

COLLOQUY

Webster's Dictionary defines colloquy as mutual discourse. Readers are encouraged to submit additions, corrections, and comments about earlier articles appearing in Word Ways. Comments received up to a month prior to publication of an issue will appear in that issue.

Responding to George Scheetz's "Onomasticon I" in the August 1977 Word Ways, Edward Wolpov of Brookline, Mass. points out that most -onym words have -onymy correlates in Webster's Second. However, there is one -onymy word for which the corresponding -onym is absent: PAEDONYMY, a name derived from one's child. Can one infer from this the existence of PAEDONYM? If so, can one convert POIKILONYMY and MYONYMY (found in various medical dictionaries, such as Dorland and Stedman) to POIKILONYM and MYONYM? He also notes the closely-related ending -anym, not separately defined in Webster's Second, leading to ANANYM (a pseudonym consisting of the real name written backwards, such as Elberp for Preble) and METANYM (a generic name rejected because based on a type species congeneric with the type of a previously published genus).

Mary Oberlander of Kewanee, Illinois notes the word APTRONYM in Mrs. Byrne's Dictionary, a word coined by Franklin P. Adams to mean a name which sounds like a person's occupation. (As examples, she cites Messrs. Hunt and Chase, procurers of zoo animals.)

Two -onym words eluded Scheetz: CONTRONYM and CHARACTONYM. Richard Lederer of Concord, N. H. found the former in an issue of Merriam-Webster's Word Study (see his article elsewhere in this issue), and reports that the latter is in common use among English teachers as a name given to a literary character that indicates a quality of that character or the situation he is in. Bunyan's The Pilgrim's Progress abounds with examples such as Evangelist, Giant Despair and Faithful; Dickens introduces Mr. Jaggers, the attorney with the serrated personality in Great Expectations. T. S. Eliot's J. Alfred Prufrock ("prude" plus "frock") is a modern example, as is Harry Angstrom ("fear" plus "storm" or "stream") in John Updike's Rabbit Run. Alas, he could not find CHARACTONYM in any dictionary or glossary of literary terms.

Jeff Grant of Hastings, New Zealand disposes of the fifteen-letter rhopallic word controversy with the excellent T/EM/PER/AMEN/TALLY. Perhaps it's time to look for reverse rhopallic words of length 6, 10, 15, ... How about MAR/IN/E to start?

George Grieshaber of Cincinnati, Ohio fills in one of Philip Cohen's vowel-consonant pattern gaps with the VCCCCC surname EHRNSCH, the nickname of one Arthur Ehrnschwender. The seven-consonant CWMBWRLA, a village listed in Davies' Gazetteer of Welsh Place Names, was inadvertently omitted from the list of multi-consonant words at the end of the article.

According to Philip Cohen the best inexpensive work on rhetorical figures is Sister Miriam Joseph's Rhetoric in Shakespeare's Time (Harcourt, Brace & World, 1962 paperback). It consists of pages i-40 and 285-421 of a larger work, the omitted portion being Shakespeare's use of the rhetorical devices. She lists about 200 figures of speech, and Philip has found at least 30 more. The alliterative R. Robinson Rowe chides John McClellan for the "obvious omission or oversight of (a) fairly frequent familiar figure".

In the February 1977 article on presidential anagrams, the editor lamented the paucity of good anagrams for HERBERT CLARK HOOVER (the best being THE EVER BLACK HORROR). William M. Cochran of Iowa City, Iowa points out that Rachel M. Kochmann and Helen Swenson's Presidents: A Pictorial Guide to the Presidents' Burial Sites offers a clue: it states that Hoover "wrestled with enormous problems of word depression". Thus it is clear that not only did Hoover suffer from word problems during his presidential term, but even after death he has been plagued by this curse!

Philip Cohen points out that the Greek terms for the four tetra-syllables in Maxey Brooke's "Got That Rhythm" should have been second paeon, ditrochee, first paeon and choriamb. For more information, see his discussion in the August 1976 Kickshaws.

D. H. Monro of Clayton, Victoria, Australia suggests STELLA KARIN MCNAIR as yet another anagram of CARMILLA KARNSTEIN. Boris Randolph adds KARIN N. MACALLISTER to the list.

George Grieshaber footnotes "From Ames to Anna" in the November Kickshaws with the doubtless-apocryphal story about the librarian who stopped a girl from taking out a non-circulating reference book -- the encyclopedia volume How to Kiss.

After reading the various CAMILLA KARNSTEIN transpositions, Michael J. Murphy wrote, "Some of the responses of your readers were quite ingenious. I was particularly interested in the submissions of Dmitri Borgmann and Murray Pearce ... Please express my thanks to your readers and especially to those who took the time to try and find a meaning where, perhaps, there was none".