COLLOQUY

Leonard Gordon has looked further into ways in which rearranged alphabets create various convergence-structures other than the Bergerson-Borgmann pentagon discussed in the August 1995 **Word Ways**. The February 1990 rearrangement leads to 38 self-referential number-names; Gordon convinced himself that there is in addition no loop of numbers to which certain number-names converge instead. Further, he noted that SEVENTY, EIGHTY and NINETY have no other number-names converging to them, SIXTY has only ELEVEN, and FIFTY has only ONE. However, the other 33 self-referential numbers each have an (effectively) infinite set of number-names converging to them.

Gordon found an alphabetic rearrangement (ABCDEFGHILNORSTUVY.X..W...) in which **all** number-names converge to 195. No doubt many other rearrangements also converge to a single number-name. He also found a rearrangement (....O..IEY..DFGGHLNRSTUVWX) in which all number-names but 90, which is self-referential, converge to the 41-step loop -327-389-338-371-348-344-334-361-320-305-254-306-252-295-318-309-253-321-340-270-287-339-354-332-350-268-333-376-369-342-323-384-345-328-379-370-313-325-363-364-349-. It's easy to program a computer to determine the convergence loops and self-referential number-names associated with a particular alphabetic rearrangement, and not too hard to ascertain which of these have only a finite number of number-names converging to them, but, as Gordon says, the algebra of discovering the maximum possible convergence loop or the maximum number of steps needed to converge would be a "horror". (By trial and error, he found a 28-step chain from a number-name as small as 579, but no doubt this can be exceeded.) These two problems would make good prize contests for, say, Games Magazine.

Richard Sabey adds the following to "Possessive Celebrities" in the August 1994 Kickshaws: Frederick's anger, Tod's laughter, George's hearing, Dame Ethyl's myth, Robert Kilroy's ilk, John's talker and Samuel's miles. He also likes examples where the 's stands for is: William's afire, General William's her man.

Sir Jeremy Morse notes that in "Alphabet Poems: A Brief History" the "Austrian army awfully arrayed" does not refer to the Crimean war. It was first published in The Trifler on May 7, 1817, ascribed to the Rev. B. Poulter and revised by Alaric A. Watts. He praises Nyr Indictor's piece for combining "logology, learning and humour".

Richard Sabey writes that David Morice's sentence "In 1987, I saw a solitaire fly past my window" in the August 1994 Kickshaws is entirely correct if one interprets a solitaire as a gemstone set by itself. Couldn't someone have thrown it so that it was visible to me?

Richard Sabey writes "You quote David Armstrong as saying '...the word-unit charade (for want of a better name)...' But what better name? I

would prefer new concepts to be named using elements from existing terminology, if this can be done in a logical fashion, than new jargon to be introduced. For example, the element -unit is useful in making names. In two articles both called 'Real Word Squares', Dmitri Borgmann (Nov 1968, p.225) and Leonard Gordon (May 1995, p.78) give the name 'real word square' to two different concepts. Borgmann's 'real word squares' could be named word-unit sentence squares, and Gordon's, frag-unit word squares'".

Rex Gooch comments on "Compound Fractions" in the May 1995 issue: "The etymology of [sericon] is uncertain, but I can make a guess, too. If I wanted to associate my alchemical enterprise with something mysterious and expensive to match my process and its end product, I might very well coin a word using a stem redolent of the mysterious Orient (land of the Seres), and of material so rare and expensive that there were edicts forbidding its use, sometimes even by nobles; a material that caused a scandal at the Roman court when worn by ladies (the world's first dry seric-gown competition?); and that was used to cement political ends in the form of presents at royal weddings. In English, silk."

