The following article is adapted from a paper presented to the class "Foundations and Collections Development" in the University of Iowa's School of Library and Information Sciences. The professor, Gerald Hodges, commented on it in part: "It appears to me that you have done the unthinkable - build an enjoyable and entertaining collection for an academic setting...I do feel that your selection process was systematic, and I think you are on solid ground in going with those titles which had multiple favorable reviews. Your annotations not only tell me sufficient information about each title but do indeed justify the selection decision. The use of a variety of sources, including both library and subject specialization, is a real advantage of the process you used...I particularly want to commend you on the four criteria statements you made and upon the decision to exclude certain formats...Aren't you glad that you had somewhat unlimited budgetary possibilities?"

SUBJECT AREA
Recreational Linguistics, also known as Logology and Wordplay.

THE LIBRARY AND ITS USERS

The hypothetical site for this project is an English Department Library at a large university. The library has several thousand volumes covering almost all areas and eras of English literature and language. It subscribes to forty literary periodicals, and its media room houses over a hundred films and filmstrips. The primary users are undergraduate English majors and graduate students in English and in Linguistics. To a lesser extent, users also include students in Education, Modern Language, and Comparative Literature, and, on occasion, non-university members of the community.

Because of the increasing realization that wordplay occupies an important place in literary history, the library has applied for and received a National Endowment for the Humanities grant to build up a collection of books in recreational linguistics. I have been assigned the job of preparing a list of twenty to twenty-five publications to acquire at the outset of the project. My final selection consists of 20 books, 3 periodicals, and 1 non-print media package. The cost was left to my discretion.

The resulting list is a guide to materials that can serve as a
foundation for a recreational linguistics collection. Each item is followed by a brief commentary to indicate why the item was chosen. The omission of an item doesn’t mean that it failed to meet the selection criteria; it may have been omitted because I wasn’t aware of its existence, couldn’t locate a description, or haven’t seen a copy. Although the list was prepared with a university library in mind, it can be used by anyone interested in the field.

THE SELECTION PROCESS

As mentioned above, my objective in this project was to select a solid foundation of wordplay publications upon which a larger recreational linguistics collection could be built. The material would be useful for writing scholarly articles, devising classroom teaching methods, and researching the history of wordplay in general - and for playing the games themselves. To my knowledge, there is no specific logology collection in any public or university library.

In making my choices, I looked for material that would show the diversity of recreational linguistics. Some of the items are currently available, but the older material would have to be purchased through Bookman’s Weekly, antiquarian booksellers, or other special sources. All the items are aimed at adults, and a few are accessible to children as well.

To be selected, an item had to exhibit at least one of the following four qualities in a strong way: (1) importance in the history of the field of wordplay; (2) comprehensiveness in presenting a wide range of different items; (3) depth of approach to a single topic; (4) uniqueness in form and/or content.

For the first step in the selection process, I made a list of possibilities located in the Books in Print Subject Guide under “Word Games”. I then checked three other sources with which I was already familiar: Word Ways magazine, Verbatim magazine, and Dmitri Borgmann’s 1967 book, Beyond Language. The two magazines have reviews that I used to identify material that might fit well in the collection; and the Borgmann book contains a bibliography with other titles that sounded appropriate. The total number of titles on my preliminary list was 35.

Next I searched the past ten years of Book Review Digest under “Word Games” for more reviews and for more titles to add to the list. After that I went to Book Review Index and looked up authors to find more books and citations of reviews. I checked two reviews for each book to get a feel for its content and quality. By comparing the descriptions and reviews, I was able to select 15 books that best fulfilled my guidelines.

For magazines, I chose Word Ways and Verbatim, because of the extensive roles they have played in contemporary recreational linguistics, and because of the high quality and wide variety of their contents.

For non-print media, I considered a computer-generated Scrabble game, but I preferred to have something that was more instructive. After consulting five years of Media Review Digest, I picked a me-

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1 review

found.

BOOKS

1. Augarde, Oxford University Press, Choice, May 1985; Word

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3. Bombauf, Harvest-Fiction, $54.00. [Am

Originally

4. Borgman

4. Bergerson's Sons,
I reviewed the list to determine whether additional material was needed and whether there was any redundancy that could be eliminated. In order to round out the collection, I decided to add five more books (items 5, 8, 14, 16, 20) with which I was already familiar. Although I couldn’t locate any reviews for them, I felt that they qualified for inclusion in the foundation collection. Finally, I added one more wordplay magazine which published briefly for a few years but is apparently now extinct.

BOOKS


   This wide-ranging work tells the history of anagrams and palindromes, from ancient times to the twentieth century, and presents a generous selection in traditional and experimental forms. The sources of more than 1000 anagrams are cited in an appendix. Since the anagram and the palindrome are basic types of wordplay, they should be well-represented in a library’s recreational linguistics section.


