

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 at least one month prior to publication of an issue will appear in that issue.

Edward B. Clarke of Newquay, Cornwall, England noted that a chapter on refractory rhyming is included in "How Thick Is a Shadow" including the following for MONTH:

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| The dONE THing now is | Haven't I told you a hundred times |
| A month in Powys. | There isn't a rhyme for mONTH? |
| | If I have to tell you just once more |
| | That'll be the hundred and ONE'TH. |

Jed Martinez writes "Many years ago, I came across a book of pencil puzzles and quizzes in my high school library. One of the more unique questions asked in said book was 'What's the only word that rhymes with MONTH?' After trying to come up with a suitable solution for nearly a half-hour, I surrendered and looked up the answer in the back pages. Their rhyming word for MONTH, believe it or not, was TWENTY-ONETH (as opposed to the more proper word, TWENTY-FIRST)."

Sir Jeremy Morse believes that the following monosyllables are also rhymeless: of, false, kilns, haves, bilge, welshed, warmth, alb, golfed, sylphs, coif, culm, cusped, doth, fugues, morgues, spoilt, plagued, wolves, and stilb. Anyone want to prove him wrong? I always thought OF rhymed with LOVE and DOVE.

Michael Helsem writes "...besides doorhinge & sporange as rhymes for orange, there is also Lt.-Com. Henry H. Gorringer, who was the supervisor in charge of shipping Cleopatra's Needle from Alexandria to Central Park. Then there is the poet George Starbuck, who came up with such rhymes as breadth/zedth/hundredth; month/n-plus-oneth/dozenth/millionth; circle/jerk'll/perkle (backformed from percolator); wisdom/is dumb/Ms.-dom; desert/Cortez hurt/fez hurt; monarch/bra narc/non-ark; and (perhaps his masterpiece) rhymed bilge with killj-! (killjoy, cut off in mid-ejaculation by the assassination of the speaker). Others I have seen are silver/gilver (an obsolete word in Mackay's *Lost Beauties of the English Language*, meaning 'to ache'); liquid/thick quid; glimpsed/anempst (anent, in Mackay also); and I have rhymed angst (American pronunciation) with Manxed, which is what happens to a cat that was too slow going through a doorway. A friend of mine immediately came up with Studs Terkel for circle, and MacKay has hurkle (to shrug). Still, there are a lot of challenges left. My list of monosyllables adds: airt, whilst, wolves, mouthe, gouge, boyg, Deutsch,

spoilt, alb, stilb (a unit of light-intensity), sylph, grilse, sculsh (junk food, in Mackay), warmth, and the infamous bilge.."

In the November 1990 Kickshaws, Jeff Grant's cheater's palindrome on Bubbly Baby Bob should have ended "baby l'b bub", not "baby l'd bub", and the point was lost (literally!) in Peter Newby's cheater's palindrome which should have read "This is to the point. T'nio Peh tot sisiht". Apologies! Al Stanger of St. Louis was surprised to see no mention of Harry Mathews's "The Dialect of the Tribe" in *Country Cooking and Other Stories*. Certainly the palindrome that ends the Mathews piece is the ultimate in cheater's palindromes - all of the words are made up!

How many readers were aware that Robert Fleissner's December 1990 article "Scrooge's Humbug Dissected" was itself a humbug - a parody of pompous academic papers on obscure points of etymology? Fleissner writes of the difficulty he had in persuading either linguistics journals or humor journals to publish it:

"Although I have been a charter member of the Dickens Society, the [Dickens Quarterly] editors did NOT like what I had written.. They thought I confused parody of pedantry with pedantry itself.. Others felt I was playing simply with words and, in so doing, was not coming to serious, conclusive terms with Dickens' intent.. Two major humor journals rejected it as simply 'not funny'.. Another said it was a 'half-serious meditation' on etymology."

He goes on to suggest that

"..we are motivated by a Spieltrieb as well as a Formtrieb in our work and daily lives. But do linguists take such games seriously?"

In a subsequent missive, Fleissner informed me that the editor of The Shakespeare Newsletter wrote him about Newby's piece "The Shaming of the True", wanting to know more about him. Apparently he took Newby's article literally! He did qualify this by saying that probably nobody believes Newby's theory but "Newby himself".

R. Merrill Ely of Chicago adds the word MANQUE to Dave Morice's list of adjectives that always follow the nouns they modify. He adds "I have a slight problem with including AGO in this category...only Webster's Collegiate shows this as an adjective [whereas Oxford, Collins and Chambers] show AGO as an adverb, which rules out its inclusion as a post-noun modifier." Sir Jeremy Morse supports Ely: "GALORE, APLENTY, AWEIGH and AGO are adverbs, not adjectives. AFLOAT, ..., AWRY can be adjectives (but only function predicatively as described) and adverbs (as in 'when people are asleep' or 'the door stood ajar' or 'I shook him awake' or 'things went amiss'). Chambers takes this line."

In the February 1977 *Word Ways*, the editor proposed muzjik pegbox dwarfs lyncht as a set of four six-letter words using 24 different letters. Leonard Gordon found two Official Scrabble Players Dictionary sets: blowzy frumps jading kvetch, frowzy plumbs jading kvetch.

Chris Cole writes in response to Colloquy "In my article [in the May 1990 **Word Ways**], I allow only uncapitalized, unpunctuated bold-faced entries or their inflected forms...for two reasons...respect for the judgement of the Merriam-Webster editors...any other rule would be arbitrary, unpredictable, and difficult to program into a computer." He notes that Dan Tilque is correct about the capitalization of Nauruan and Manxman; they should not have been in the article.

