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#### A Hoagie By Any Other Name

Dave Wilton Albany, California

"I wanna shake off the dust of this one-horse town. I wanna explore the world. I wanna watch TV in a different time zone. I wanna visit strange, exotic malls. I'm sick of eating hoagies! I want a grinder, a sub, a foot-long hero! I want to live, Marge! Won't you let me live? Won't you, please?"

—Homer Simpson

One of the amusements offered by my frequent travels to Europe is seeing *The Simpsons* translated into different languages. Homer speaking French or German is something to behold. But sometimes I wonder if all of the humor translates along with the words. The above-quoted passage is one of the best jokes ever seen on that show—at least to my inner linguist. But even in Britain, where they don't bother to dub the original American voices, probably only a few get the joke.

You see a *hoagie*, a *grinder*, a *sub*, and a *hero* are one and the same thing. They are simply regional names for a sandwich served on a large Italian roll and filled with Italian meat, cheese, lettuce, tomato, onion, and sprinkled with olive oil and spices. Variations on the basic recipe are made by filling the sandwich with other things, such as tuna salad, roast beef, ham and cheese, meatballs, and all manner of other ingredients. Subs can be served either hot or cold. All the exotic things that Homer associates with travel are simply roses by another name.

And Homer is just scratching the surface of the lexical diversity of the sandwich. In addition to the names he cites there are: poor boy, torpedo, Italian sandwich, rocket, zeppelin or zep, blimpie, garibaldi, bomber, wedge, muffuletta, Cuban sandwich, and spuckie. Most of these names are associated with a particular region of the United States. The names also fall into several distinct patterns of origin, from the shape (sub, torpedo, rocket, zeppelin,

blimpie, and bomber), from the size (hero, hoagie), from ethnic association (Italian sandwich, Cuban sandwich), from the type of bread used (muffuletta, spuckie), or from the fact that the sandwich is a cheap meal (poor boy).

Where I grew up, in the town of Toms River on the New Jersey Shore, we knew the sandwich as a *sub*, short for *submarine sandwich*, so called because the long, tubular shape resembles the submersible vessel. *Sub* is the general name for the sandwich, found throughout the United States and not associated with any particular region. The name dates to the mid-1950s, although there is at least one claim (made in 1967) that the word existed as early as 1928.

It is often asserted that the name *submarine* sandwich began in New London, Connecticut, after the naval submarine base there, but there is no evidence to support this contention. Sub, the sandwich, is not associated with Connecticut in particular. (Although the Subway® chain of sandwich shops got its start in 1965 as Pete's Super Submarine Shop in Bridgeport, about 70 miles from New London.) And if the 1928 claim were true, it would seem unlikely as that citation is from Philadelphia.

Torpedo, related to sub, is found throughout the U.S. It is often used to refer to a small or half-sized sub, a torpedo roll being a smaller piece of bread.

I learned my first exotic name for the sandwich, hoagie, during my earliest school days. We had subs at home. We ate subs at local restaurants (subshops). But for some reason the school cafeteria served hoagies. That's the name given to the sandwich in Philadelphia (also known for that other famous sandwich, the Philly cheesesteak, which can be considered a variant on the basic sub theme).



Articles















p. 1 p. 6

#### **Contents**

Vol. XXVIII, No. 3 Autumn 2003

A Hoagie By Any Other Name	Dave Wilton
Greguerías: Squeaks/Pipsqueaks?	Walter Redfern
Blog This	Steve Lawson
	T D

Blog This Steve Lawson p. 8
Tom Pearce, Tom Pearce, Lend Me Your Good Ear Jerome Betts p. 10
Ersatz Languages Gordon S. Jones p. 12
Let There Be Light Larry Tritten p. 19
Famous Last Words Paul Bayliss p. 21

Famous Last WordsPaul Baylissp. 21You've Got GameGloria Rosenthalp. 23

Columns

Horribile Dictu
Classical Blather: It's Only Music, Don't Be Scherzo
Nick Humez
P. 11
As the Word Turns: Latin Lovers
Ex Cathedra
Barry Baldwin
P. 18
Ex Cathedra
Erin McKean
P. 30

