QUELQUE CHOSE

DMITRI A. BORG MANN
Dayton, Washington

Kickshaws is currently being assembled by a series of guest editors. All contributions should be sent to the editor in Morristown, New Jersey.

Scribbleomania

Do you frequently experience an obsessive or even insane urge or desire to write, possibly reflecting an exaggerated idea of the importance of what you are writing? If so, then you are the victim of GRAPHOMANIA. In its more advanced stages, you may find yourself writing long successions of unconnected, meaningless words, typically page after page. Doing so makes you a victim of GRAPHORRHEA.

These conditions are very likely to give you WRITER'S CRAMP, a neurological condition marked by a spasmodic contraction of your fingers, hand and forearm, accompanied by muscular pain therein, discouraging you from further writing attempts. WRITER'S CRAMP is, however, such a plebeian designation for what ails you. Fortunately, synecronic logology comes to your rescue here, with a wealth of alternate names for the condition from which you are suffering.

To give you the maximum possible relief, I have culled the following exact synonyms for WRITER'S CRAMP from various general and medical dictionaries, encyclopedias, and other published sources: CHIROSPASM, WRITERS' PALSY, GRAPHOSPASM, SCRIVENERS' PALSY, MOGigraphia or MOGOGRAPHIA, PENMAN'S SPASM, WRITERS' NEUROSIS, HYPERKINESIA, DYSGRAPHIA, WRITERS' SPASM and hold on to your hat - A STUTTERING OF THE HAND. Numerous little variations on these terms are also available - the word WRITERS' is usually interchangeable with WRITER'S, and CHIROSPASM may be spelled CHEIROSPASM.

No longer need you suffer from the WRITER'S CRAMP of the masses - you can, instead, discourse eloquently and frequently about the plethora of more elegant-sounding ailments that I have made available to you!

But wait - there's more. What if someone asks you to be specific - what kind of writer's cramp has afflicted you? Be prepared to specify your condition as SPASTIC, PARALYTIC, NEURALGIC or TREMULOUS MOGigraphia, these being the four principal forms in which it occurs. If your questioner asks you to explain the differences between the four varieties - well, let's leave that issue for another time!
A Cryptographic Quirk

In the May 1975 issue of Word Ways, Leslie E. Card and A. Ross Eckler presented four general English letter-frequency lists (and nine special ones). While differing from each other in various particulars, all four of the general lists showed that the five most common letters in English text are E, T, A, O, and N, in that order.

Such uniformity is uncharacteristic of untrammeled logology. To liven things up a bit, I therefore present a very different letter-frequency list:

E A O I D H N R S T U Y C F G L M W B K P Q X Z

It appears about four-fifths of the way through Edgar Allan Poe’s short story, “The Gold Bug,” first published in 1843 in a Philadelphia newspaper. In addition to demoting T and L, and promoting H, S, and D, it is conspicuous for ordering only 24 of the 26 letters of the alphabet.

Why did Poe omit the letters J and V from his letter-frequency list? Was he careless, simply forgetting them? Did he regard them as so infrequent in use as not to be worth mentioning? Did he have some morbid aversion to them? The last of these possibilities intrigued me, but I soon dismissed it. For one thing, the cipher that Poe was trying to decode in “The Gold Bug” happened to use the letter V twice (in the words DEVIL’S and SEVENTH), although it avoided the letter J. More interestingly, the last two words of the third sentence of Poe’s short story “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” happen to be LIVELIEST ENJOYMENT. Omitting the J and the V from these words would have put a crimp of sorts in that story.

The solution to this cryptographic conundrum finally dawned on me. Once upon a time, the letters I and J had been used without differentiation in print, as had the letters U and V. Poe had, therefore, included the frequencies of J and V in those of I and U. The only problem with this explanation is that the practice of intermingling the two members of each letter pair had died out before 1843: for example, Richard P. Jodrell’s Philology of the English Language (1820) and Noah Webster’s An American Dictionary of the English Language (1828) both separated the letter pairs in question.

Can any reader of Word Ways shed further light on the Poe curiosity?

Who is Salome Jens?

