My wife and I were on a plane high over the Atlantic en route to England. We occupied aisle seats, and next to us was a young English lad, obviously returning home with his parents (in the row behind us) after a visit to the United States. On the boy's lap was a comic book -- I've forgotten the title -- and an English dictionary was at his side. A Latin dictionary lay on the floor. He had a puzzled expression on his face and it seemed as though he might be close to tears for his chin trembled ever so slightly. After observing him for a while out of the corner of my eye I leaned towards him and asked if something was troubling him. Silently, he pointed to the comic book open on his lap, and to a fearsome drawing of some beings undoubtedly from outer space. The caption of the drawing, hand-lettered, and frighteningly large, was S-P-P-L-E-E-C-H!

"I've looked in all my dictionaries," he told me bravely, "but I can't find what it means; and Pater -- my Father, I mean -- doesn't like me to ask unnecessary questions." I glanced to the seat behind me where Pater sat with closed eyes and a copy of Creasy's Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World open (at "Waterloo"?) on his lap.

"I promise not to tell him I helped -- Boy Scout's Honor."

"Oh, thanks awfully!" said my new friend warmly. I then began to explain SPPLEECH as best I might. I told him that it could not be found in the usual dictionaries because it was a new word, made up at the spur of the moment by the artist; that it was an interjection, and possibly onomatopoetic, and that the etymology of such words was usually unknown. I told him, too, that artists and authors often had to use such words because space was not available for lengthy explanations. His eager face showed that I may have left him behind at some point, but I continued. "So you see, your dictionaries won't help you at all. Best to just look at the picture and draw your own conclusions about the word. The SPPLEECH is coming from the ray-gun those fellows are using -- only a ray-gun could make such a noise, don't you agree?" He agreed with me and took up his reading again. I could see that he was getting ahead much more easily now, and was glad. Pater had opened his eyes, and Mater continued to look out at the fluffy cloud cover below us. By tacit agreement the subject of comic book coinages was dropped and we did not take it up again. At Croyden he said, "Good-bye" politely, and disappeared into the crowd. I did not see him again.

However, our brief conversation had given me pause, and I deter-
route to Eng­-English lad, and us) after a look -- I've 
side. A Latin man in his face and trembling 
the corner of his mouth. A Latin man and I trembled 
- before his face and the caption of 
- on him. 

"P-P-P-L-E," but I 
that behind me 
IClient Deci­
ch words be­
continued, 
just look 
. The 
- only 
agreed with 
fifteen Deci­

Then began to 
not be found 
up at the spur 
foundly unknown. 

Such words be­
his eager face 
Continued, 
just look 

The 
- only 
agreed with 
getting ahead 
yes, and 
us. By tacit 
and we did 
pletely, and dis­

I deter­
In passing, we may say that from the standpoint of Phonetics certain interesting conclusions may be drawn from our coinages, although it is not our intention to go into the subject deeply. For instance, the two High Front Vowels transcribed phonetically as (i:) and (i) -- the sounds of 'queen' and 'it', respectively, are often associated in the comics with speed, lightness, or fear. EEEK, phonetically (i: k), is commonly, but not always, used in the connotation of a woman and a mouse. The diphthong (ai) -- the I of Eng. 'child' -- is formed more towards the back of the mouth, and heard in YIPE. It is a more 'open' sound, pronounced with the tongue in a slightly lower position than the preceding (i:). The (ae) of Eng. 'father' and the (o) and (o:) of Eng. 'John' and 'talk' is formed with the tongue in a still more lowered and retracted position and used for sounds connected with heavy objects in flight or making forceful contact -- such as WHUMP, ZOT, SKRUNNCH, and many others. In general, the more closed High Vowels have less 'carrying' quality, while the Back, more open Vowels are of a more sonorous character. The former are properly associated with short-lived, staccato 'circumstances', while the latter expresses heavier, more resonant ones. But an extended treatment of the vowels and consonants used in the comics would make our paper over-long and is better left to other more competent persons.

We have limited ourselves here to comic books in English, despite the great popularity in the United States of certain French and Latin-American strips and books. Space does not permit the inclusion of so much material, nor have we found it necessary to include words which may be readily found in the usual dictionaries. MUMBLE, MUTTER, CLANK and a number of others will present no problem to foreigners with their bilingual word-books handy. We are concerned more with the WHOOPS, CHUGS, UHMUs, etc., which will elude even the most diligent of word-enthusiasts, be his word library ever so large.

I could not consider this introduction complete without grateful acknowledgement to my grandson, Thor, who gave me access to his large collection of comic books. These are most precious to him; ancient scrolls could hardly be guarded with more loving care. Thor is eleven.

