

COINCIDENTAL SELF-SYNONYMY

ANIL

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The February 2003 Kickshaws (03-54) defined **self-synonymy** as two synonyms--if any exist--that are spelled the same but are unrelated etymologically. David Silverman in an earlier Kickshaws (74-108) stated that if two words are homographic (and homophonic) synonyms they must be the same word. This seemingly obvious dictum would be refuted by a self-synonym pair. They're the same but not same. David Morice compared this idea to a linguistic Möbius strip. Schizograms is another apt name for such split personalities, but that coinage I reserve for coincidental **contronyms** (part III), where it applies doubly.

To search for such convergent evolution, I've examined every word with two or more bold listings in the Macquarie Australian Dictionary, Rev.3rd '01 (Mq) for meaning affinity and etymological difference. Hits were cross-checked in Chambers Dictionary of Etymology '88 (CDE), Random House Unabr. '66 (RH), Webster NI 3rd '61+add.'86 (W3), Webster's New Twentieth Century Unabr., World, '47 (NTC) and as many as appear in Encyclopedia of Word and Phrase Origins '97 Facts on File: NY (EWO) and the Cassel Dictionary of Slang '98 (CDS). When these sources disagree I tend to favour Mq and CDE, presuming they reflect more recent research, which ain't necessarily so. Some of the uses noted are missing altogether in the older dictionaries. And of course some of the mostly IndoEuropean pairs below may be related 'pre-dictionary'. For readers not interested in etymology I offer a more philosophical question: why are you here?

I. SELF-SYNONYMY or Polysynonymy

The search turned up a great many cases of self-affinity, of which a few seem to qualify as actual self-synonyms. I'm surprised and gratified there were any. Synonymy may involve only certain secondary usages of some words. Check your dictionary if you have doubts. But no two words can share all of each other's subtleties. In many cases (Ib) the bigger question is whether they are truly unrelated or simply doublets (same root, different route into English).

Ia. Unrelated (?) [< = from, ?< = possibly from, <? = origin uncertain, > = akin to, compare]

<u>word</u>	<u>common meaning</u>	<u>root 1</u>	<u>root 2</u>
halt	Pause.	Stop, pause. <G <i>halt</i> hold	Falter, hesitate. <OE <i>healt</i> <Gmc <i>lame</i>
loop	circle, hole	closed line w. opening inside >Gael./Ir. <i>lub</i> bend	small opening, peephole or 'loophole' ?<MD <i>lupen</i> peer
net	Obtain.	Profit, clear, nett. <neat <F/Ir.	Capture in net. <OE/Gmc. <i>net</i> ?<L <i>nodus</i>
parting	departing	<Part. (see dart in V)	in "parting shot" < <i>Parthian(s)</i> , warriors who fired backward as they retreated
pen	escape-proof enclosure	for convicts <penitence <L [1 <penitentiary but "influenced	for animals <OE <i>pen(n)</i> <? by" 2 (CDE)--a deliberate self-synonym!]
policy	program, rules	plan of action <L <i>politia</i> polity [W3 agrees with two roots but	insurance policy <ML <i>apodixa</i> receipt says 2 influenced by 1. (see above)]

prized	of treasure	Praised. <L <i>pretiare</i> >price	Pri(s/z)ed booty. <L <i>prehendre</i> capture
rapt	keenly absorbed in [2 is a recent contraction of wrapped, only in Mq]	carried away by <L <i>raptus</i> carried off >rape, rapture	<wrapped up in <wrap < <i>wry</i> obs. vb to cover + <i>lappe</i> ME vb to fold 3rd, not 2nd ('87). Modelled on 1?]
root	Unearth.	Pull up from the soil by the roots. <OE/Icel. <i>rot</i>	Turn up soil with the snout. <OE <i>wrot</i> snout [2 influenced by 1 (CDE)]
rout	Drive out.	Defeat. <L <i>rupta</i> broken	Root out. <snout (see above)
sen	Asian coins	Jap. <Mand. <i>qian, ch'ien</i> coin	four different SE Asian coins, all <cent
		[RH gives only two of 2, calling them native names, implying a triple coincidence. See chine in II.]	
un	person	one <dialect	him <hin <he [in W3 only]
un-	undoing prefix	of negation <L <i>in-</i> , Gk <i>an-</i>	of reversal, removal <L <i>ante-</i> , Gk <i>anti-</i> [2 ?<influenced by 1 (CDE)]