Salome Jens is an actress who first came vividly to my attention with her role in “Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman,” an offbeat TV series produced by Norman Lear. Since those pristine days, I’ve spent a great deal of time wondering about that actress. Is SALOME JENS her real name, or is it a clever, anagrammatic pseudonym for some other name?

The anagrammatic possibilities are considerable. I have evolved
nine names into which SALOME JENS can be transposed:

Selma Jones  Les Jameson  Jose Selman
James Olsen  Mona Jessel  Joe Lessman
Jess Malone  Elson James  Jon Les Ames

There must be still other possibilities that I’ve overlooked. Tell me what they are ...

Hidden Words

Webster’s Third Edition is a dictionary that doesn’t believe itself. In its definitions, it uses many thousands of words which it doesn’t recognize as words by including them among its boldface dictionary entries. Here are eighteen examples of hidden words in that dictionary:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dictionary Entry</th>
<th>Word in Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fyke net</td>
<td>cork-floated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grass pickerel</td>
<td>dark-banded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>great land crab</td>
<td>dull-grayish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>handle-talkie</td>
<td>transmitter-receiver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypochaeris</td>
<td>milky-juiced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leaf-nosed snake</td>
<td>dark-blotched</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>line</td>
<td>belly-to-back</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mariposite</td>
<td>chromium-bearing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mistletoe</td>
<td>waxy-white</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>paddlefish</td>
<td>spatula-shaped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pearly everlasting</td>
<td>floccose-woolly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pholus</td>
<td>elongate-oval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pholiota</td>
<td>brown-spored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phoma</td>
<td>stem-inhabiting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scarlet plume</td>
<td>scarlet-bracted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schardinger dextrin</td>
<td>low-molecular-weight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tsutsugamushi</td>
<td>louse-borne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>typograph</td>
<td>keyboard-operated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Who will be the first reader of Word Ways to comb the definitions in Webster’s Third for all such terms? A list of them would form a valuable additional word pool for use in logological studies. More significantly, if the dictionary can coin words right and left to suit its purposes, why can’t and shouldn’t we do the same for our logological purposes? As Jonathan Swift remarked in 1738 in his Polite Conversation, “What’s sauce for a goose is sauce for a gander.” Think about that — two-and-a-half centuries later!

The Sight of Silence

Many English words and names include letters in their spelling which are mysteriously absent from their pronunciation. Thus, the A in AISLE is silent, as are the B in LAMB and the C in INDUCT.

Here is a quiz that tests your knowledge of the silent side of English. Listed below are the definitions of 26 English words (from which names have been excluded), with the number of letters in the answer word indicated in parenthesis following the definition.

1. Extremely (5)
2. Sinister (7)
3. The comer (7)
4. Places of (5)
5. To accost (6)
6. Physically (6)
7. The member (6)
8. Calling for (7)
9. An English (6)
10. A slight on (6)
11. An oboe p (6)
12. To subvert (7)
13. Slender (6)
14. On a par (5)
15. Money ref (6)
16. A small, g (5)
17. A mode of (6)
18. A difficulty (6)
19. A nickel (5)
20. Conforming (6)
21. Relating to (6)
22. Sustained (7)
23. Relating to (6)
24. An insignificant (5)
25. A card game (5)
26. A wild tobo (6)

Progressive Words

A progressive word is formed by taking a new letter at the beginning of a word and forming a new word from it. Progressive squares are formed by adding a new letter at the end of the word and forming a new word from it. They are, however, generally larger than the larger squares.

Shown below are three small progressive squares that have never been completed.

I T Z A G
T O A G E
C E M

The three small
The 26 answer words feature unpronounced letters, with each letter of the alphabet remaining unpronounced in at least one word. The silent letters are alphabetically scrambled.

How many of the defined words can you identify?