**Bibliographia** 

Rogue Scholar by Richard W. BaileyMichael Adamsp. 26The Hidden Language of Baseball by Paul DicksonRon Kaplanp. 28Mighty Fine Words and Smashing Expressions by Orin Hargraves Fraser Sutherlandp. 29

plus a crossword puzzle and EPISTOLAE

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Hoagie permeated outward from Philadelphia, attenuating in use as it traveled, until by the time it reached Toms River it was known only in the school cafeterias. (Whoever wrote the cafeteria menus for the Toms River school system was probably from Philadelphia.) Hoagie is common throughout Pennsylvania and much of southern New Jersey.

My portion of the Jersey Shore lacked a strong Philly influence. Even today the main road from Toms River to Philadelphia, Route 70, is a two-lane country highway for much of its length. As a boy, I rooted for the Mets, not the Phillies, even though Veterans Stadium was much closer, as the crow flies, than Shea. Our beaches were filled with visitors from Bergen County and New York, who came down the Garden State Parkway. Philadelphians went to beaches further south: Long Beach Island, Wildwood, and Ocean City. Hence, *hoagie* was somewhat of foreign term to the Jersey Shore of my childhood.

The word *hoagie* first appears in print in 1945, with alternate spellings like *hoogie* and *hoggie* appearing as early as 1941. How it got its name is an often debated topic.

The most commonly touted explanation is that it comes from the name of Hog Island, Philadelphia. In the early part of the twentieth century there was a shipyard on Hog Island (now the site of the Philadelphia airport). During the First World War, Italian-American shipyard workers, or hoggies as they were known, would bring large sandwiches to work with them. The early spelling of hoggie makes this hypothesis attractive, but there is a gap between the shipyard's years of operation and the earliest attestation of the sandwich name in 1941. The shipyard operated full-bore from 1917-20, after which production rapidly declined before it closed completely in 1925. That leaves only a handful of years for the name to catch on in the city's consciousness and a gap of some fifteen years before the name is found in print. If the name can be antedated further, the Hog Island hypothesis will seem more likely, but for now this explanation seems doubtful.

A variant on the above is that it comes from *Hogan*, a nickname for Irish workers at the ship-yard. This has the same problem of dating, plus it

seems unlikely that an Irish name would be associated with the Italian sandwich.

A second and more likely explanation is that an enterprising restaurateur coined it. Al De Palma, the self-proclaimed "King of the Hoagies," claims to have coined *hoggie*. In 1928, while working as a jazz musician, De Palma saw some fellow musicians eating a submarine. Impressed with the size of the sandwich, De Palma remarked that, "you had to be hog to eat one." When the Depression hit, De Palma couldn't find work as a musician and in 1936 opened up a sandwich shop. Recalling the sandwich and his remark from eight years before, he made and sold hoggies in the shop. He was quite successful, eventually opening a chain of hoagie shops and earning himself his sobriquet.

De Palma's claim and story is consistent with the date of the name's appearance. He opened his sandwich shop in 1936 and the term (*hoggie*) appears in advertising copy by 1941.

Eames & Robboy include De Palma's account as a footnote in their 1967 American Speech article. They do not, however, give his name. But various other accounts of the tale do and from these one can determine who the "King of the Hoagies" was. These other accounts often confuse various details of the story, however. The WaWa (a Philadelphiaarea chain of convenience stores) website, for example, places the 1928 incident among Italian shipyard workers on Hog Island instead of among jazz musicians—a chronological impossibility. But the account in Eames & Robboy is in De Palma's own words and presumably more reliable. De Palma's account is also interesting because he claims the sandwich was called a submarine as far back as 1928. The earliest known written citation of that term is from 1950. Of course, he is recalling the incident some forty years after the fact and his memory could be faulty.