Ib. Possibly Related

conductor	leader	director <L	Malaysian labour supervisor <Pg.
		[2 is only in Mq 3rd. Its Portuguese origin suggests it's the same word as 1 or at least a doublet.]	
dash	Confound.	"Confound (it)!" <damn	<ME <i>dasshe</i> >Scan. <i>daska</i> flap, slap
		[W3 lists damn in 2; in RH 1<d--n, euphemism for damn ie <the punctuation mark=same root as 2.]	
indent	Indent.	Depress, dint. < <i>in-</i> + <i>dent</i> ¹	Make a recess in (coastline, paragraph).
		[1=2, CDE only] <ME <i>dente</i> dint, hollow	< <i>en</i> + <i>dent</i> ² F<L <i>dens</i> tooth (see III)
jowl	cheek	jaw, cheek <OE <i>ceafl</i> jaw	hog cheek meat <OE <i>ceole</i> throat
		[1 and 2 may have a common	precursor in ME <i>jol</i> head (CDE only).]
pick,	pointed	perforator <ME <i>pyke</i> , OE	pickax <ME <i>pikk</i> , OE <i>pic</i> ?>pink
pike	tools	<i>picung</i> prick >peck	(See spike, prick in IV, pick, pike in V.)
		[Pink, pick, peck, pike, spike and prick all sound related but mostly aren't. Only W3 says 2 ?<1.]	
pike	Leave. (slang)	Let down, abandon, pike out on. <ME <i>pyke</i> ?<Dan. <i>pigge</i>	Depart quickly. ?<turnpike <late ME
		[Besides Mq, 1 is only in CDS	<i>tournepike</i> road barrier, tollgate which seems to equate it with 2.]

The following five are possibly related in two or all of CDE, W3 and NTC:

soil	dirt	earth <L <i>solum</i> ground	smudge, stain <L <i>sus</i> pig.
stark	utter	sheer <G/Icel. strong	stark naked <ME <i>start</i> <OE <i>steort</i> butt [RH, EWO only. In others 2=1 or unlisted.]
think	Use brain.	Cogitate, have in mind. <OE <i>thencan</i> <D/G <i>denken</i> .	Seem, appear. (in methinks) <OE <i>thyncean</i> ?<G <i>dünken</i> seem
whisk	Brush rapidly.	Sweep rapidly. <late ME <i>quhiske</i> <Scot. <Scan. wipe	Whip with a straw brush. <ME <i>wisk</i> ?<Icel./G wisp of straw
will	Wish/plan to.	(auxil. vb) Would, shall. <OE <i>wyllan</i> ?<D/G <L <i>velle</i> wish	Choose deliberately, think into being. <OE <i>will(a)</i> <Gmc volition

II. COINCIDENTAL **SELF-AFFINITY** or Homographic Cognates

A much larger number of word twins bear similarities of meaning but fall short of being synonyms. Another two dozen pairs matching as well as these were omitted because they were not the same parts of speech, verb tenses or voices. * 1=2, or partly so, in NTC / ** ditto in NTC and W3

