

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.

Several readers suggested additional mean words for Chris Cole's collection. Maxey Brooke knows "hundreds" of them: demi- words (demigod, midway between divinity and humanity), hemi- words (hemihydrate, midway between hydrate and anhydrate), meso- words (mesolithic, midway between paleolithic and neolithic), semi- words (semiconductor, midway between conductor and resistor), and sub- words (subconscious, midway between conscious and unconscious). He adds such common ones as black-gray-white, day-twilight-night, and rare-medium-well done. Len Gordon disputes Cole's assertion that mean words have been linguistically optimized out of existence; when the doctor says "Your blood pressure is a little high but otherwise you are normal" the last word conveys more meaning than any "extreme" word. There are fewer mean words because fewer are needed. The mean between acid and base might be salt as well as neutral. The mean between sharp and flat might be "in tune" or even "sweet" (the equal-tempered musical scale produces dissonances apparent to good jazz musicians, who correspondingly sweeten their tones). Leonard suggests other examples: ultraviolet-visible-infrared, subsonic-transonic-supersonic, hypomorph-mesomorph-hypomorph, microsplanchnic-normosplanchnic-macrosplanchnic, subdermal-intradermal-topical, electron-mesotron-proton, layman-paramedic-doctor, heavyweight-middleweight-lightweight, conductor-semiconductor-insulator, metal-metaloid-nonmetal, past-now-future, apogee-center-perigee, north-interpolar-south, good-indifferent-bad, liquid-plastic-solid, antebellum-wartime-postbellum. Leonard Gordon and Ed Wolpov answer Chris Cole's request for "normal-sighted" but in different ways: twenty-twenty or emmetropic. Ed Wolpov adds "if a word does not exist for it, medical custom prefixes eu- or normo- for the normal state; the overactive thyroid is hyperthyroid, underactive is hypothyroid, whereas the normal gland is euthyroid." He corrects Cole's pseudomonym: "the 'pre-' in preorbital refers to being ahead in space, not in time - being in front of the orbit. Postorbital (better, retroorbital) means being behind the orbit. So the mean word is intraorbital (within the orbit), or, even simpler, orbital."

Jeff Grant writes "SUBDERMATOGLYPHIC was interesting. A perfectly logical term all right, but was it 'coined' for the occasion? It certainly looks like it. Shades of BENZHYDROXYQUIN in my high-scoring Scrabble article! I once needed a French word for a 10-square, and couldn't find it anywhere. A French author (Perec?)

offered to include it in his upcoming novel! I politely refused. The concept of getting a coined/inferred word in print (no matter how reputable the source) doesn't seem quite satisfying to me. Nevertheless a 'word' must start somewhere, so good [for] Ed Wolpov for starting the ball rolling with this worthy example (though I fear some may feel it is just a case of DERMATOGLYPHIC BUNK)." Michael Helsem penned the following couplet to honor it: No one may blaspheme with immunity / Our subdermatoglyphic unity.

Peter Newby has beaten his existing record score in the 5-by-5 version of "Competitive Word Squares". In a contest with fellow Chesterfield **Word Ways** subscriber Julie Titchener, he achieved 57 points to her 40 using Chambers only (see below). However, this was exceeded by Sir Jeremy Morse in July 1961 in a game against his wife (below, at right) scoring 58.

G R A N D	6	E R R O R	6	S P L I T	6
H O W E R	6	W A S V A	3	C H I N A	6
A V A L E	6	K G R A N	4	R A V E N	6
N E K L Y	3	Y E L L D	4	U S E R S	6
D R E Y S	6	E D E N Y	4	B E R T H	6
6 6 6 6 6		3 6 x 4 6		6 6 6 6 4	

Ivy Dixon-Baird of Nottingham, England was inspired by Thomas Palumbo's "Nautical Creativity" to create a few more clever boat-names: GALLEY SLAVE (for a cook), OVERBORED (for an oil-rig worker), FATHOM IT OUT (for a word-puzzler), CUT THE DECK (for a croupier), BRIDGE THAT GAP (for a dentist), LIFEBOUY (for a ship's chandler) and ABANDON SHIP (for a musician).