Editor's note: Two articles in the Winter 1979 issue of Maledicta, "You Have Only Your Asterisk" by Laurence Urdang, and "Dingbatted Maledicta: Symbolic Euphemisms" by editor Reinhold Aman, nicely complement John McClellan's survey of comic book coinages. Dingbats are not only women such as Archie Bunker's wife Edith (in the former TV series 'All In The Family'), but various typographical symbols (%% $@ &?!) used by artists to denote curses or obscene words. Aman urges readers to send him any dingbat examples they encounter in their reading, especially ones in foreign languages (331 South Greenfield Avenue, Waukesha, WI 53186).

A SHORT GJ

Sources (impressions)
ac - Andy
bs - Brenda
hgs - Grimm
Hulk, ju - Juggernaut
loa - Little
mm - Mic
men - Men
Man, sw - Superman
Com, war - War Tale

Abbreviations
aug - augment
ono - onomatopoeia
v infr - sub

AAH h Unh
AAAA h A
AAGH ha S
AAAAH kk P
AAARGH ac H
AH-CHOH h
AH HA kk I
AHFPOO kk N
AIEEE wi A
ARF loa A
ARGH sf A
A ROOM ggs

BAA ha A
BALLOOM ha A
BAM ha A
BASHOW wi A
BIMP h A
BLAM bl I
BLANT ha A
BLONK kk

BOO 11 A
BOOF ac T
BONG ha A
BONG SWA'
BOP ac T
BONK p H

---

163

A SHORT GLOSSARY OF COMIC BOOK COINAGES

Sources (immediately following the word listed)
ac - Andy Capp, bb - Beetle Bailey, bh - Broom-Hilda, bl - Blondie,
bs - Brenda Starr, ca - Cathy, do - Doonesbury, g - Garth,
ggs - Grimm's Ghost Stories, h - Hart, ha - Hagar, ih - Incredible
Hulk, ju - Jumble Puzzle, k - Kooky, kk - Krazy Kat, ll - Little Lulu,
loa - Little Orphan Annie, m - Margie, mc - Marvel Comics,
mm - Mickey Mouse, p - Peanuts, pp - Pink Panther, rf - Robot
Fighters, rk - Rip Kirby, s - Shoe, sf - Science Fiction, sm - Spider
Man, sw - Spider Woman, tgs - True Ghost Stories, wi - West Indian
Comic, ww - Wonder Woman, wwp - Woody Woodpecker, wwt - Weird
War Tales

Abbreviations
aug - augmentative, cf - compare, Eng - English, Fr - French,
ono - onomatopoeia, 000 - of obscure origin, qv - which see,
v infr - see below, v supr - see above, var - variant

AAH h Unbelieving astonishment. A prehistoric noise (also AAAR-
BRGH).
AAAA h A noise of great annoyance (cf RRRR, GGGG, HHHH).
AAGH h A sudden surprise and fear.
AAAH kk Deep sorrow.
AARGH ac A nightmare noise.
AARGH ac A sneeze.
AARGH ac A fear of falling.
AHPFOO kk A sneeze (cf AH-CHOO, v supr).
AIEEE wi A sound of a bulldozer.
ARF loa A dog-noise.
ARCH sf A fear-noise.
ARROOM ggs A sheep-noise.

American Heritage Dictionary
ledicta, "You batted Malec-"...
BRAT-TAT mc Burp-gun.
BRRR bl An alarm-clock.
BTAM lh Hitting and penetrating a brick wall.
BUFF wi A blow to the jaw.
BWAIE wi A gun going off.
BZZZ kk A whispering.

CHINGLE wi Noise of money in pocket (cf JINGLE).
CHUG ww Noise of a train.
CLANG rf Metal hitting ground.
CLANK bh Same as above.
CLOMP ww Sound of heavy animals walking.
CLUMP tgs Noise of falling downstairs.
CRAK ha Crackling knuckles.
CRRRRZ sf ooo

EEE h A noise of fear, as when a lady sees a mouse.
EKK k Aug form of the above; extreme fear.
EEP ac Surprised disbelief; fear.
EFP h Noise of fear and surprise (cf the milder WHOOPS).

FAZZZAK sf A science-fiction explosion (see FZZZAM).
FLUMP h A heavy object hits the ground.
FOO-EH h A derisive sound (ooo).
FOOM h A volcano noise; an eruption.
Vin Noise of blasting.
FOM FOM FOM sf Ray-gun discharges (cf PWOK).
FWIP sm Noise of a line being thrown (cf WHIP).
FWISSSHH sw 'Living flame erupted from her fingers'.
FWOOOSH mc Another ray-gun sound.
FZZZAM sf Var of FAZZZAK (v supr).

GAAGG tgs Terrorised.