word	common theme	root 1	root 2
ajar	not right/tight	half open <on char	at variance, out of harmony <at jar
amice	clerical garb	collar, drape <L	hood or cape <Ar./Gmc v.<MF almuce
approve	Be favourable.	OK, pass. <L <i>approbare</i>	Improve (legal). <MF <i>aprouer</i> profit
arm	extended reach	weapon <OF/L tool	limb it's an extension of <pan-IE join
base*	bottom	physical <L/Gk <i>basis</i> pedestal	moral <ML <i>bassus</i> low
bit	smallest iota	jot <OE <i>bita</i> bite, morsel	computer data <b(inary dig)it [Pun on 1?]
braze*	brass	make, cover with <OE <i>bræsiān</i>	solder (with) brass ?<F <i>brasier</i> live coals
broil	'Heat.' (see IV)	Cook by direct heat.	Embroid in a heated quarrel.
chine	ridge/edge	1. rock ravine <chink <crevice 3. protruding rim of barrel <chime <ME <i>chimb</i> <edge	2. ridge, backbone <MF <i>eschine</i> ?<shin
[This is the only case of a grammatically-same triple affinitive--except for the unlikely sen in Ia.]			
clamp	Press firmly.	Tread heavily. <clump<imit.	Hold down.<G/D <i>klampe</i> cleat (see V)
cob*	bird	male swan <Scan. <i>kubbi</i> lump	gull, cobb ?<D <i>kob</i>
cot*	abode	bed <Hind. <i>khat</i>	cottage ?<Icel. <i>kot</i> hut
dale	stretch of land	valley (see V)	piece of land <OE <i>dal</i> deal, portion
defer	Put off.	Delay. <L <i>differre</i> differ	Put off onto another. <L <i>deferre</i> carry off
dilly	unusual	queer, crazy <daft+silly v.?<dill	remarkable<delightful/darling/delicious
fellah	ordinary person	fellow <Scan. cattle, partner	peasant, labourer <Ar. husbandman
flight	going off	flying <OE <i>flyht</i> > <i>fleogan</i> fly	fleeing <OE <i>fleon</i> Both Gmc.
fold	Enclose.	...in an animal pen <OE <i>falod</i>	Wrap. <OE <i>faldan</i> fold, double over
forge	Make. (see V)	Fabricate.<L <i>fabrica</i> workshop	Make steady progress.<? [?<1 (CDE)]
found	'Create.'	Set up. <L bottom	Mold molten metal. <L pour, melt
fudge	non-truth	fake, cheat <fadge ?<OE <i>gefæg</i> fit, OK [2 ?<1 in CDE]	nonsense ?<LG <i>futsh</i> begone [v. EWO <G <i>futch</i> no good + a liar, Cpt. Fudge]
gig	Poke at.	Taunt. <Br./US colloq. <? [provoke	Spear. < <i>fizgig</i> <Sp.harpoon or v. poke (anagram)]
gob	mouthful	lump<ME <i>gobe</i> , <i>gobbet</i> lump, mouthful <OF/Gallic >gobble	the mouth, spit <Br. colloq. ?<Ir./Gael. [v.2 ?<1 (CDE)]
hatch	opening	of eggs <Scan./G <i>hecken</i>	trap door <OE <i>hæc</i> gate
hoick	sudden rise	Hoist abruptly. ?<hike [Sounds to me like hoist+quick.]	Clear throat and spit up. <hawk <imit.
hold	container	pen (eg) <OE <i>healdan</i> <Gmc	sub-deck, cargo hold <hole ?<infl. by 1
housing	cover, shelter	building <OE/Icel./Goth <i>hus</i>	horse cloth ?<OF <i>houce</i> mantle [=1 (W3)]
jam	crowd	(log, traffic) jam ?<imit. ?< champ, chomp	music jam <Mandingo/Wolof <i>jama</i> crowd [Mq, CDS v. 2<1 in RH, W3, CDE]
jib	Move laterally back and forth.	animal balking ?<OF kick [v. ?<2 in W3]	sailboat jibe ?<Dan. <i>gibbe</i> , D <i>gijben</i>
keel**	ship spines	ship part <Scan. <i>kjölr</i>	keeled barge <MD <i>kiel</i> ?<OE <i>ceol</i> ship
kit	container	tool/parts case ?<MD/Nor. jug	woven basket <Maori <i>kete</i>
launch*	boating	floating of a boat <ONF lance	a boat <Sp. <i>lancha</i> <Malay [?sp. infl. by 1]
lush	"juicy"	tender ?<luscious, OE/OF loose	loose, 'juiced' drunk ?<Lushington club
matted	not smooth	tangled (cover) <mat <L<Sem.	dull surface <mat ?<L <i>mattus</i> sot stupid