Other suggestions as to the origin of hoagie include: *hoke sandwich*, favored by hoboes who were *on the hoke*; a reference to the pork or hog meat in the sandwich; *honky sandwich*, called that by blacks who saw whites eating them; and *hookey sandwich*, favored by kids skipping school who would buy them from sidewalk vendors. None of these seem very likely.

















"To a New Yorker like you, a hero is some sort of weird sandwich, not some nut that takes on three Tigers."

—Oddball (Donald Sutherland), *Kelly's Heroes* Another term that I identified in childhood was *hero*. Toms River is on the outskirts of New York City's cultural sphere of influence. Like *hoagie*, the word *hero* penetrated into the local vocabulary just far enough to become familiar.

Hero is attested to as early as 1947 and is distinctly a New York name for the sandwich. The most common etymological explanation is that it is so called because of its large size. It's often claimed that New York Herald Tribune food columnist Clementine Paddleford coined the name in the 1930s, claiming the sandwich was so large "you had to be a hero to eat it." Alas, no one can find any record of this in any of Paddleford's columns, or any use of the term before 1947. But it does seem likely that the name comes from the size of the sandwich.

An alternate explanation is that it is a folk etymology of gyros (pronounced yee-roh; phonetics experts and those fluent in Greek may feel free to pick at my representation of the proper pronunciation. The unvoiced s represents the Greek spelling. The s is often dropped in English, presumably because English-speakers take it to be a plural form. My Microsoft® Word spell-checker, for example, keeps objecting to formulations like "a gyros" and "gyros isn't."). Non-Greek New Yorkers took the unfamiliar word and made it into the familiar hero. It's a plausible explanation from a phonological standpoint, but not from a cultural one. The hero is a distinctly Italian sandwich, not a Greek one. And there is no way that someone could mistake cold cuts on an Italian roll for a gyros, which is lamb and tzatziki sauce in a pita. Besides, gyros isn't attested in English until 1968 and appears to be a later addition to the American bill of fare. It certainly was a later addition to mine. I never saw a gyros until the Army sent me to Germany in 1986. (Toms River had restaurants owned by Greek-Americans, but none that served Greek cuisine.) Due to the large number of Turkish Gastarbeiter in Germany, we knew them by the Turkish name, döner kebab, anglicized by us G.I.s into donburger.

New York State, as opposed to the city, offers some other regional variants. Around Buffalo, subs are sometimes known as *bombers*. The name *bomber* is not limited to Buffalo and is found scattered throughout the U.S. The term in Westchester County and the Hudson Valley is *wedge*.

I can recall one other name for the sandwich from my early childhood, blimpie. The eponymous chain of sub shops served blimpies. Other establishments served subs; Blimpie served blimpies. The chain was founded in Hoboken, New Jersey in 1964 and one of the early franchises was in Toms River. After early childhood, the term disappeared from my vocabulary. The local Blimpie shop closed and I've never seen one since—although the chain is still in existence and second only to Subway® in number of franchises. The name was chosen by the chain's founders, a combination of blimp, from the shape of the sandwich, and the -ie ending from hoagie.

Blimpie is etymologically unrelated to zeppelin or zep (1960), another name for the sandwich, common in eastern Pennsylvania. With Lakehurst Naval Air Station, site of the Hindenburg crash and home of the Navy's lighter-than-air aviation program, right outside Toms River on Route 70, you would think that this name would have caught on in my hometown. But no, blimpie had to pull double duty in representing the area's aviation history.

So my childhood was *subs*, with the occasional *hoagie* or *hero* or a trademarked *blimpie*. I was a little better off than Homer Simpson in that I knew a few of the terms. My first real linguistic shock happened on a church choir trip to New England, where in Rhode Island I encountered my first *grinder*.