The following acronyms should be added to "Common Acronym Words" in the February 1990 **Word Ways**:

| | |
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| jato | Jet-Assisted TakeOff (1947, NI2+) |
| rad | Radiation Absorbed Dose (1918, NI3) |
| rep | Roentgen Equivalent Physical (1947, NI3) |

Similarly, add the following blends that also are acronyms:

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| avgas | AViation GASoline (1943, NI3) |
| dorper | DORset horn + blackhead PERsian (1949, NI3) |
| kip | KILO- + Pound (1914, NI2) |
| linac | LINear ACcelerator (1950, 6W-9C) |
| redox | REDuction + OXidation (1828, NI2) |
| vidicon | VIDeo + ICONoscope (1950, NI3) |
| wilco | WILL COmply (ca. 1938, NI3) |

Finally, add the following near misses:

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|-----------|---|
| echovirus | Enteric Cytopathogenic Human Orphan VIRUS (1955, 6W-9C) -blend |
| jaygee | Junior Grade (1943, NI3) - pronunciation of J.G. |
| jayvee | Junior Varsity (1937, NI3) - pronunciation of J.V. |
| pj's | PaJamAs (1951, NI3) - punctuated |
| nystatin | New York STATE + -IN (1952, NI3) - extraneous suffix |
| reovirus | Respiratory Enteric Orphan VIRUS (1959, 6W-9C) - blend |
| tradevman | TRAINing DEVICES MAN (ca. 1947, NI3) - blend |
| updo | UPSwept hairDO (1946, NI2+) - blend |
| warfarin | Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation + coumARIN (ca. 1950, NI3) - blend |
| yuppie | Young Urban Professional + -PIE (1983, 9C) - extraneous suffix |

Murray Pearce pointed out that Webster's Ninth Collegiate was first published in 1983, not 1986, so it supersedes **12000 Words** as the first reference containing all words except for IBUPROFEN (not in the 1983 printing). Actually, many of the 12W words appear in **6000 Words**, published in 1976.

If non-dictionary phrases such as MORE SAINT or N. RAMISETO are to be allowed as AEIMNORST transpositions, many (perhaps hundreds) of examples can be constructed. As an example, Edward Clarke strings some together in more-or-less coherent prose:

No, Mr. Satie / I'm a nestor, / not a miser / nor a Times /
 Tories man
 In some art / an erotism / is meant or / remains to / train some
 ten Maoris / in maestro / mean riots / or atenism

Jon Steeves corrects the price of Moot, described in the November

1990 **Word Ways**: it is \$39.95, not \$40.95. He notes that the levels of difficulty in Moot are determined by the question format: red or green cards present two alternatives, whereas yellow or blue cards force the player to come up with information.

Several readers responded to Simpson's "Letter-Deletion Acrostics". Jeff Grant "feels this is something he could really get his teeth into," and proceeds to do so for at least the shorter missing examples: aDmin (Chambers, OSPD), aDred (Chambers), Qaids (OSPD), Queys (Chambers), burQa (Chambers, Web 2), talaQ (Chambers), ollaV (Chambers), reverB (Web 2), and faQirs (OSPD). He also suggests two improvements: Xylem (Chambers) and dJins (OSPD). Jeremy Morse came up with a number of similar examples: aDits, Queys, ollaV, aZides and superB, all found in Chambers. Leonard Gordon added aFlight (OSPD) and oVocyte. Oren Dalton of El Paso, Texas noted aDmen and the spelling variant pizZazz. Finally, David Morice writes "I liked the approach that Simpson used...For a moment, I thought he was going to say he went through the dictionary to check, but no, he cleverly looked for a master set of words containing all letters in all positions, a chess-like move to solve it!"

Leonard Gordon sent in various corrections and amplifications to "The Structure of a Word Network" in the August 1989 issue. On page 144, CONS connects directly to EONS, not via TONS, changing the counts in the next paragraph. The longest open no-dwell tour can be extended to 15 of the 16 subnetworks (not just 13):

swad-swld-sild-sile-aile-ails-awls-awes-awee-awme-twme-twee-tyee-tyes-eyes

All but swld, awme and twme are in Webster's Third; these are listed as obsolete in the Oxford English Dictionary. The following words can be joined to four different subnetworks: twee, sine, aids, ails, ains, aits, ales, oles, pest, pist, taks, tarn, turn, suld.

William Lutwiniak reports that he was the author of the anagram TO CAST PEARLS BEFORE SWINE (ONE'S LABOR IS PERFECT WASTE); he believes it appeared in The Enigma between 1931 and 1941, but can't supply the exact reference, and the editor can't find it. Can anyone help?

Jeff Grant writes "John Bulten's query...was interesting. The word ARCHRIVAL has been around for some time and it's surprising it's not in all dictionaries, but it is in at least one, namely the Random House Dictionary of the English Language, Second Edition, Unabridged (1987). I saw the term used in the newspaper the other day as two words (arch rival), and I'm sure it is also sometimes hyphenated."

Recently Alfred Lubran sent the editor his privately-printed "An Abecedum of Adjacent Letters from aa-zz", containing examples for each bigram from grAA1 to buZZ. Comparing this with "676 Bigrams" in the November 1982 issue, the editor noted one decided improvement: viZS1a (in the Collegiate) for vammaZSa (in Webster's Second).