As my recent contributions to Word Ways show, I enjoy graphing. But, one day I got bored with long words which I would never use in writing or speech. Somehow, I thought of graphing proverbs. Here is a sample.

The reader is no doubt familiar with king and queen graphing (placing the different letters of a word on a chessboard in such a way that one can trace out the word by king's move or queen's move in chess). My original plan was to use king graphing only. However, the words in many proverbs do not all connect. Sometimes words like OF or IS or WILL don't make it. For some cases, I mixed in a second (related) proverb. This worked sometime, but the pair often became too much for a king graph. So, I shifted to queen graphing. Finding these challenging, I searched out longer proverbs, and now a new problem arose. I planned to present graphs as "decipher" puzzles but some are nearly impossible to decipher. So, I present them in a way that can be adapted to search-a-word puzzles.

I have a computer program for king graphing. A potential graph was first laid out in rough form with pencil and paper. The guts were then entered into the computer program letter by letter until I recognized that a king graph was or was not possible. If it was, I usually let the computer finish, but sometimes completed the picture using tiles on a checkerboard. If a king graph was not possible, I tried to extend the king graph nucleus to a queen graph, again using tiles on a checkerboard. Often, all that was needed to complete a queen graph was an offset of one or two tiles; other times quite a bit of manipulation was needed. Occasionally a queen graph was not possible. For either type of graph, tiles were sometimes shifted to make the final form compact and/or symmetrical.

Some of these proverbs (or sayings or cliches) are not politically correct (a woman's place...) today. Those of Irish origin are easily recognized by the pugnacious tone. The proverb about the crows is of Scottish origin. Rooster-chicken analogies usually indicate a Spanish origin. Many proverbs appear in collections from several languages.

To illustrate the game, the following graphs may be read as "all that glitters is not gold", "big fish eat little fish" and "a graph a day keeps boredom away". The page preceding the graphs lists the proverbs to be searched for or taken as hints in deciphering. The Answers and Solutions keys each proverb on the list to the number accompanying its
A limitation of both king graphs and queen graphs is that there can be no more than eight joins to a letter. With proverbs, that limit often occurs with the letter O, caused by DO NOT and/or YOU. DO NOT can be replaced with DON'T but I have avoided all contractions in this article. Often this replacement is of no value because some word like TOMORROW also calls for the TO join. The proverb "do not take love for granted or you will lose it" became graphable when YOU was replaced with YE, as shown below. The proverb "they speak of my drinking, but never of my thirst" became queen graphable when OF was replaced with ABOUT.

I noticed that the letters in graph 309 are all on the same color squares of a checkerboard, allowing me to reform the graph to the one on the right below. This is related to making ordinary search-a-word puzzles. The best plan there is to make two separate rectangular crossword arrays, convert each to a diagonal array, and intermix by placing each on a separate color. Then add connecting words orthogonally as you can. King graphs are actually search-a-word graphs if one considers each bigram to be a two-letter word.

001 A leopard cannot change his spots
002 A man's tongue has often broken his nose
003 A shut mouth makes no enemies
004 A woman's place is at home

graph. There are 61 proverbs on the list which are to be located in 51 different graphs. King graphs are in general more difficult to decipher than queen graphs because the tightness allows more false leads. It is possible that some graphs may include unplanned proverbs.
| 056 | There is no honor among thieves |
| 057 | There is no fool like an old fool |
| 058 | Too many cooks spoil the broth |
| 059 | Words are to be weighed, not counted |
| 060 | You cannot teach an old dog new tricks |
| 061 | You reap what you sow |
Mabuya mabuya
Macrophyllum maena
Maena maena (b)
Malleus malleus
Manacus manacus
Margaritifera m.
Marmota marmota
Martes martes (a)
Mascarinus macrurus
Melanoderma melamys
Meles meles (e)
Melo melo (Ind.)
Melolontha melolontha
Melongena melongena
Menidia menidia
Mephitis mephitis
Mercenaria mercenaria
Meretrix meretrix
Merluccius merluccius
Microchaetus micropus
Microperca microps
Milvus milvus (f)
Mitra mitra (epi)
Mitu mitu (razor)
Mobula mobula (a)
Modiolus modiolus
Modulus modulus
Mogurnda mogurnda
Mola mola (oce.
Volossus volossus
Volva volva (Irish
Monachus monachus
Moniliformis moniliformis
Mora mora (an
Norgurnda norgurnda
Multiceps multitentaculatus
Mustelus mustelus
Myotis myotis (c)
Naja naja (cobra
Nandus nandus
Nasua nasua (c)
Natrix natrix (g)