GARUF m A dog (ono) (cf HONK, BAA).
GAWRSH mm Interjection of surprise (probably from GOSH).
GOG h Similar to AAA (qv).
GLANG kk A dinner bell (ono) (also GLENG, GLONG and GLUNG).
GLOOMP h On swallowing a stone.
GLURB mm An underwater sound (cf BLOOB, COOB).
GNISH h A variant of GRONK (qv).
GNUFF h Same as above.
GONK bh A thrown object scores a hit.
GROH h Similar to GRONK (v infr).
GRONK h A prehistoric animal noise.
GRR ac An angry sound, similar to GARUF, but human-produced.
GERROWWLL mm A sound of growling (probably aug of GRR).
HALP ww Var of HELP; a solecism.
HAR HAR lh Var of HA HA, a laugh.
HAW HAW kk Same as above, but more vulgar, perhaps derisive.
HEE HEE p A chuckle, sometimes derisive.
HIC ac A hiccough noise (ono).
HONK ha A goose noise (cf BAA).
HOOOOWWOO ggs A whining of hounds.
HRMPF sh Noise preceding sleep.
HUD (or HUT) sm A signal in football from the quarterback to the center to set the ball in motion (ooo) (cf Army slang HUT, the cadence in marching).
HUH? ww What?
HUH-HUH kk A snicker.
HUM p 'Now, let me think...'
KA-BLAM do Noise of thrown objects.
KA-BLAST pp An explosion.
KABLOWIE h Running into someone.
KA-VOOM ww An explosion.
KAZANGO h Something crashes through a tree.
KERTHWAN sm A Spider Man noise (ooo).
KIK-KLICK wi Loading a magazine into a gun (ono).
KLANG kk Church bells (ono).
KLENK kk Noise of sabres struck together.
KLOPP kk Noise of wooden shoes (ono).
KLUNK kk Brick hitting ground.
ac Falling on head, or running into something.
KOFF (or KAFF) pp A cough (ono).
KRRUMPP mc Noise of destruction.
KWA mc Indeterminate noise (ooo).
KWONK kk Akin to BOPP and BLONK (qv).
M-M-M kk Sounds of cognition - 'Now, I wonder...' (also HM-M).
MMM ac Same as above.
g Mumbling sound of a gagged person.
MRMF sh Sound of thinking.
NERTS mc Derisive interjection (ooo) (probably from NUTS).
NOK li (ono) (probably from KNOCK).
OH-H kk Sorrowful interjection.
OH-OHH ac Fearful surprise.
OMIGOSH mm Contraction of OH MY GOSH; generally, surprise -- pleased or otherwise.
OOF m Sound of a dog.
 ih Hitting a wall.
ww Someone being hit.
OUCH mm Interjection of pain.
OWTCH kk Aug var of OUCH: 'pinned' in a duel.
OWW ac Pain (var of OUCH).
OWWCH g Same as above.
PEEEP kk A bee-noise (also PFAA, PFUF with same meaning).
PFIU kk A snort of disdain.
PING kk Two balls hitting together (perhaps from PING PONG).
PLOOSH sm ooo
PLOP ? Probably a var of FLOP.
PLUNK h A dropped coin.
POOF h Noise associated with volcanos.
POW kk The sudden landing of a brick.
mc A destructive noise.
PTUI h Satellite hitting volcano.
PWOOK mc A ray-gun noise.
PYOINNGG sm A tremendous blow (perhaps from Fr POING, a fist).

RAFF m A dog noise.
RAT A TAT-TAT ac A knock (ono).
RATTA-SHATTLE wi A gate being shaken, to get attention.
ROWF m Same as RAFF above.
RRRR h A sound of great annoyance (cf AAAA).
RUFF m (ono) (Probably akin to RAFF, above).

SCRURCH wi Small car taking off, overfast.
SHADDUP ac A solecism on a vulgarism: keep still (from SHUT UP).
SHOO kk To 'scat' a cat (see SKAT v infr).
SHOOIE h A prehistoric animal noise.
SHWOOSH kk A noise to make something disappear.
SKAT kk To 'scat' a cat (see SHOO v supr).
SKATCH ll Violin noise of an amateur.
SKNK (or SKNXX) bl A sleep noise; snoring.
SKRITCH ll A violin noise (see SKATCH).
SKROCH ll Same as above.
SKRUNNCH ih Noise of penetrating a wall.
SKWAA kk A motorcycle siren.
SLURP ha An eating noise.
SMAKK kk A kiss.
SNOOK h Prehistoric animal noise.
SPLAM ih Running head-on into a monster.
SPLAT ha Foot hitting a puddle (also SPLAAT).
SPLINGE h, wi Contents of a frying pan dumped on someone.
SQOOZ bh A squeeze by a vulture.
STOK SVAM! sm A fight.
SWAK sw ooo
SWOOSH kk Someone getting squirted, or otherwise wetted.