   Originally published in 1875, this book selects unusual types of prose, poetry, and wordplay, including everything from puns to charades to macarons and beyond, and discusses them in a homely, enjoyable fashion. Furthermore, it demonstrates an early attitude towards wordplay, compiled as it was by a man raised in the nineteenth century. This 864-page book is worth the price for the research value of its voluminous contents. Oddities and Curiosities of Words and Literature, edited by Martin Gardner and published by Dover Publications, is a reprint of the first 310 pages and the chapters on Refractory Rhyming and Conformity of Sense to Sound – an inexpensive alternative to the unabridged work.


July 1967; Time, Aug 18 1967]

Many authorities on recreational linguistics agree that Borgmann is a modern master of wordplay. His interests range freely over the field, and for this reason alone, his work is essential to a well-rounded collection. Moreover, each "problem" is presented in an intriguing three-part puzzle format, within a maze of fascinating information that takes the reader to the fringes of language and beyond.


It would be hard to assemble a set of crossword puzzles more difficult than the ones in this book. It's a treasure-house for the advanced cruciverbalist, and a slaughter-house for the beginner. If crossword puzzles can be considered an art form, this book is the Museum of Modern Art. As a reference guide to the outer limits of this popular pastime, it has no equal.


This landmark work is considered to be the first book treating wordplay as a field of knowledge to be studied in its own right. It discusses the basic elements of "logology," the author's term for wordplay, in a witty, conversational fashion, chapter by chapter, word by remarkable word. It has been referred to as the Bible of recreational linguistics. An indispensable item for the library.


Aimed specifically at people interested in wordplay, this book is an enthusiastic display of etymology and pseudo-etymology. It's suitable for the general reader as well as the linguistics professor. Heavily illustrated, it presents a collection of unusual words, some real and others made up by the author.


This is probably the only book to cover all aspects of onomastics, the field of wordplay in which the name is the game. Ninety-nine articles by some of the leading figures in contemporary recreational linguistics are reprinted from Word Ways. Personal names, town names, chemical names - you name it, it's here to enjoy. This unique anthology on the wonders of names is an excellent reference work for the library.


Wordplay of a daily sort is the specialty of this collection. The puzzles are entertaining, the information would enrich any collection. This alternative to modern crosswords at Play, presents a large amount of material and is recommended for libraries.


Among the many puzzles presented in this book, there are a number which appeal to modern times and to contemporary recreational linguistics. This book is recommended for libraries.


This book is a collection of amusing puzzles, illusory challenges, and other stunts designed to entertain. Also included are brief essays about the humorist's life and work. This book is recommended for libraries.


This encyclopedia is a source book for difficult words. The author provides definitions, origins, and amplification about words that are used every day, or not. This book is recommended for libraries.


This unusual and entertaining book has many puzzles to produce and stimulate wordplay. It should be recommended for libraries.


This book is a collection of jokes for use with crossword puzzles. The puzzles and the jokes are intended for young and old alike. It is recommended for libraries.
Wordplay in prose, poetry, and puzzles appears here in the form of a daily almanac, with one or more entries for each day of the year. The presentation is highly original, and the results are very entertaining. Such a gathering of information in so many different forms would increase the scope of the recreational linguistics collection. This book is the successor to Espy’s An Almanac of Words at Play, published by the same company in 1975 for $12.95, an alternative choice for the library.


Among the chapters, which are lettered from A to Z, the author presents a great variety of wordplay, much of which is geared to modern times. From puzzle poems to punned headlines, Espy distorts the structure of language forms to achieve his amusing and amazing results. This overview of the field would interest both the browser and the serious word-lover.


This is a collection of original puzzles in traditional forms: crossword puzzles, mixed-word puzzles, cryptograms, etc. Not intended to be scholarly, it is "applied" recreational linguistics at its finest. As a book that displays the puzzling side of logology, it fits in well with the purpose of this selection.


This encyclopedic compendium of word games, ranging from easy to difficult, is accessible to children as well as adults. Along with being fun, it is also a how-to book: its appendix explains how to create your own word games. This useful feature and the thorough index make it a very good reference tool.


This unusual book contains a selection of crossword puzzles whose answers are palindromes. Not for beginners in wordplay, the games here are challenging even to the expert. Accompanied by an entertaining text, this work combines two familiar types of wordplay to produce a hybrid form. Because the book explores new territory, it should be included in the foundation collection.

14. Loyd, Sam. Sam Loyd’s Cyclopedia of 5000 Puzzles, Tricks &

The work of an American puzzle genius, this book is full of picture riddles, word games, mathematical problems, and other "species of mental gymnastics." The author has generously illustrated it with intricate line drawings. Although not all the puzzles are wordplay, a great many charades, rebuses, puns, and conundrums abound. First published in 1914, this is a delightful and historical book.


A college-level textbook on linguistics, this volume is based on the idea that most of what we hear or see in the mass media is language play. As one of the few books to probe the topic in depth, it constructs an important bridge between academic and recreational linguistics: it attempts to explain in a serious way how advertising and wordplay go together.


The pun is one of the oldest forms of wordplay, and one of the least respected. This thoughtful book revels in puns of all sorts - erotic, scatological, literary, historical, and so on. It is a fun look at a topic too often dismissed with a groan. The recreational linguistics collection, would, of course, be open to this book.


