

COLLOQUY

Jim Puder writes "Regarding Anil's comments on my article "Foldedness Factor in Letter Arrays," recall that the experiment was to compare the numbers of words accidentally formed in the letter arrays produced when the same sequence of letters was inscribed in grids of the same size with varying degrees of foldedness. Because words which were already embedded in the original letter sequence were not formed accidentally in the array, they were not counted in the results. As Anil points out, this exclusion skews the results in favor of the more-folded patterns, since the less-folded ones contain more of these embedded words, whose exclusion leaves correspondingly less space in the arrays of the less-folded patterns for accidental words to form. But this skewing is not a flaw in the experiment's design; rather, it is an aspect of the phenomenon being studied. Actually, it mattered not at all whether the letter sequence chosen for this experiment contained any embedded words or not; longer straight-line segments of the sequence in the arrays constituted space partially lost for new-word formation regardless of content. The fact is that when any letter sequence is inscribed in a grid, no new words can be formed along the line of the sequence until it is either folded or disjoined; that is the basis of the "foldedness factor" whose effects the experiment attempted to discern. Inscription patterns of differing degrees of foldedness were employed in the expectation that, if the effects of the foldedness factor were observable on this scale, they would be more pronounced in the more-folded patterns. The experiment was not to demonstrate the existence of this factor, which was assumed, but to see if its effects would be potent enough to be apparent in a 10x10 array. A finding that the most-folded patterns yielded the highest new-word counts could be taken as strong indirect proof that it was indeed the effects of the foldedness factor being observed.

Sir Jeremy Morse sent along the following 6x6 pangrammatic crossword (not of his composing) in which all the words can be found in Chambers. He also notes a pangrammic list from C.H.R. Thorn's *Complete Crossword Reference Book* (London, 1936) which under Mythology lists 350 gods beginning with all 26 letters of the alphabet.

C	H	F	M
L		D	O
A	X	Z	R
N		G	Y
K	J		T
S	Q	U	I
		B	

In "Shiftgrams Revisited" Darryl Francis incorrectly credits Dmitri Borgmann with the invention of shiftgrams. The article in the February 1969 Word Ways, "Sea-Changed Words," was actually written by Howard Bergerson. Susan Thorpe, author of "Shiftgrams: My Deft Ruse" in the February 1996 issue, constructed several based on Word Ways authors: ROSS + 23 = PLOP, M.KEITH + 7 = PATROL, CONTI + 20 = WINCH, GRANT + 13 = AGENT, C.COLE + 16 = BUSES, DMITRI + 11 = CO-TEXT, THORPE + 15 = WIDGET, and MORICE + 22 = YANKIE (as in Yankie Doodle). By the way, WORDWAYS + 12 = PAID MIKE.

Peter Mabey notes that BUCKFASTLEIGH is the longest isogrammatic placename in English. He says "I have often thought it would be nice to acquire a plot of land there, and dig a hole which I could fill with water so I could own MY BUCKFASTLEIGH POND—twenty different letters of the alphabet!"

Dan Tilque offers the following improvements to Darryl Francis's "The Alphabet Cube and Beyond": BATS/STAB = 36.06, ABUT/TUBA = 38.00, DRAY/YARD = 38.21, BRAY/YARB = 40.25, DRAWER/REWARD = 41.21, and REVOTES/SETOVER = 3.16 (close word pair).

Rex Gooch notes that the NIMA database has a different version of Jeff Grant's 85-letter New Zealand placename: TAUMATAWHAKATANGIHANGAKOAUOTAMATEATURIPUKAK-APIKIMAUNGAHORONUKUPOKAIWHENUAKITANATAHA, with only 83 letters. He adds "Susan Thorpe says that Noah will not admit more than two of a given consonant to the ark. This is a serious conservation issue. I had a word with his Boss, and even if zoologists do not see the danger, we both easily grasp that this is a high-risk strategy from a genetic as well as statistical viewpoint, not to mention the psychological trauma of inmates being forced to associate so closely with the one aardvark (or whatever) they most detest. Susan should consult Noah again after his Boss has had words." He also notes two errata: on page 261, the Q in the second crossword should be a space to the right, and on page 262, "up" should not have been boldfaced.

Ed Wolpov writes "Mark Isaak's pangram challenge #2 is improved, at least a little, by looking at the list of Languages in the 4th edition of Roget's Thesaurus (1977), [containing a] pangram list numbering 408. I raised the question of a 'lipolist' in a Kickshaw some years ago: 26 lists, each missing one letter of the alphabet. After J,Q,X,Z it gets very difficult."

Chris Cole writes "In 'Shiftgrams Revisited' in the latest issue notes that [the editor] predicted that a 12-letter shiftgram should exist, but states that one has not yet been found. He overlooks the pair PENTADACTYLE-PRECIPITANTS with a shift of 15, listed in my book *Wordplay, A Curious Dictionary of Language Oddities* (Sterling, 1999)." The first word is found in Webster's Second as a variant of PENTADACTYL, having five fingers or toes.

Darryl Francis extends his May 2001 article "Fifteen-Letter Transdeletion Pyramids" based on words in LeXpert. Changing to a mixture of Webster's Third and the OED (the first two words), Darryl has constructed the following 18-letter transdeletion pyramid

PRESENTATIONALISMS
PRESENTATIONALISM
MALPRESENTATIONS
MALPRESENTATION
PRESENTATIONAL
SEPTENTRIONAL
PENETRATIONS
SEPTENTRION
PRETENSION
INTERPOSE
PIONEERS
OPENERS
PERSON
PROSE
ROPE
ROE
RE

Anil adds a couple of new high crash definitive word ladders to his article "Meaningful Word Ladders" in the August Word Ways:

Icon I don **idol** (Don means 'wear' as a belief or symbol)

Want. Went West, wist **wish** (Wist means 'knew' [Arch.]; West is an arbitrary example of an objective)

He notes that the last item in "Consonant Cascades" can be expanded to

Vying-tying, lying, eying dying by my Ky.Ry. (distracted from work by nostalgic reverie)

And finally he supplies some new "Word Stools":

Definitives (or strong affinities)

Blush. Flush.

candlestick candle's wick

Delegate. Relegate.

Red "rad"

Clear. Clean.

Consent. Content.

Get. Net.

snore Snort.

colonial coronial

"[I must] **Dart.**" Part.

Pall. Pale.

together to gather

Antonyms (or complements)

and... ...end

leadership readership

wildness mildness

Elect. Eject.

Present. Prevent.

reputation refutation

lad's lass'

Save. Gave.

Truck. Trunk.

Doubles

green greed [(antonyms (ecology, 'synonyms' (envy))]

Vail. Veil. [synonyms (obs. spelling of veil), antonyms (Vail is an unrelated verb with an archaic meaning of taking off one's hat in respect, an 'unveiling')]

Other Cognates

"arrangement" arraignment!

"Lay?" "Pay!"

the prize the price

bankers wankers!

mendacity mendicity

squeak squeal

Buick quick

pub hub

Mendacity and mendicity are not cognates but often equated by arrogant non-mendicants. Notice that Consent Content can be extended to the word ladder antonym **Contest.** Content, **consent**, and similarly Save Gave can be extended to **Gave.** Save, **have** (also a Consonant Cascade).