

COLLOQUY

Paul Maxim's article in the present issue (and the ones in the August 1993 and August 1994 ones) rest upon an unverifiable proposition: the French writer Mallarme extensively used wordplay techniques to encode hidden messages in his works. If this is so, his article should be of considerable interest to French literary scholars; if not, the article still has value--as a demonstration of how densely one can pack information into an apparently-unrelated cover-text. Would it be possible for someone else to "discover" an entirely different hidden message with the same wealth of detail in the same text?

Jeff Grant was a member of the New Zealand team in the World Scrabble Championship in London in early November; 64 players from 31 countries participated. He writes "The Scrabble exceeded my expectations and I actually finished 3rd, behind Canadian David Boys and Joel Sherman [of the U.S.]. Quite a buzz! I played David 3 times and won 2/3, and only lost to Joel by 1 point, so it was very close."

Reinhold Aman of Maledicta (see back cover) writes "The artist of The Big Finnish illustration on the back cover of your November 1995 issue misspelled the Finnish word SAIPPUAKAUPPIAS. In addition to being a palindrome, this Finnish-looking word meaning 'soap dealer' actually is imported from German. Saippua is from German Seife 'soap' and kauppias from Käufer 'buyer, dealer' or kaufen 'to buy.'"

Max Maven writes "David Armstrong's essay...is cleverly wrought, but I do not feel his argument holds up under scrutiny. Mr. Armstrong concludes his argument with this example: 'Some people are poisoned by the same milk that nourishes others; it is not the milk but the individual reaction to it that is different.' While it is quite true that there are some people who have a potentially lethal allergic reaction to the normal milk that nourishes most of us, let's consider a different situation. Imagine two glasses before you, each containing milk--but one of those liquids has been adulterated with poison. Now, I would ask Mr. Armstrong, which of those milks would he choose to drink?" Susan Thorpe replies to David Armstrong "[Your] article makes a lot of sense. The noun possessionlessness is found in Webster's Second Edition below the line. As to whether or not it is fair game for pluralizing in matters of wordplay, it all depends on where you draw the line."

Oops! In "A Spooner-Assisted Ten-Square", James Mabber should be Mabbe, and "In Words of One Syllable" into (fourth paragraph) should be in. The fern-like moss in "The Anglo-American Hyphen" is spelled Hypnum. John Parr caught the Hanna-Barbera error in the May Kickshaws.

Peter Newby notes "Susan's 'Alphomes' article touched upon alphomic words which consist of letters confined to either 'half' of the alphabet but she had none which straddled the fulcrum. May I remedy this omission

withn the OED word NOP (a mattress stuffed with woollen waste) and which reverses to the apostrophied 'PON (as in 'pon my word)."

Susan Thorpe comments on "The Anglo-American Hyphen" as follows: "I have reservations about agreeing with his description of UU words as being rare. UU itself is an old form of yew and, by admitting old forms, it is not difficult to discover in excess of one hundred UU words. Here on a trip down alphabet lane are just a few of them. All are in the OED except those with an asterisk which are in Webster's Second Edition: ahuula*, bestuur, couuienales, duumvirate, euuela, (ignis) fatuus, grouue, huus, individuum, juu, kouuele, lituus, menstruum, neuu, obliquus*, puuk(k)o, quart, residuum, stuue, triduum, uuen, ventriloquus, yuu, zuur-veldt." She questions Peter Newby's contention that among British dictionaries only Collins unhyphenates WW-words: the OED contains bawways, hollowwort, mawworm, powwow, swallowwort and saw-wort (written saw-wort in Collins!).

"Some Men Enjoy Oysters" inspired Jeremy Morse to create the following: With their irredeemable lesser errata, tabloid ideologues escape penalty. Typical alternative vehicles establish shade--Democrat atmosphere, Republican angle, Leftist (Stalinist) stucco, Conservative veneration. One never eradicates established editorial allegiances.

John Parr reports that the *Children's Encyclopedia* unequivocally states that the dog's name was "Take" (The King's Riddle, May Kickshaws).

Christopher McManus writes that the obvious fix for the LEMON-MELON reversal pair on the back cover of the August 1995 issue is NO LEMON and NO MELON. No messy white-out--just write NO in green ink above each offending word!

Mike Morton proposed several anagrammable names, three of which turned up in the 1992 edition of the ProCD national telephone directory: Colin Nicol (2), Lena Neal (6), and Norma Roman (4). Too bad Enoch Cohen doesn't seem to exist!