Grinder is the term of art throughout most of New England, with the notable exception of Boston where it is less common. The name probably comes from the chewing or grinding your teeth do when consuming the sandwich. It dates to at least 1946. Many people make a distinction between grinders and other subs in that they use grinder to mean a hot sub, but this is not the original sense. The original grinders were the familiar cold cut subs we know and love. Hot sandwiches are often known as oven grinders. And you occa-

















sionally see the alliterative *guinea grinder* that associates the sandwich with its Italian-American heritage, however derogatorily.

Boston has its own local name for the sandwich, *spuckie* (also *spukie*, *spooky*, and *spucky*). The name comes from *spucadella*, a type of Italian sandwich roll. This local Southie name appears to be dying, being replaced by the generic *sub*.

After being surprised by grinder, I was better prepared when I encountered my next lexical variation on the sandwich. I joined the army in 1985 and they sent me to Fort McClellan, Alabama for my officer's basic course. I quickly discovered that the stuff they served at breakfast that looked like Cream of Wheat wasn't and the green vegetables that looked like spinach weren't. Upsetting as grits and collard greens were to my Yankee notions of proper food, I did delight in the discovery of hush-puppies. But while these foods were strange and new to me, I also discovered a new name for a familiar sandwich, the poor boy.

The *poor boy* got its start in New Orleans and spread out across the South from there. It's attested to as early as 1931. The name most likely comes from the fact that subs are cheap, but filling meals for "poor boys."

The best-substantiated claim for the coinage of *poor boy* is that of Clovis and Benjamin Martin, brothers who opened a sandwich shop on the New Orleans waterfront in 1921. They claim to have invented the sandwich and its name, which were quickly copied by their competitors. Their justification for the name is that it is a hearty sandwich for the workingman who doesn't make much money.

In Puerto Rico there is a similar sandwich, known as the *niño pobre*. Whether the sandwich and its name emigrated from New Orleans or whether it came to that city from the Caribbean is not known. The same sandwich is available elsewhere in Latin America under the name *obrero* 'laborer.' The Martin brothers profess to have been unaware of these Spanish variants.

Being from New Orleans, some insist that the *poor boy* has a French origin. Two theories contend. One is that it is from *pour le bois*, a meal taken into the woods by lumberjacks. The second is that it is from *pourbois*, a tip or gratuity. Street urchins

would knock at convent doors seeking a *pourbois*, and the nuns would give them a sandwich.

There are two Southern variants of the poor boy that are not subs in the strictest sense. The first is also a New Orleans creation, the *muffuletta*. The muffuletta takes its name from the bread, a Sicilian dialectical name. Unlike the long, tubular shape of a sub, the muffuletta is round. The muffuletta was added to the menu of New Orleans cuisine in 1910, when the Central Grocery on Decatur Street started serving them.

The second Southern variation is the *Cuban Sandwich*. While it has the familiar tubular shape of a sub, it is Cuban rather than Italian in origin and, properly made, contains a different combination of meats and is flattened in a sandwich press. Found mainly in Miami and southern Florida (no surprise), the sandwich has been part of the local cuisine since 1901.

In a few places subs are called *rockets*. In Madison, Wisconsin they have been known as *garibaldis*. And there are undoubtedly other local names for the venerable sandwich.

Why so much lexical diversity in a sandwich? Probably because no one can lay claim to inventing it. Slicing an Italian roll and filling it with meat, cheese, lettuce, and tomatoes hardly requires culinary expertise or inventiveness. It was undoubtedly created *de novo* many times across the United States and given a different name each time. Many of the more regional names appear to be going by the wayside as American culture becomes more and more homogenized, but *hoagie*, *hero*, *grinder*, and *poor boy* remain strong and so far are resisting being overtaken by *sub*, even as *garibaldi*, *wedge*, *bomber*, *zeppelin*, *rocket*, and *spuckie* fade from the American lexicon.



[Dave Wilton is the proprietor of WordOrigins.com, and his next book, on mistaken etymologies, is due out from Oxford University Press in 2004.]

















