

THE OZ CONTRADICTIONARY: PART 1

“ANIL”

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“Anil” is the pen name of Dr. Charles Melton, a retired Oz (Australian) biologist who privately published in 1999 a 98-page booklet, up/dn, a dictionary and contradictionary of wordplay including anagrams, palindromes and charades. Word Ways will present excerpts from his book in this issue and future ones.

Welcome to the mixed-up world of anagrams and their playmates. It’s an up and dn world any way you look at it, like life itself. Anagrams, just as the languages they play with, can produce uppers and downers, be good or bad, happy or sad, reassuring or provocative, optimistic or cynical, charming or offensive, pious or obscene, surprising or boring, funny or serious, obvious or obscure. The best I’ve come up with are presented here, covering this whole gamut (including boring!).

In addition to entertaining word and pun lovers, this collection aims to argue by example that anagramming is a legitimate art form or tool for creative writing. In the 17th century anagrams were the literary passion of the day. Lindon and Bergerson view palindromes and charades as literary chess. Despite--or because of--the strictures they impose, anagrams can throw up fresh, incisive expressions and imagery that probably wouldn’t have arisen otherwise. (**Incompetent art! Impotent nectar! Amateurishness! He misuses an art!**)

Part A of the book is a straightforward dictionary of “definitive” anagrams, palindromes, charades and polyanagrams. These are compound anagrams, multiple anagrams of a word or phrase strung together to make a longer phrase or sentence, as illustrated by

An Anagram Dictionary a mad array containing | anagram candy I ration | a contrary mind. A gain? A | damn ya? Or a craniating | anatomy racing a drain | in a dancy anagram riot!

Part B, for literate adults, shows that anagrams can be made to say or do almost anything. This may require great effort of course and occasional license. (I hold licenses in creative spelling, nonce usage and coinage, awkward sentences, and ana-grammar.) The **ana-grammer’s sin**, insane grammars, **stirs up** purists. In addition to liberties of form, other features of the book may be offensive to some readers, including some pomography, a mixture of silliness and serious message, some mysticism and other radical or outre opinions--presented not to “convert” but to illustrate the expressive or communicative power of anagrams.

ANAGRAMS a “mar” sang [short for marred word]

abandonment Madonna bent [the non-virgin Madonna, self-styled paragon of abandonment]

accommodating “command, I go act”

adversary arrayed vs.
asteroids i.e., star sod [are asteroids star piles?]
basics is ABC's
carcinogens so cancering
decomposer corpse mode
deus ex machina a man hid excuse
the diploma i.e., MA, PhD lot
El Dorado lode road
expectorations spit (O no--excreta) [the technical mind spits on the vulgar expression]
flinched inch-fled
genealogist got lineages
glissando a slid song
identification "I" definition act
libido id boil
lingam, the male "thing" [a stylized phallic symbol, emblem of the god Siva]
loathsome hate looms
maize I'm *Zea* [*Zea* is the genus of corn]
mousetrap to pare *Mus* [*Mus* is the mouse genus]
obsolescent bones closet
oversexed eros-vexed
profusion if pours on
purchasing ungrasp cash
reflections self-noticer [mirror gazes; contemplation or introspection; recursion feedback]
shallow show all
slow readers lore's waders
smokescreen sense mocker
under stress stern duress
unsettles nettles us
urgent "Run! Get!"

ANTONYMS many nots
admit dam it
aspired despair
enormity or tiny me
firm "Mr. If"
gets a lot got least
the ignoramus or math genius
immediately I'm time delay
lowlands all downs [downs are rolling hills are uplands]
revoke OK ever
sainted stained
saintly nastily
scolded coddles
sea lords sod earls
unties unites