This well-known cartoonist has discovered a highly original way of blending comic art and wordplay. His cartoon drawings use numbers and letters for presenting wordplay. The captivating illustrations have an appeal for all ages. This book would go well in the library because it shows, in a literal sense, some of the wordgames people play.


A slim volume, this represent years of careful research into personal names. Delighting in the absurd, it demonstrates in detail an aspect of onomastics that most people have experienced in their daily lives. Who hasn't blinked twice and chuckled on discovering a name that just couldn't be real - but is? The sequel, Even More Remarkable Names, was published by Clarkson Potter in 1979 for $4.95; both books are combined into a single volume with new material added for $9.95. Any

19. Walsh, Detroit: Galt

Another by Lippincroft, this book contains excellent conundrums with answers. They provide a vast repertory of puzzles and word games; a vast repertory of puzzles and word games.

20. Villefranche

Concrete Language Play for its effect on word play. This early years' show in which the five-year-old library provides a library for an.

MAGAZINES


As Scientific American, so Word Ways is filled with the workings of the words. This pediatric linguistics magazine provides an index to the languages of the world to languages of the world in the course of making wordplay.


This collection of language facts is an index to the local telephone book. The local telephone book gives a fail index to the local telephone book.
full of picturesque "specially illustrated puzzles are conundrums and historical

Introduction 1978. $9.95

Modern Language is based on mass media is rich in depth, recreational advertisement.


It is one of the all sorts - it is a fun recreational book.

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York: Clark-

May 1978] search into per-

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mterial added, in Most Remarkable Names, Clarkson Potter, 1985 for

$9.95. Any one of these volumes would be suitable for the library.


Another nineteenth-century classic (it was originally published by Lippincott in 1892), this volume includes puzzles, games, and word facts from many magazines and books of the period. It's an excellent complement to Bombaugh's book (listed above). Together, they provide the researcher as well as the curious reader with a vast representation of earlier wordplay. Although this book is expensive, it contains 1,104 pages of material that would be hard to find elsewhere.


Concrete poetry is non-traditional "verse," and much of it achieves its effect by exploring the meaning, the shape, or the sound of words. This anthology provides a world-view of the form in its early years, from 1945 to 1967. It's a revealing look at ways in which the tools of recreational linguistics can create literature. The library would benefit from having this distinct view of wordplay for art's sake.

MAGAZINES


As Scientific American magazine is to science and technology, so Word Ways is to recreational linguistics. Issue after issue is filled with valuable information on all aspects of wordplay involving the written word in its many forms. Articles vary from intriguing puzzles and games to serious studies of word frequencies and evolutions of word types. Some of the more technical matter might not have been published or even written if it weren't for the magazine providing a forum for the dedicated logologist. It charts the course of modern recreational linguistics.


This companion magazine to Word Ways takes a different approach to language. Its articles focus on the spoken word - words, dialects, and etymologies - and show the quirks of language from the local to the international level. There is surprisingly little duplication of material between the two magazines. Together, both give a fairly complete picture of current topics in recreational linguistics in the English-speaking world.

This British quarterly, lasting only about three years, dealt with a wide variety of wordplay, traditional as well as innovative, covering topics such as computer "word" generators, Guinness advertising, and dyslexia. It had several regular departments, including book reviews and letters from readers; for an added touch, it offered reader competitions and challenges to bring out the ana- grammarian or palindromaniac in everyone.

NON-PRINT MEDIA

24. Calligraphy, the Art of the Scribe. Fountain Valley, California: Warner Educational Productions, 1983. 6 filmstrips of 50-111 frames each, 9-21 minutes each; 2 wall charts, 35 in. by 23 in.; cassettes. $149.50.

In the books on wordplay, there is some mention of the play involved in calligraphy. As a supplement to the printed publications in the selection, this non-print media package presents the calligraphic art in action by showing pictures of calligraphers at work and by explaining the process involved. The filmstrip could be used to draw the connection between the play involved in reading words and in writing them.

Editor's Note: This is a fine introductory collection of books devoted to logology in all of its aspects. I would append only a handful of others:

Dudeney, Henry Ernest. 300 Best Word Puzzles. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1968. $4.50. This is based on Dudeney's The World's Best Word Puzzles, published in 1925; it shows the state of wordplay in the period between Bombaugh and Walsh on the one hand, and Borgmann on the other. Dudeney, the counterpart of Sam Loyd in England, was primarily interested in mathematical puzzles.

Kim, Scott. Inversions: A Catalog of Calligraphic Cartwheels. Peterborough, New Hampshire: Byte Books, 1981. $8.95 paper. By distorting the shapes of letters, Kim shows how a wide variety of words can be reflected on a vertical axis or rotated 180 degrees to form the same (or other) words. The book unites the fields of graphic art and logology in unexpected ways – Kim is the Escher of calligraphy.

Eiss, Harry Edwin. Dictionary of Language Games, Puzzles, and Amusements. New York: Greenwood Press, 1986. $39.95. This is an alphabetical listing of word games and word puzzles, each with a paragraph to a page of description, and cross-references to related wordplay.

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