Oops! A line was left out from "Alphomes". Replace line 6 with "formed from the particular set of letters. One of the early anagram dictionaries deserves a mention for the sheer ingenuity of its title..." In "Extending Francis" the word with weight 269 was SUPERSENSUOUSNESS, and the word with weight 296, THYMOLSULPHONEPHTHALEIN. In the May 1995 Kickshaws "Famous Feminist Onomastics", the example of Hanna-Barbera is incorrect. Finally, two graphs in Figure 15 of "Introduction to Word Graphing" in the February issue are wrong:

```
      Y                 D
  O P T I B         Z I O N
  V E R L           A T R E
    C S U             H Y P
```

Richard Sabey notes that in Britain the number names are written in the form "two hundred AND fifty-one", altering the convergence-properties of the number system. In particular, 251 and 259 are self-referential.

Both Sir Jeremy Morse and Peter Newby have wondered whether Nyr Indictor is a pseudonym. In **Word Ways**, pseudonymous authors never have residences following their names.

David Armstrong liked Susan Thorpe's discussion of alphomes and alphomic words -- "scholarly, as well as betraying a bit of impish wit" -- but could not let pass her use of POSSESSIONLESSNESSES (9 S's) without comment (found elsewhere in this issue). Sir Jeremy Morse suggested the addition ADDEEMST (an archaic inflection of an archaic verb) as a second-class match for AEGILOPS.

Richard Sabey restricts Peter Newby's Logomotives (Kickshaws, May 1994) more than Reinhold Aman does: the surname must pun a single word spelt the same way. Could Peter Cook? Can Stephen Fry? Was John Brown? Was Alexander Pope? Was Martin Luther King? Was Thomas Dunn English? Could

Frederic March? Was Jonathan Swift? Was Anthony Blunt? Is Diane Keen?
Was Brigham Young? Was John Gay? Is John Hurt? Does Bob Hope? Was Thomas
Hardy? Was Christopher Smart? There are more. It is possible to do
without added words altogether: Robert Burns, Samuel Smiles, Sir Arthur
Helps.

"New Punctuation, New Meaning" reminded Doug Hoylman of a Cole Porter
song whose title is particularly suited to repunctuation:

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What is this thing called "love"?
What! Is this thing called "love"?
What is this thing called, Love?
"What is this thing called?" "'Love'".
"What is this?" "Thing called 'love'".
"What is this thing?" called Love.
"What is," this thing called, "love"?
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Rex Gooch comments on "Abbreviations Without Ambiguities" in the May
issue: "An efficient scheme of abbreviations is almost always variable in
length...any abbreviation scheme must also be natural, simple and easy
to apply. One such scheme simply repeats the letters of the original
word until it is unambiguously different from all other words [in the
class]. [If] we separate the two-word states and simply use their
initial letters, the one-word states now become
Alab,Alas,Ari,Ark,Ca,Col,Con,D,F,G,H,Id,Il,In,Io,Ka,Ke,L,Mar,Mai,Mas,
Mic,Min,Missi,Misso,Mo,Neb,Nev,Oh,Ok,Or,P,Tex,Ten,U,Ve,Vi,Wa,Wi,Wy."
This averages 2.4 letters per state, not much worse than the (probably
unattainable) goal of 2 letters using a consistent set of rules.

In "Compound Fractions" in the May 1995 issue, Peter Newby called curium
(Cm) and neptunium (Np) intransmutable. Richard Sabey notes that
Neptunium can be transmuted in many ways, for example NoNpAr, TiNpLaTe,
UNpAcK, UNpIn, UNpOLiTe and UNpReTeNTiOUS. Curium is an ingredient in
LaCmOID, LaCmUS and PaRaCmAsIS. If the old-fashioned A is used for argon
then ACmAtIC, ACmEs, BLaNCmANGe, MoCmAIn and SOCmAN are possible.

The editor inadvertently omitted the four Salt Mine cards from the end
of the article "Non-Transitive Word Games". Also, it should be pointed
out on page 162 that Card O dominates Card B.

SALT	MINE	MANT	LIES
MINT	SALE	SINE	MALT
SANE	MILT	LAME	SNIT
MILE	STAN	LIST	NAME