B. Marck Rabbitbasket disputes Sir Jeremy Morse's list of rhymeless monosyllables in the February Colloquy: "KILNS rhymes with MILLS or MILNES, HAVES with HALVES, BILGE with MILGE (to be milged = Lat. *circumfodi*), ALB with (Bernard) KALB, COIF with LOIF and MOLF (if pronounced as spelled), PLAGUED with BAGGED, and CULM with (New) ULM." Puckishly, he suggests (without remorse) a coat of arms consisting of a morse wearing a cloak fastened with a morse the whole surrounded by the morse for "Morse". Doug Hoylman looks at Michael Helsem's words with only one rhyme (in Kickshaws) and asks "for Vienna/Sienna, how about antenna, Gehenna, and (as pronounced by its natives, of which I am one) Montana?" And "for cubic/pubic...how about Rubik['s cube]?"

Errata: Several readers noted that Cagliostro was consistently misspelled Cagliostoro in "The Case of the Wrong Answer". The fourth palindrome on page 48 should have read ANOMALY? LA! MONA. And on page 49, one of Helsem's palindromes should read SEX: EVERY GYRE VEXES, and DIDO is DODO. Apologies!

Jeff Grant writes "I thoroughly enjoyed Robert Funt's piece on the fabulous Edwin Fitzpatrick. Having been fooled by Peter Newby's spoof in the previous issue I was wary of this one, and when I saw that Fitzpatrick attended Baillol College (not Balliol) and was

inspired by the Rubaiyat (not Rubaiyat), I knew at once that these must be deliberate transposals giving a clue to the discerning reader that all is not as it appears. Next they'll be telling us that Professor Cloudesley and The Wombat are just figments of someone's imagination!" Edward Wolpow adds "Robert Funt's article on Edwin Fitzpatrick has the subtle flavor of a put-on..." and Dave Morice writes "The bio of 'Edwin Fitzpatrick' is great, not just because of its believability, but because of some of the concepts that Funt introduces regarding the form. I remember reading Bergerson's original introduction of EF, but if you hadn't reminded me, I might have thought he'd really existed. The discussion of EF's intention (on page 9) on meeting Edward Fitzgerald was very thought-provoking. And the line 'silence is the most consuming of all palindromes' is beautiful in its simplicity...the detail of the piece gives it its truth. If Edwin Fitzpatrick had not lived we would've had to invent him."

Leonard Gordon improves the **Word Ways** insertion-deletion ladder based on Webster's Pocket Dictionary to WORD-world-wold-old-gold-god-goad-gad-ad-wad-wads-was-WAYS. Using the OED, it can be shortened to WORD-world-wold-woald-woad-wad-wads-was-WAYS.

Dave Morice's Hermans ("She's my woman," said Herman) reminded Stanley Laite of St. John's, Newfoundland, of a family game called I'll Haves. What would an actor have in a restaurant? I'll have ham. A witch? I'll have steak. A jeweller? I'll have carrots. A playwright? I'll have Bacon.

Tom Pulliam is certain that all gaps in "A Classification of Metalleges" can be filled, but it is "coolie labor" to a large degree, "putting a high strain on these old eyes". To start the ball rolling:

8-letter: 1-7 nigerite-tigerine; 2-7 hallicet-hellicat; 2-8 barrette-berretta; 3-8 colorman-conormal; 4-8 Calendra-calandre*; 7-8 accouter-accoutre

9-letter: soda limes-modalises; 2-6 glavering-graveling; 2-8 reddleman-raddlemen; 2-9 adrogater-arrogated; 3-8 stoccatas*-staccatos; 3-9 modalizer-moralized; 4-8 dianetics-diacetins; 5-8 bersarker*-berserkar; 5-9 Katharine-Katherina; 7-8 backspeir-backspier

10-letter: 1-8 mistreader*-distreamer; 2-5 saggerings-seggarings; 2-7 blethering-bretheling*; 3-9 postliners*-portliness; 4-6 apperances*-apparences

Perhaps Darryl can verify the spelling MODALISES in some British dictionary! Asterisked entries are found in the OED; all others are Websterian.

Sir Jeremy Morse suggests for Q the following letter conundrum: What is the difference between Liberace's tailor and the letter Q? One makes a squat a suit, the other makes a suit a squat.

Writes Ed Wolpow "Another country called the United States is Brazil," answering Dave Morice's Kickshaws query.