1. Extremely low (9)
2. Sinister or perverse (7)
3. The common cold (7)
4. Places of popular resort (10)
5. To accost or address (5)
6. Physically delicate (7)
7. The members of a family (6)
8. Calling for skillful execution (8)
9. An English sheriff (8)
10. A slight or minimal chance (6)
11. An oboe player (10)
12. To subvert or weaken (9)
13. Slender (6)
14. On a par with (6)
15. Money refunded as compensation (8)
16. A small, soft, unripened cheese (10)
17. A mode or method (6)
18. A difficult or complicated matter (8)
19. A nickel (9)
20. Conforming to all legal requirements (6)
21. Relating to the shinbone (7)
22. Sustained poses (8)
23. Relating to memory (7)
24. An insignificant person (8)
25. A card game like bezique (9)
26. A wild tobacco (9)

Progressive Word Squares

A progressive word square is one in which each succeeding word is formed by removing the first letter of the preceding word, adding a new letter at the end (as in the sequence PLATE to LATER). Progressive squares are somewhat easier to produce than ordinary word squares, because one can describe them as self-constructing. They are, however, subject to the inexorable logological law that, the larger the square, the more difficult it is to devise.

Shown below are the finest progressive word squares that have ever been constructed in each of the size categories from 2 to 7:


The three smallest squares can easily be modified or replaced in
many different ways. In the case of the 4x4 square, however, most changes will result in a decline in the quality of the square. The last word of the 5x5 square, ANGEL, can be changed to ANGER – but ANGEL has a more pleasant sound and meaning.

The last word of the 6x6 square, ERNEST, can be removed entirely, adding the word TCHAST ahead of CHASTE to compensate for the loss. The name ERNEST is, however, a more common and more English name than TCHAST is a word (a TCHAST is a Russian measure of volume, equal to 6.67 cubic inches). Flawing the 6x6 square is the very uncommon word TERNES ("coats with an alloy of tin and lead"). I see no way of replacing the word with a more desirable one. Do you?

The last word of the 7x7 square, TERNERY ("a place where terns breed gregariously") can be removed, adding the name LA BREAS ahead of ABREAST to compensate. Since LA BREAS is the plural of a proper name ("villages named LA BREA, such as those in Peru, Honduras, and Trinidad"), the net result of this change is a decline in word square quality. Making the square aesthetically objectionable are its second, third, and fifth words. BREASTE, REASTER, and ASTERNE are obsolete or dialectal words. ASTERNE is a seventeenth-century spelling of ASTERN, found in two quotations in The Oxford English Dictionary; BREASTE is obviously a similarly old spelling of BREAST, although I cannot identify its dictionary source on the spur of the moment; and REASTER probably has some relation to one of various obsolete, dialectal, or Scottish meanings of REAST or REEST. Both BREASTE and REASTER may well have been taken from The English Dialect Dictionary (1896-1905) by Joseph Wright, which I do not have.

Can any reader rework the 7x7 square to make it less objectionable? Better yet, can anyone construct a progressive 8x8 square?

Planetary Intelligence

Back in the good old days, when speakers of English were logically sensitive – I refer, of course, to the sixteenth century – one way of spelling the word written UVULA today was UUULA. Our language therefore included a word beginning with three consecutive U’s, an achievement probably unparalleled in any other language.

Times have changed, moderns are on an antilogologtical crusade, and UVULA has been consigned to the dustbin of history. Left for us to marvel at is but a pale shadow of UVULA – the name UUCHATHON, beginning with two U’s. Even so, it is the only English word thus beginning, if we ignore a few odd place names such as UUSIKAPUNKKI and UUSIMAA, both in southern Finland.

What is UUCHATHON? According to Webster's Second Edition, it is one of the four main astral spirits associated with the malefic planet Saturn. Evidently, there are minor such spirits as well, but they are outside the scope of this discussion. What of the other three main astral spirits? Webster's identifies one of them as CASZIEL, also defined as one of the four main astral spirits associated with the planet Saturn.

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Two down, Second Edition. Neither does the dictionary, one might assume, that the name CASZIEL is a Russian measure of volume, equal to 6.67 cubic inches. Flawing the 6x6 square is the very uncommon word TERNES ("coats with an alloy of tin and lead"). I see no way of replacing the word with a more desirable one. Do you?
however, most to ANGER -
wed entirely.

