

COLLOQUY

DONALD KNUTH, a close friend of the late Solomon Wolf Golomb (who died on May 1), adds “Alas, our friend Sol has departed. Do you happen to recall when and where he stated emphatically that the plural of “polyomino” is NOT “polyominos” but “polyominoes”? I seem to recall that he said, in this connection, that “dominoes” are pieces used in games, while “dominos” are cloaks. . “

THE GOLOMB FAMILY has informed us of even more sad news. Sol’s wife Bo died on May 16. We have many fond memories of the charming Bo when we spent with her in California and Europe.

DAVID SINGMASTER remarks: My book **Problems for Metagrobolists-Volume 3** (World Scientific) has appeared and some friends have received copies from Amazon. You may know that I have been interested in the Three Rabbits problem. My Devon colleagues have just produced a book on it. I contributed Chapter 13: Puzzles, pp. 293-300. The book’s title is **The Three Hares A Curiosity Worth Regarding** and is published by Skerryvore Productions, South Molton, Devon.

DON HAUPTMAN is traveling: “In another week, I will be en route to Las Vegas for back-to-back conferences of The Atlas Society (Ayn Rand) and Freedom Fest (everything else). I suggested to the panjandrums of both events that they use the classic slogan: “Together again for the first time!”

Did I mention that I hate Vegas? The only culture is in the yogurt!

Below, Ayn Rand’s incisive take on gambling, from a Q&A deleted from her Playboy interview, and which appears in the original manuscripts I own, as well as in my article about the papers. But for my purchase and reportage, her views on this and other issues would never have come to light.

As to gambling, I wouldn't say that a person who gambles occasionally is immoral. That's more a game than a serious concern. But when gambling becomes more than a casual game, it is immoral because of the premise that motivates it. The passion for gambling comes from a man's belief that he has no control over his life, that he is controlled by fate, and, therefore, he wants to reassure himself that fate or luck is on his side.

JEFF GRANT comments: In Darryl Francis's excellent 'What's The Significance', he asks for a transsubstitution (or paratransposition as Dmitri Borgmann called it) of MISSISSIPPI. The surnames SIPPINS and SIPPITS can be found on the Net, and unmarried females with those names would be called MISS SIPPINS and MISS SIPPITS. Finding a single word transsubstitution is more difficult. The 1880 US Census records an individual named Kyrion Pipkiss, who resided appropriately in Coldwater, Mississippi. We have spoonerisms, Bushisms, Burgessisms and such, but sadly there don't seem to be any PIPKISSISMS known. A Google search reveals 1,300 hits for IPPSISSIMUS, including a Lord High IPPSISSIMUS, a Grand High IPPSISSIMUS, an IPPSISSIMUS maximus and reference to 'IPPSISSIMUS verbum', 'the very word' (of Jesus). Although these all seem to be errors for 'ipsissimus', Latin for 'own very self' (Wiktionary), there are many instances of the double-p spelling, as in the following from *The Occult Experience*, a book by Nevill Drury (1987, p105):

'Michael Aquino, Ippsissimus and Director of the Temple of Set, is far removed from one's image of a typical Satanist.'

JASON STRANGE asks: So before today I didn't even know anything about the study of logology. I've always enjoyed word games and challenges, so I'm glad there are people out there who have given it a name.

I overheard a phrase the other day that put me on a journey to find out more about a particular concept. I've outlined it on my website in the hopes that someone might help me determine what it's called, which can be found at <http://jasonstrange.com/strange-set>. That being said, I'll also include the details here.

I've recently become interested in a concept that sits at a midpoint between mathematics and language. Since I've not been able to find anything that quite matches the necessary constraints, I shall take the liberty of naming it a Strange Set, because puns. It shall be defined as follows:

A strange set is a set of valid English words in which the entire derivative set of characters are used exactly once to form a different valid English word.

Example: ['spice','slice'] -> ['s','p','i','c','e','l'] -> ['splice']

Example: ['cat','hat'] -> ['c','a','t','h'] -> ['chat']

Example: ['cap','map'] -> ['c','a','p','m'] -> ['camp']

Example: ['cap','map', 'area'] -> ['c','a','p','m','r','e'] -> ['camper']

As you can see, this doesn't quite fit the rules for an anagram or an isogram, but it seems to borrow ideas from both. I originally heard the phrase "slice and splice" and it sort of set me off on this adventure. As a programmer by trade, I started to think about ways to find larger input sets that create an isogram.

SCOTT CRAIG inquires: For years I have wondered if there is a name for people like me. My first and last names could be used as either a first or last name. Is there a name for a name that has names that could be used as first or last names!



Three little kittens had lost their mittens,
So they began to cry
"Oh, mammy dear, we greatly fear
That we have lost our mittens!"
"Lost your mittens, you naughty kittens,
Then you shall have no pie."

Find the third kitten.