

## 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 it.

William Sunners disagrees with Philip Cohen's August 1983 Colloquy comment that the double-clueing of British crosswords is sufficient protection against a multiplicity of answers. He feels that a plethora of unkeyed or unchecked letters (unches) is the principal villain, citing in support the following passage from page 49 of Alec Robins' book Crosswords:

On the other hand, I was caught out on one occasion by an alternative answer about whose existence I had forgotten. I had clued the word VICEREGENT by jumbling the letters into an anagram, and, as it happened, it was possible to obtain from solving other clues the letters -I-E-E-E-T. The clue was something like this:

CRETE GIVEN, for a change, a deputy (10)

Imagine my surprise when it was pointed out to me that both VICEREGENT and VICEGERENT (each in a sense a stand-in or deputy and each formed by mixing the words CRETE GIVEN) fitted the spaces equally aptly ...

William Sunners concludes "In the past sixty years during which I have been associated with every type of crossword puzzle, I have seen numerous instances where multiple answers could fit into a diagram where a multiplicity of unches existed." He adds that British-style crossword constructors do not have to use the unchecked grid; witness, for example, Mel Taub's Puns and Anagrams in the September 3, 1983 New York Times.

Both Philip Cohen and The Word Wurcher feel that the editor may have been too harsh in his criticism of John Irving's -ary/-ery spelling tips in "Silvery Discovery? Glittery Trumpery" in the August 1983 Word Ways. Specifically, both note that Irving's intent may have been to include oxytones (words secondarily accented on the -ery) only. If so, Irving was almost right, eliminating distillery from his list, and adding dysentery and presbytery, he has found all the words accented on -ery. (The words beery, query, leery, every and very have the suffix -y, not -ery, and so can be eliminated from consideration.)

Jeff Grant footnotes Darryl Francis's review of the OED Supplement by noting that it contains the palindrome OGOPOGO (its first dictionary appearance) and the 24-letter transposal POLYDESOXYRIBONUCLEOTIDE/POLYDEOXYRIBONUCLEOTIDES, both words in citations.

Two readers -- Alan Kantrow of Boston and The Word Wurcher -- offered explanations for some of the terms in Richard Lederer's "A Lexicographer's Search" in the August issue:

**bed's head** At many places in his diaries, William Byrd speaks about "dancing his dance", probably a regular routine of exercises. The 1711 entry suggests that he may have done these right in his sleeping chamber, which no doubt was a rather noisy business for the other sleepers.

**castle duty** I believe this to be the fee paid to the keepers of a castle dominating a port, strait or passage for the privilege of using the same.

**d. vi m.** Cotton Mather began most entries in his diary by noting the day and month. This notation is much like others, except that he failed to give a numeral for the day. Note that since the year started in March, August was indeed the sixth month. Another interpretation: the Roman numeral might refer to the 6th of August; does the Julian calendar reveal that August 6 was a Friday in 1721?

**dissuetude** This is the failure to exercise or assert a privilege.

**first table** When Puritans or their contemporaries referred to the first or second table, their comments had to do with one or another grouping of the Ten Commandments -- quite a common usage at the time.

**single stockings** Harrower is probably not referring to the thickness of the stockings but with their being characteristic of "dabbling wives".

**skimmers** Muleskinners are to mule handlers as skimmers are to handlers of animals in general.

**tie up by the leg** The victim sits on the ground with one leg tied up so he cannot get up and stand on his feet.

**whip over the ground** This is what gamebeaters do.

Philip Cohen points out the interesting fact that the word **meame-louc** (a person one-sixteenth black, in Dmitri Borgmann's Colloquy item in August) is probably related to **mameluke** (one of a body of soldiers of the Middle Ages recruited from slaves converted to Islamism); the latter comes from an Aryan word meaning a white (non-Negro) captive.