But how much more desir

The malefic planet, Saturn. Note that a comma has crept
into the definition this time, spoiling the complete uniformity of
definition that one would expect the four spirits to display.

Two down, two to go. In decades of browsing through Webster's
Second Edition, I have never found the two remaining like entities.
Neither does any published synonym included them. However,
the dictionary does include AGIEL, defining it as a Saturnine intel-
lence; one of the astral spirits of Saturn. Let us be generous
and assume that AGIEL is number three, bemoaning only the fact
that the malefic nature of Saturn is no longer mentioned. What
about number four? It does not appear to be in Webster at all,
under any guise. If we expand the dimensions of our search and
search through William R. Cooper's Archai Dictionary, from the
Egyptian, Assyrian, and Etruscan Monuments and Papyri (London:
Bagster, 1876), we eventually find ZAPKIEL, defined as the angel
of the planet Saturn. An angel associated with a malefic planet?
Implausible in the extreme! Cooper's omits UUCHATHON and CASZIEL,
but includes AGIEL, defining the latter as the intelligence of the
planet Saturn. IS ZAPKIEL the missing fourth member of the Web-
senian quartet? I don't know.

The search through Webster's and through Cooper's turns up
related names. COCHABIEL (in Cooper's) is the spirit of the planet
Mercury. HAGIEL (in Cooper's) is the intelligence of the planet
Venus. ELMIEL (in Cooper's) is the intelligence of the earth's
moon. GROPHIEL (in Cooper's) is the intelligence of the planet Mars.
JOPHIEL (in Webster's) is an astral spirit, the intelligence of the
planet Jupiter. The outermost planets (Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto)
and the conjectured "Nemesis" companion of the sun were all un-
known before 1781, when all of the astrological or cabalistic nam
es for planetary intelligences came into use, so the search ends here.

Note that our starting point, UUCHATHON, is doubly unique:
It begins with the remarkable letter combination UU, and
it is the only one of the nine names to end with a letter combination other
than IEL. Why the exception? Note further that, while Webster's
classifies the names as astrological, Cooper's makes them cabalis-
tic. Since the cabala did not crystallize until the thirteenth cen-
tury, and the word CABALA did not even exist before the twelfth
century, how could cabalistic names possibly have appeared on
Cooper's ancient Etruscan, Assyrian, and Egyptian monuments and
papyri?

Further questions abound. Why is only Saturn endowed with four
astral names? Why is only one of the names palindromic - ELM-
IEL, broken up into EL-I-MI-EL (rhymes with "yell, Jimmy, yell!")? Why
is only one of the nine names mentioned here to be found both
in Webster's and in Cooper's?

Readers are encouraged to come up with answers to some of the
questions raised in this vignette.

Editor's Note: In The Master Crossword Puzzle Dictionary, Herbert
M. Baus lists under "SATURN spirit" agiel, bohel, casziel, dacedl,
uuchathon. I have been unable to locate bohel or dacedl anywhere.
Rhyme Time

Now is the hour. This is the moment.

You finally have your opportunity to play a word game with yourself — one originally invented by the ancient Greeks when they chose to rhyme POUS ("the foot") with NOUS ("the mind"). The question is, how well do you know yourself?

Contemplation of one's physical and psychological selves uncovers an astonishing number of rhyming parts. In the simplest version of the exercise, one part is both a sound rhyme and a sight rhyme or eye rhyme of another part. One-syllable examples include WRIST and FIST, LOIN and GROIN, FOOT and ROOT (of a tooth), BONE and CONE (in the retina), SHANK and FLANK, HAM and GAM (leg), MOP (of hair) and TOP (of the head), PIT (of the stomach) and TIT, and FACE and SPACE (the popliteal space). Two-syllable examples include BICEPS and TRICEPS, LARYNX and PHARYNX, and GONAD and MONAD (a Leibnizian soul). For a three-syllable specimen, consider BICUSPID and TRICUSPID.

More difficult to spot, and therefore more highly prized, are sound rhymes only. These include EYE and THIGH, NOSE and TOES, FEET and TEAT (mammilla), CHEEK and BEAK (nose), and BACK and SAC (the lachrymal sac, for example).

