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Further comments on Omentum-to-Brain Transplants

FROM THE JOURNAL'S ASSESSOR, DR SAMUEL SMITH, GENERAL PRACTITIONER

I like this poem, and I like it more having spent some time unravelling the rather obscure neurological and neuropathological allusions. The cingulate gyrus is part of the limbic system involved in emotion and memory; the Alzheimer twos refer to neurofibrillary tangles found in the histopathology of Alzheimer's disease; the thirsty bouton belt, I presume, refers to regions rich in synaptic connections; and Wernicke's encephalopathy most of us can remember something about. The simplistic jokes might be directed at the hapless demented, or perhaps be provoked by the bizarre impulse to transplant gut to brain. But beyond them lies a response to a cruel incapacity; one which might be ameliorated by the bouncing blood, driving back the shadows, although not completely resolving the alimentary confusion of keys and peas. I did not find anything on Lendrum's stain, which may not be important anyway - presumably a neurohistological stain - but the reference to Eleanor Roosevelt also remains a puzzle. It could just be that she continued to be politically active long after her husband's death, rather than slip into dementia. I don't know. Anyway, I do recommend the poem be published as it is; something to make one think, captured between title and reference in a learned journal. The allusions, once unravelled, add resonance to the pleasing aesthetic structure.

FROM THE POET

I thank you and your assessors for approving my poem, Omentum to Brain Transplants. I am pleased to comment

about several obscure references, while mindful that simplifications will satisfy some readers—especially non-medical scholars, but may dampen fanciful comparisons that attract others.

Concordance-wise:

- Mrs Roosevelt did not have Alzheimer's disease, but she did own a last syllable that rhymes with *bouton belt*.
- I introduced the eponym Wernicke's because some readers like occasional rhymes, and I had assumed that most readers would conclude that Wernickes caused the problem with car keys.
- One of your reviewers suggested that the fresh blood flowing up from the omentum may be harmful in ways not understood. This is certainly true and will surely be part of the ongoing scientific evaluations.
- I am, however, proud of the many gastro-physiologic phenomena I refrained from mentioning, for example, eructations and flatulence. Should I write a sequel describing what Jalapeno peppers caught in the lesser curvature, might do to blood flow aimed at the temporal lobe or a more romantic gyrus?
- * You understand that this has been a speculative poetic effort in no way critical of Dr Goldsmith, whose imagination and perseverance may lead to astoundingly successful new therapies.