carl Nelson](#) (June 2019)



Crowded People, Lu Chao, 2015

End Times

*“They really make me want to bring back the hanging basket,
the gibbet, heads on a pike, the rack . . . you get the
idea.” –Delmore Franks*

Like the Un-Dead, they were much like ourselves
with parents, childhoods, hometowns, chums,

and dreams of one day taking their place in sodality.

When they were bitten to become evolved,

then 'woke', then fanatic with just one desire:

to search out and infect all

squirreled remnants of the fully hinged

on this planet—and to munch our brains.

Though reports were censored, the swath they left

described itself. You could smell it! Step in it.

And trip over the human distress in cities like

Portland, Seattle, Los Angeles and San Francisco,

where Progressives held sway.

There was no reasoning with them.

They would come at you with garish smiles and open arms,

convinced that all humans must be perfected,

so you, like them, were all eating brains, too.

That's all there was—just this one notion, finally.



Untitled, Jenny Saville, 1990

Warm Summer, West Virginia

I prefer to say, “It’s warm out there,”
rather than, “It’s hot!” Since the former
has a bearing, which embraces the climate and
the region. And poise carries its own retort.

The people hereabouts have the nature
of a pigeon squatted upon a statue,
or of a fist, not unlike the state
with the northern panhandle extended.

The first time I drove through Parkersburg, West Virginia,
up past the venerable Blennerhassett,
there was this heavy set girl in loose shift and flip flops
smoking a stogy in the early morning,
and regarding me from a side street,
in what would pass here for reflection.

And this is a bit of what I mean.

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Carl Nelson is relishing a smaller existence in a smaller town along the Ohio

River after fifteen years in the theater world. As a playwright in pre-opening rehearsals once said, "I'd like to be a carrot in the ground." Currently, he moseys about while working on *The Poets' Weight Loss Plan*—an interlarding of plan and poems by which has lost 45 pounds. He also runs The Serenity Poetry Series in Vienna, West Virginia. His work is available at: <https://www.magicbeanbooks.co/home.html>.

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