Providing a special sense of satisfaction are two rhyming terms which also happen to be precise synonyms of one another. Examples include BREAST and CHEST, SPINE and CHINE, and SPLEEN and LIEN (if we take the liberty of pronouncing that LIEN which is a legal right to hold property or to sell it or apply it in payment of a claim).

On to bigger and better things — why settle for just two rhyming words when we can have three? Instances of the latter include HIP, LIP, and TIP (of the finger); GUM, THUMB, and DRUM (eardrum); BRAINS, VEINS, and REINS (the kidneys); WALL (of the stomach), SMALL (of the back), and BALL (of the thumb); and HAND, GLAND, and STRAND (of hair).

Once you have tasted trios of rhyming body parts, you want quartets and quintets. I have made a search for such marvels, and have found two quartets and one quintet. Can you match my finds? See Answers and Solutions at the end of this issue.

A Useful Word Square

SAT OR
ARE PO
TEN ET
OPERA
ROTA S

Always on the lookout for practical benefits of etymology, I have been struck forcefully by an entry in the Dictionary of Satanism by Wade Baskin (New York: Philosophical Library, 1972). According to the author, the well-known palindromic square that appears at the left is recommended for locating witches, extinguishing fires, fulfilling wishes, and many other purposes (page 290). A word to the wise is sufficient!
The Double Dot

Dr. William James Mayo is said to have described a specialist as a man who knows more and more about less and less. Some laymen would classify a logologist as such a specialist. I, however, regard the field of logology as a very broad one. Since I wish to qualify as a specialist, I have decided to select one particular detail of logology as my specialty. What detail? The double dot which sometimes appears over a vowel, either to indicate that it is sounded separately from the vowel immediately preceding it, or to denote a change in the usual sound of the vowel because a vowel that formerly followed it has been dropped from the spelling of the word in question.

To begin with, the mark to which I have dedicated myself is a specific DIACRITICAL MARK, DIACRITICAL, or MODIFIER. It is known in English as a DIAERESIS or DIERESIS. The latter spelling is the simpler one, but do not confuse it with the word DIESIS, a name for the reference mark also known as a DOUBLE DAGGER. For the benefit of the masses, the mark is known even more simply as TWO DOTS.

Because many of the words and names that have entered English from other languages include the double dot, its name in languages such as French and German have also entered English. One of the French names for this diacritic is TREMA. For those who do not wish to use a word unless it appears in an English-language reference work, I hasten to point out that you will find the TREMA discussed in the article "Typographical Signs" in The Reader's Encyclopedia, edited by William Rose Benét (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1955). The name is of interest chiefly for having quite a different application in English: according to The Century Dictionary (1889-1891), it is a rare synonym for vulva.

The German language contributes two names for the double dot: ZWEIPUNKT and UMLAUT (or, more accurately, UMLAUT-MARK). I have yet to see ZWEIPUNKT in a dictionary of German, but The Reader's Encyclopedia obligingly quotes it. UMLAUT-MARK is similarly nowhere - except in the Funk and Wagnalls Standard College Dictionary (1973 Edition). That dictionary plucked the term out of the blue sky, for its parent unabridged dictionary does not include it. Be circumspect in your use of the German names, however, for they also designate the little circle placed atop certain vowels in Swedish.

The German umlaut is used only over the vowels A, O, and U. Depending on which of these vowels the diacritic adorns, it is known as the A-UMLAUT, the O-UMLAUT, or the U-UMLAUT.

Webster's Third Edition provides an additional two synonyms for the umlaut: METAPHONY and MUTATION. I am convinced that the intention of the editors was to make these two words synonyms for the first definition of UMLAUT (as a kind of vowel change, or the resulting vowel), but they did not say so. The dictionary user is consequently free to treat the words as synonyms for the second definition of UMLAUT (as the diacritical mark) as well.
Coming full circle, another name for this modifier is the DOUBLE DOT. I remember seeing that designation applied, somewhere, specifically to the diacritical mark, but can’t remember where. The Second and Third Editions of Webster’s conspire to limit the term to two dots following a musical note or rest and indicating the augmentation of its time value by three quarters. Can any reader help me identify the source of the real meaning of DOUBLE DOT?

