

# PHOBIAS FROM A TO Z

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Most of us are probably aware that someone with a morbid fear of strangers or foreigners is suffering from XENOPHOBIA. Similarly, a person with an abnormal aversion to closed spaces is the victim of CLAUSTROPHOBIA, while others who dread large open areas are displaying AGORAPHOBIA. Many people have an exaggerated fear of spiders, but would probably not know the name for this if it were not for the movie ARACHNOPHOBIA.

The versatility of the human mind permits it to fear almost anything, and science is usually quick off the mark with a name to fit each situation. Those that are not covered scientifically may be coined for the occasion, as is the case with many of the following conditions. If you have a particularly weird, unidentified phobia, perhaps you could invent a name for it yourself--unless you have VERBOPHOBIA, fear or dislike of words. (Not a common occurrence among *Word Ways* readers, I suspect.)

Here is a list of unusual phobias, one for each letter of the alphabet. How many of them do you suffer from? Just affix "fear of" to each definition.

- ARACHIBUTYROPHOBIA peanut butter sticking to the roof of your mouth (Paul Dickson, *Words*, 1982)
- BATOPHOBIA passing close to tall buildings or mountains (Dorland's *Medical Dictionary*, 23rd edition, 1957)
- CYPRIANOPHOBIA ladies of the night (*Word Ways* May 1974)
- DORAPHOBIA animal furs or skins (Dorland's *Medical Dictionary*, 23rd edition, 1957)
- ENOSIOPHOBIA having committed an unpardonable sin (Josefa Byrne, Mrs. Byrne's *Dictionary*, 1974)
- FRIENDORPHOBIA forgetting a password (Paul Dickson, *Words*, 1982)
- GEPHYROPHOBIA walking on bridges (Dorland's *Medical Dictionary*, 23rd edition, 1957)
- HYPOCRITOPHOBIA your daughter becoming sexually active at the same age you did (*Penthouse Magazine*, March 1988)
- ICHTHYOPHOBIA fish (sharks? piranhas? herring?) (Dorland's *Medical Dictionary*, 23rd edition, 1957)
- JAPANOPHOBIA Japan or things Japanese, such as Mazdas, origami or sumo wrestlers (Webster's unabridged, second edition)
- KEDOPHOBIA having your sneakers eaten by the teeth on an escalator (Rich Hall (and friends), *Sniglets*, 1984)
- LUPOSLIPAPHOBIA being pursued by timber wolves around a kitchen table while wearing socks on a newly-waxed floor (Gary Larson, *The Far Side Gallery* 2, 1989)

- MAGNIPHOBIA an object in the side mirror being much closer than it appears (Rich Hall (and friends), Sniglets, 1984)
- NUCLEOMITAPHOBIA death by nuclear weapons (Paul Dickson, Words, 1982)
- ODONTOPHOBIA the sight of animals' teeth (Dorland's Medical Dictionary, 23rd edition, 1957)
- PTERONOPHOBIA being tickled with feathers (Josefa Byrne, Mrs. Byrne's Dictionary, 1974)
- Q-PHOBIA getting stuck with the Q while playing Scrabble (Forwards, the New Zealand Scrabble Magazine, Dec 1989)
- RHYTIPHOBIA having wrinkles (Josefa Byrne, Mrs. Byrne's Dictionary, 1974)
- SYNGENESOPHOBIA relatives, especially ones you dislike who call unexpectedly (Josefa Byrne, Mrs. Byrne's Dictionary, 1974)
- TAENIOPHOBIA harbouring tapeworms (Word Ways Nov 1977)
- URANOPHOBIA going to Heaven (Dorland's Medical Dictionary, 23rd edition, 1957)
- VENUSTAPHOBIA beautiful women (Word Ways May 1974)
- WAMBAMOPHOBIA not getting enough foreplay, common among women (Penthouse Magazine, March 1988)
- XYLOPHOBIA being lost in a forest (Josefa Byrne, Mrs. Byrne's Dictionary, 1974)
- YAWNOPHOBIA the other person talking endlessly about their previous lovers (Penthouse Magazine, March 1988)
- ZELOPHOBIA jealousy (Word Ways, May 1974)

### The Dead Sea Scroll Palindromes

In the August 1992 *Word Ways*, Howard Richler presented "The Palindromic Dead Sea Scrolls", a set of 57 palindromic phrases humorously commemorating Biblical events from Genesis to Revelations. He selected 46 of these and generated 26 more to create a book with the above title, published in paperback for \$9.99 by Robert Davis Publishing. Each palindrome is accompanied by a brief explanatory text. Some of the palindromes are irreverently illustrated by Danny Shanahan (will conservative Christians be amused or offended by Mary Magdalene with HOT and COLD written above her eyes as she washes Jesus's feet with her tears, or Jesus stifling a yawn when responding to Pilate's interrogation?). Sharp-eyed readers will discover that Palindromes 26 and 38 are marred by typos. The book can be ordered in the United States through Associated Publishers Group, 1501 Country Hospital Road, Nashville TN (1-800-327-5113).