

A FLURRY OF PHOBIAS

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Most of us are casually aware of the fact that people with a morbid fear of strangers or foreigners are suffering from XENOPHOBIA. Similarly, those with an abnormal aversion to large, open places are the victims of AGORAPHOBIA, while others who dread enclosed spaces are displaying CLAUSTROPHOBIA, and still others with an exaggerated fear of high places have contracted ACROPHOBIA.

The versatility of the human mind permits it to fear almost anything, and science is right on the spot with a name to fit each situation. Diverse fears include those of being buried alive (TAPHEPHOBIA), thinking (PHRONEMOPHOBIA), loud noises (LIGYROPHOBIA), petting (SARMASSOPHOBIA), the sight of animals' teeth (ODONTOPHOBIA), infinity (APEIROPHOBIA), and the wearing of clothes (VESTIOPHOBIA).

Some fears are apparently so widespread that merely one name is not regarded sufficient to designate them. For example, the fear of being alone may be called AUTOPHOBIA, or MONOPHOBIA, or EREMOPHOBIA, or ISOLOPHOBIA. In the same vein, the fear of lightning is known not only as KERAUNOPHOBIA but also as ASTROPHOBIA, or METEOROPHOBIA, or BRONTEPHOBIA.

Just how fearful are you? That is, how hep are you when it comes to identifying fears? Listed below are forty objects of fear, and forty names for fears. Each column is in alphabetical order. Can you rearrange the lists so as to match each fear with its proper object? Purely by accident, the alphabetized lists have matched one fear with its object. How swiftly can you recognize the correct match included here?

A word of caution may be in order. Do not try pairing items in the two columns haphazardly. The mathematical odds against your succeeding are considerably more than one quattuordecillion to one!

So much for the easy part of the problem. Each of the things feared has at least one designation additional to that provided by us. Can you think of it, or find it?

The answers can be found in Answers and Solutions at the end of this issue of Word Ways.

Objects of Fear

1. Bees
2. Cats
3. Crowds
4. Darkness
5. Death
6. Disease
7. Drinking
8. Fever
9. Flowers
10. Fog
11. French culture
12. Gaining weight
13. Germans
14. Germs
15. Glass
16. Greek customs
17. Hell
18. Insanity
19. Left-side objects
20. Lice
21. Light
22. Men
23. Mirrors
24. Nakedness
25. New things
26. Odors
27. Pain
28. Poisons
29. Rabies
30. Sexual intercourse
31. Small objects
32. Speaking
33. Spirits
34. Stars
35. Thieves
36. Wine
37. Women
38. Words
39. Work
40. Worms

Names for Fears

ALGOPHOBIA
 ANDROPHOBIA
 APIPHOBIA
 ASTROPHOBIA
 BACTERIOPHOBIA
 BOTANOPHOBIA
 COITOPHOBIA
 CRYSTALLOPHOBIA
 DEMOPHOBIA
 DEMONOPHOBIA
 DIPSOPHOBIA
 ERGOPHOBIA
 FEBRIPHOBIA
 FELINOPHOBIA
 FEMINOPHOBIA
 FRANCOPHOBIA
 GERMANOPHOBIA
 GRECOPHOBIA
 HADEPHOBIA
 HYDROPHOBOPHOBIA
 KLEPTOPHOBIA
 MANIAPHOBIA
 MICROPHOBIA
 NEBULAPHOBIA
 NECROPHOBIA
 NEOPHOBIA
 NOCTIPHOBIA
 NUDOPHOBIA
 OBESOPHOBIA
 OENOPHOBIA
 OLFACTOPHOBIA
 PATHOPHOBIA
 PEDICULOPHOBIA
 PHONOPHOBIA
 PHOTOPHOBIA
 SINISTROPHOBIA
 SPECTROPHOBIA
 TOXICOPHOBIA
 VERBOPHOBIA
 VERMIPHOBIA