meal	food	a feed <OE <i>mæl</i> a set time	a milled food <OE <i>melu</i> <mill
mole	fleshy surface blemishes	on the skin <OE <i>mal</i> ?<OHG blemish	on uterine wall (a dead ovum) <L <i>mola</i> false conception, millstone
mole	mammals, furry things	burrowing insectivore <MD/ MLG <i>mol</i> <earth, tosser	woman, Oz colloq.<moll <Molly, Mary [+ analogy w. slang "beaver", her furry bit]
mow	grass-related	Cut it down. <OE <i>mawan</i>	Stack mowed heaps. <OE <i>muga</i> swath
nap	sleeping	a snooze <OE <i>hnappian</i>	bedroll, Oz colloq.<nap, cloth fuzz <OE <i>hnoppa</i> <pluck <infl. by knapsack
nave	middle part	of a church <ME/L <i>navis</i> ship	of a wheel <OE <i>nafu</i> hub <navel
ooze*	fluid	juice <OE <i>wos</i> juice<slow flow	soft mud, slime <OE <i>wase</i> mud
paddle*	Cut water	Row, oar ?<ML <i>padela</i>	Dabble/swim in water.<?, ?<Gmc tramp
pall	Displease.	Gloom-cover.<L <i>pallium</i> cloak	Make wearisome, distasteful. <appall
patter*	rapid beat	rapid speech <pater, reciting the paternoster	rapid patting <pat (see spatter in IV) [Is spewing out words a spitter spatter?]
pip	reproduction	a plant rootstock <spot <?	a seed <pippin, apple type
poles	linearity	long rods <L <i>palus</i> stake	axis of sphere <L <i>polus</i> pole, axis, pivot
pool	collection	of liquid <OE <i>pol</i> <Gmc/Celt.	of cars etc <F <i>poule</i> stakes <hen
pounce	Treat surfaces.	Emboss metal. ?<punch	Sandpaper hats. <L <i>pumex</i> pumice
press	Force.	Weigh upon.<L <i>pressare</i> press	Force into military service. <prest (by confusion w. l?) <L <i>præstare</i> pre-pay
prop	holder up	support.<ME/MD <i>proppe</i> <?	propeller <propel <L <i>propellere</i>
pry	Try to open.	Lever.<prise, prize (see Ia(1))	Delve, pry out info. <ME <i>prien</i> peer <?
purl	curl (see V)	an eddy ?<Nor. <i>purla</i> bubble up, gush	a looping, inverted knitting stitch ?<obs. <i>pirl</i> twist into cord, v. ?<purfle <thread
rack	violence	strain, torture <ME <i>rekke</i> <MD	destruction <wrack <ME <i>wrak</i> wreck
rate	Judge.	Evaluate. <L <i>rata</i> ratio <judge	Cast judgement on. ?<Sw. <i>rata</i> reject
repose*	Rest.	Lie at rest.<L <i>repausare</i> pause	Let (trust eg) rest in.<L <i>repositus</i> replace
rim	perimeter (n) re " (vb)	(a) an edge <OE <i>rima</i> (b) Form a rim. <(a) (see 03-54, original example)	(b) peritoneum <ligament [W3, NTC only] (b) Ream, enlarge hole rim. <open up [Both ?<L <i>ripa</i> steep bank in W3, CDE]
river	carver	Agitate.<?, ?<rush >repel	Upbraid. <roust, shout [in Mq, CDS only]
rouse	Stir, fuss.	for weight <OE <i>scealu</i> shell, a balance pan <Gmc <i>skal(a)</i>	for short distances, other scalar quantities <L <i>scalae</i> stairs, ladder, climb
scales	graduated measure	shoal of fish <OE/D troop, band	of students <L <i>schola</i> leisure(!) <Gk
school	a group	Rub clean. <Scan. rub &/or <D <L <i>excurare</i> clean	Search.<ME speed ?<OF/Nor. run ?<Icel. <i>skur</i> storm >shower
scour	Traverse thoroughly.	Slide, be slippery.<escape	Apply potter's slip. <slime ?>slop ?>1
slip*	slickness	Express disdain.(obs.) <MD <i>snuffen</i> snuffle, turn up nose at	Kill (colloq), snuff out as a candle, thing of no value.<ME <i>snoffe</i> <?, ?<Sw. snip
snuff	Disvalue.	steeple <OE spike, shoot >G/D <i>spier</i> ?>spine >spear, spar	coiled structure <L <i>spira</i> coil [eg, most spiral shells have a conical shape]
spire	conical structure	a brace <OF <i>estayer</i> support [Stay (vb, to remain <L <i>stare</i> stand) >1 in CDE, W3,	a mast rope/wire <ME <i>stey</i> <G/D <i>stag</i> ?> both in Mq, RH and ?> neither in NTC!]
stay*	steadier, stiffener	Be fertile, bear. <OE <i>t(i)eman</i> offspring >team	Pour, rain hard. <OE <i>tom</i> free from <Scan. <i>tomr</i> to empty (see also III)
teem*	Be prolific.	total <L so much, entire, v.< mark on a list (see also III)	small amt. (orig. a child) ?<totterer v. <?Icel. <i>tottr</i> dwarf v. other theories
tot	a quantity	market gardener <truck, trade beneath <L <i>infra</i>	food truck driver <wheel <Gk pulley <run amidst <L <i>inter</i> [CDE only, 1=2 in rest]
trucker	trade delivery		
under**	under		

vent	opening	aerating hole <let out air (see V)	aerating slit in coat <slit [?<infl.by 1 (W3)]
wind	direction(n,vb)	tendency, trend OE air flow	Change direction, curl, wend <OE <i>windan</i>
wrinkle	a fold, twist	furrow <OE <i>gewrinclod</i> wind	twist <OE <i>wrenc</i> wrench, turn, trick,
		round, serrate ?<wring >wrench	new idea [2=1 (incl.OE) in CDE, W3]
yard	practical geometry	space measure <OE <i>g(i)erd</i>	area of ground <OE <i>geard</i> enclosure
		<Gmc twig, spear, rod	>D <i>gaard</i> garden