Jeremy Morse located examples for Alan Franks five missing cardinals-in-words:

**FLVEs** (vives or avives), a horse disease, found in the "Taming of the Shrew"

**SlXeteene**, Shakespearean form of **sexton** found in "Hamlet" (see the OED)

**miSEVENT**, in the OED

He also offers **ouTWO**n as a remarkably short word containing **two**, and extends the list with:

**rELEVEN**, an obsolete form of **relieve** in the OED

**comFORTYe**, an obsolete form of **comfort** in the OED

**wEIGHTY**

tHUNDRED (thundered) in a 1617 citation in the OED

Two-adjacent-cardinals in words also include:

TENONed, a shorter word than rotenone

TENTWOrt, in the OED

Philip Cohen notes that Dmitri Borgmann suggested the coinages kisSIXerxes, pasSEVENt and raffFIVEst in Language on Vacation (see pages 222-23).

The Word Wurcher believes that it is de rigueur to write the inhabitant of Los Angeles as **Angeleno**, not **Angelino**. Someone from Pinsk is a **Pinsker**, and someone from Manchester, England is known as a **Mancunian**. Spanish provides a fascinating example of this genre:

**Santiago** means St. James and is the patron saint of Spain

**Santiagoño** describes people from Santiago in Panama or Paraguay, or from Santiago del Estero in Argentina; it is also said of fruit ripe by St. James's day

**Santiaguero** pertains to those from Santiago de Cuba; in Puerto Rico it also refers to a faith healer who practises by making the sign of the cross

**Santiagués** is the adjective for those from Santiago de Compostela, in Spain

**Santiaguino** denotes those from Santiago de Chile

**Santiaguista** denotes a member of the Order of St. James

Apologies to Walter Shedlofsky: his article in the August issue was originally planned as a quiz, but subsequently presented as a narrative. However, the corresponding material was not excised from Answers and Solutions. Apologies also to Jeff Grant; the editor forgot that he had already exhibited **inaccidentated** as a pair isogram in the August 1982 Word Ways.

Dana Richards follows up Eric Albert's May 1983 Kickshaws with additional examples of creative labeling of record album sides:

Story One, Story Two: Absolutely (Madness)

One View, Another View: Point of View (Matumbi)

Home Side, Away Side: Private Parts & Pieces (Anthony Phillips)

First Half, Second Half: Sides (Anthony Phillips)

NOR Side, SOR Side: Private Parts & Pieces (Anthony Phillips)

Beastie, Broadsword: The Broadsword and the Beast (Jethro Tull)

.001, .002: We're All Bozos on this Bus (Firesign Theater)

Ed Wolpow improves Philip Cohen's MQQQ word in "The 4-Set Problem" with (Hymenoxys) **quinquesquamata**, a New Mexican plant illustrated in Harold William Rickett's Wild Flowers of the United States on page 678, part 3 of Volume 4. Alas, the plant has no common name!

The Word Wurcher adds to "A Little Bow Peep": draw the long bow, exaggerate when telling stories.

Elsewhere in this issue, Martin Gardner is the guest Kickshaws editor. His previous Kickshaws column, in February 1981, was recently reprinted in his latest book, Order and Surprise (Prometheus Books, 1983).

Kyle Corbin goes back to the note on Games Magazine Logological Competitions in the August 1980 **Word Ways** to submit the following improvements to the longest Merriam-Webster Pocket Dictionary words beginning with each letter, beheadable to other Pocket Dictionary words: l-ionization, q-t, and x-u.

Recently the editor spotted the punning maternity shop name **Mum's the Word** in Butler, New Jersey, somewhat more clever than the inevitable **Ladies in Waiting**. Richard Lederer noted the non-punning but clever **Muffin in the Oven** in the September 8 1983 Wall Street Journal. No doubt a systematic survey of telephone directories would reveal others.

Jeremy Morse replaces carpeting with the ten-letter taperingly as an example of a word with no repeated letters and no letters adjacent in the alphabet. If one removes the requirement that all letters be different, interpenetratively beats incapacitatingly two letters.

The Word Wurcher says that the singular-plural combo skopets/skop-tzy, in "Dr. Robinson's Dictionary", is not unusual as a Russian plural. The root kop means "cut" because the round copeks were sliced off a round bar.