Do you now feel as though you suddenly know more about the double dot than you really wanted to know?

A Matter of Definition

How would you define the word TEN, if someone asked you to do so? As the sum of 7 and 3? As the number between 9 and 11? As twice 5? These and similar definitions are purely mathematical ones. Can you provide definitions worthy of logological attention — definitions which minimize the numerical component?

I have given considerable thought to the problem of defining TEN suitably, and now proudly unveil the fruits of my toil: worthwhile definitions of the term:

1. A reversal of the word NET
2. A word answering the question, “How many?”
3. A numerable quantity written as X, using Roman numerals, thereby replacing a numeral with a letter
4. As many in number as there are fingers on both hands
5. The total number of toes on one's feet
6. The number of Commandments comprising the Decalogue
7. The English cognate of the German word ZEHN
8. The translation into English of the French word DIX
9. The equivalent in English of the Spanish word DIEZ
10. The modern English descendant of the Old English word TEN
11. The English word corresponding in signification to the Italian word DIECI
12. The English analogue of the classical Latin word DECEM
13. A next-dooriness to extraterrestrial life: just one step beyond TEN, as letter-shifting proceeds along the alphabet, is a UFO
14. The central syllable of the word ROTTENNESS or ATTENTION
15. The middle three letters of the word STENT or LATENCY
16. One of the two words (the other one is HIE) into which the word THEINE is broken up for use as an alternate
17. The central word of the first word square shown below, which is the center or core of the second word square shown below

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
V & E & S & T \\
A & T & E & R \\
E & A & T & E & R \\
T & E & N & O \\
E & N & D & S \\
T & E & N & D & S \\
A & R & O & S & E \\
\end{array}
\]

18. A word which happens to mean this in Polish and that in Slovak; in short, this ‘n’ that

How many other definitions of this stripe can you suggest?
The Information Gap

From time to time, newspaper and magazine articles mention the news agencies of various foreign countries: TASS, the Soviet Union's news agency; DNB, the West German news agency; TANJUG, the Yugoslav news agency; IRNA, the Iranian news agency; ANGOP, the Angolan news agency; and so on. The class of names is an interesting one, but where does one find a complete list of these names? Encyclopedias and dictionaries have always ignored them. The obvious place in which to look for them is that set of annual almanacs including the Reader's Digest Almanac and Yearbook, The Hammond Almanac, The World Almanac & Book of Facts, and the Information Please Almanac & Yearbook. The obvious place, yes - but no list of foreign news agency names has ever appeared in any of these almanacs.

Their inaccessibility makes the names tantalizingly desirable. Does any reader know where to find a complete list of the names?

English - or Mumbo Jumbo?

The most recent of the "unabridged" dictionaries to be offered to the American public is Webster's Third Edition. No one doubts that it is a massive, scholarly, and authoritative work.

Scattered through the pages of that dictionary, however, are vocabulary entries such as CYWYDDAU, YULOH, RTA, GYTTJA, WAQF, EYRIR, NTLAKYPAMUK, VIJAO, OLOT, KABELJAWU, SYAGUSH, JAAG-ZIEKTE, TLACHTLI, MLECHICHHA, DGHISA, OLYKOEK, YUEH-P'AN, PWE, HAAK-EN-STEIK, NASTALIQ, SHELOTUPUSIE, PLZEN, KINNIKINNIK, SHABB'S GOY, QAIMMAQAM, HUMUHUMUKUNUKUAPUAA, OYAPOCK, ZINDIQ, QARAQALPAQ, NGBAKA and SCHAAPSTEKER. There are thousands more - I have merely cited a few examples to give you a clear idea of the kind of words that concern me.

Do these vocabulary entries look English or sound English? Most assuredly not - they are a mockery of English, about as far removed from bona fide English as any words could possibly be. Why, then, should we accept them as English? The mere fact that they are included in a dictionary of English does not make them English. If they are patently words outside the boundaries of anything conceivably recognizable as English, how can we possibly use them in logology?