III. COINCIDENTAL **CONTRONYMY** or Schizogrammic Schizogrammy (double cross: #)

Self-synonyms were first conceived ('03-54) as the opposite or complement of **self-antonyms** or contronyms. So it's relevant to this article that some contronyms are also unrelated. The majority of the nearly a hundred words or phrases that have appeared in WW as contronyms over the years have related origins. The first five below don't. The rest here I believe are new. This is a complete list, all unrelated contronyms with separate listings in Mq. But declaring contronyms is subjective.

<u>word</u>	<u>meaning, root 1</u>	<u>opposite or complement, root 2</u>
cleave	Split.<OECleofan >G <i>klieben</i>	Adhere. <OE <i>cleofian</i> >G <i>kleben</i>
clip	Cut. <Scan. <i>klippa</i> cut	Clutch, bind. <OE <i>clyppan</i> embrace
stem	Start from. <trunk, stand, tribe	Check, dam up. ?<Scan. stop ?>stammer
tip	top	pit (see tip below for both)
boundless	Not tied down.	Ti(r)ed, having no bounce, can't/won't leap off.
bound	Tied down. <Gmc<Skt >band	Leap off. <L buzz >bomb
earthbound	Tied to earth.	Headed to earth. <Scan. get ready
clobber	Maul. ?<club+slobber v.?<imit.	Mend, patch.(obs.) <Gael. <i>clabar</i> mud
dear *?	of high regard <OE <i>deore</i> dear,	grievous <OE <i>deor</i> severe, wild, deer >OHG
	precious >OHG <i>tiuri</i> costly	<i>tiorih</i> wild animal
dent	projection	depression (see indent in Ib for both)
dredge	Remove from below, scoop up,	Add from above, sprinkle (flour, eg) down on.
	rake. <OE <i>draggan</i> drag, draw	<ME <i>dragge(ye)</i> grain mix <Gk nibble
forego *	Go before. <OE <i>foregan</i>	Not go, forgo. <OE <i>forgan</i>
gate **?	doorway <OE <i>geat</i> >OFris.hole	way or path <ME <i>gate</i> <ON <i>gata</i> road
	[A double--same or opposite depending on whether gate 1 is open or closed.]	
in- (prefix)	in <OF <i>en-</i> <L <i>in-</i> (adv., prep.)	'out', not <un- <L<Gk <i>an-</i> (see un- in Ia)
peak **?	Be in top form. <pike ?+beak	Become or look peaked, weak, sickly. <?
rack	Order into racks. (see II(1),V)	Disorder, wreck. (see II(2),V)
rally *	Ridicule. <F <i>railier</i> rail	Come to aid of. <F <i>rallier</i> re-ally [Fr. anagrams]
rocky	rock solid<OE/ML/OF/Celt.	shaky >Gmc sway, jerk
salvage	Save. <L <i>salvare</i>	Execute. <Phil.Eng.<Sp. <i>salvaje</i> savage, cruel
snitch	Steal. ?<snatch.	Inform on (thief).<? ?<nose [1=2 in W3, CDS]
stir	a circulation. >Gmc disturb	prison, non-circulation ?<OE v. <Romany (CDE)
suppliance	supplying <L <i>supplere</i> fill up	asking for <L <i>supplicare</i> beg <kneel
teem	Abound.	Empty. (see II for both)
tip	(a,b) Be top.<ME <i>tippe</i> ?<tap	(a) Overturn, bottom <ME <i>typen</i> ?<infl. by 1
	>Gmc <i>tip</i> (see V)	(b) Dump into a garbage tip. <(a)
tot	all	little (see II for both)
yard (slang)	female genitals <lawn (CDS)	penis ?<measuring rod v. ?<spar (naut. yard)
	(see II for both 1 and 2)	v. <Gmc <i>gazdjo</i> pole, It. <i>cazzo</i> penis (CDS)