TATA TAA kkk Happy humming.
TCH ac A click of the tongue meaning 'Too bad!', or 'You really should've done that' (a very primitive interjection).
THOOMP pp (ono) (Perhaps from THUMP, to slap or beat).
THRAAKK ih Noise of demolition.
THRAM mc A destructive noise (sometimes THRAMB).
THUH mm Var spelling of THE.
THUM sm ooo
THUNK wwt Sound of an arrow piercing a tank.
THWACK sh A noise of hitting.
THWAK ha Noise of knives being thrown into a wooden door.
THWIPP sm Noise of Spider Man's web being hurled.
TRUND h ooo
TUH mm, wi Var spelling of TO.
TWANG ha Sound of a bow-string (ono).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UGHHH ac</td>
<td>Disgusted noise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UHUM kk</td>
<td>Cogitative interjection meaning 'Now, let me think...'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNGH wi</td>
<td>Violent monosyllable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UH wi</td>
<td>I, or a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOOF ha</td>
<td>A dog noise (also VOFF).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOOM mc</td>
<td>An indeterminate noise (ooo).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA-AH ac</td>
<td>Crying.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAH ac</td>
<td>Tears, anger.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAH ll</td>
<td>Noise of a wet baby.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAR kk</td>
<td>Same as above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHAM h</td>
<td>Noise of laundry being beaten on a stone, in a stream.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHANG h</td>
<td>A hitting noise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHAP h</td>
<td>Similar to above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHOO bb</td>
<td>Noise of an owl.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHOOF bl</td>
<td>Noise of speedy departure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHOOPS bh</td>
<td>(cf EEP).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHUMP sm,h</td>
<td>A hit; falling after ski jump.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOOF m</td>
<td>A dog noise (cf ROWF, RAFF, OOF).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WONK s</td>
<td>When one falls asleep and head hits table.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOW do</td>
<td>Noise of surprise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WWOFW bs</td>
<td>An enraged animal, biting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WUH wi</td>
<td>Where (var spelling).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WUN wi</td>
<td>One (var spelling).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YAAAAY ll</td>
<td>A joyous noise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YAK wi</td>
<td>A noise of much talk (also YAKKIT Y).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YAP m</td>
<td>A dog noise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YEOOW bl</td>
<td>Noise of hurt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YEOOUCH bh</td>
<td>Same as above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YI loa</td>
<td>Surprise and fear at a brandished scimitar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YIP m</td>
<td>A dog noise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YIPE ha,bh</td>
<td>A startled cry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YIPES sf</td>
<td>Noise of fear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YIPPEE ww</td>
<td>A joyous noise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YOFF ha</td>
<td>Another dog sound.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YYYYYNHHHH tgs</td>
<td>An eerie sound (ooo).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZAK h</td>
<td>Hitting a ball.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZAM kk</td>
<td>Kicking something, as a bucket.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZANG h</td>
<td>Noise of an anteater catching a clam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZANGO h</td>
<td>Neanderthal love-making sound.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZAP ha</td>
<td>A war-noise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td>A Neanderthal slap.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bb</td>
<td>A bewitching sound.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZAZ kk</td>
<td>Sound of something being thrown.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZIP h</td>
<td>An armadillo rolling into a ball.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kk</td>
<td>A projectile like a brick or boomerang in flight.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A MAIL AUCTION OF WORD BOOKS AND MAGAZINES

Palmer Peterson's extensive library of old dictionaries, puzzle magazines and other National Puzzlers' League material was willed to Murray Pearce, 410 Avenue B West, Bismarck, North Dakota 58501. He now offers at auction that part of this collection which duplicates his own, with all proceeds to be donated to the National Puzzlers' League. Those wishing to participate should write to him for a full three-page listing (send a self-addressed stamped legal-sized envelope). Bids will be accepted until October 1, 1980. If more than one person bids on a particular item, all such bidders will be notified of the high bid to date and will be given a chance to make one additional bid if they desire. A sample of the material available:

- Eastern Enigma and Enigma issues dating back to 1899, with a nearly complete run (missing one issue, December 1969) from 1931 to date
- Word Ways, complete through February 1979 (45 issues)
- A Key to Puzzledom, 1906
- Webster's New International Dictionary, first and second editions
- Levine's Pattern Word List, Volume 1 (2-letter through 9-letter words)
- Berrey and Van Den Bark, The American Thesaurus of Slang, 1947
- The Century Dictionary and Cyclopedia, 1904
- Funk and Wagnalls New Standard Dictionary, 1950
- Frederick Webb Hodge, Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico, 1912

The most process of wo as compactly speak or write especially when we can see in the May invasive and ve...

AdvertiSE to suggest, i...

In addition clippings (1 v category), E...

But, to be an...