## Greguerías: Squeals/Pipsqueaks?

The Work of Ramón Gómez de la Serna

Walter Redfern Reading

Born in Madrid in 1891, and later living in Buenos Aires, Ramón Gómez de la Serna (he telescoped himself to just 'Ramón') first published his greguerías in 1910. This cornucopious author was also a globettroting lecturer, orating on occasion in circuses while swinging from a trapeze or perched on an elephant's back.

Though he no more came out of nowhere than any of us, he was a true original. What he called his "danceable philosophy" harks back to medieval Spanish Arabic poetry, which is based on acute observation (essential in the desert, but still serviceable in cities and gardens) of human, animal, and botanical phenomena. Or climatic: here is Ramón on various weathers:

Rain is melancholy because it takes us back to the time when we were fishes.

A thunderstorm is the first day at school all over again.

Electricity is God's nervous system.

The rainbow is a dry-cleaner's neon advert.

Ramón offered umpteen explanations for his choice of the term greguería, which means 'hubbub, outcry,' and, by extension, 'the squeals of piglets around the sow.' In general, what things, life, the universe, and everything murmur to us. He makes the tacit talkative, the dumb world an open book, chattering to readers. Although he makes a song-and-dance about the need not to confuse greguerías with maxims or other congealed asseverations, he cannot resist teaching us, in effect, to open our ears and eyes. Like Nicholson Baker, he is the poet of littleness.

Many greguerías are blatantly precious, conceits, but no less serious for all that:

Some men with wooden legs turn green in Spring and rebecome saturs.

The human ear is forever asking questions.

Our head is a fish-tank for ideas.

Dust is full of old and forgotten sneezes.

In the phone-book we are all Lilliputians.

An embrace is a necklace without a fastener.

After using toothpaste we bare our teeth like wild animals.

The majority are fleeting impressions (are there any other sorts?), but the apparently related haiku, in his eyes, is inferior, because too fragile and evanescent:

Some dirty skies look as if water-colourists had cleaned their brushes on them.

Seagulls are born from handkerchiefs waving goodbye on jetties.

The feline gaze of screws.

The hardest fish to land is a bar of soap in the bath.

As befits a Modernist, many, while natural in their gracefulness, are autoreferential:

Giblets are a chicken's greguerías.

The typing keyboard is the alphabet's false

All are resolutely anthropomorphic:

Sometimes flies look as if they're trying to rip their heads off, sick to death of being flies.

The peach is a blonde with her hair parted in the middle.

Nature is sad. Have you ever seen a tree smile?

We thought of turtle soup when we saw the tureen on the creature's back.

Greguerías are quintessentially metaphors. They twin two objects or two ideas that up to then had each been an only child.

Looking upwards in a narrow street you see the sky's cleavage.

Sleep is a lost-property office.

Mussels are the sea's castanets.

Every statue is like a blind beggar holding out his hand for alms.

Nostalgia is the neuralgia of memory.

Many make you think twice, or for the first time. Greguerías, it has been said, are the pencilsharpeners of ideas.

















The moon is the wrong way round.

The sea spends its time throwing buckets of cold water on the land to bring it to its senses.

Every grave contains an alarm-clock set for the Last Judgement.

Consoling thought: worms die too.

The bagpiper wears his lungs and larynx outside his body.

Ramón is the poet of the trivial, who glories in it. He agrees with Chesterton that the telescope diminishes the universe, whereas the microscope enlarges it. He could have called his 'micro-ideas,' to use Chesterton's oxymoron, *Tremendous Trifles*. Both escalate the minuscule.

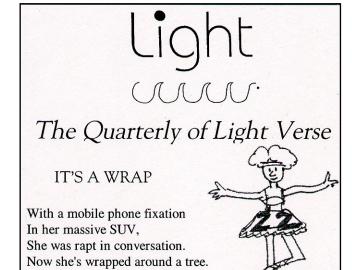
Why did Ramón reject "Alphabet soup is good for dyslexics"? Like any humourist, indeed any human being, he reserved the right to contradict himself, to practise what he preached against. Hence the numerous axioms, saved by humour from being pedantic. But only metaphorically do his metaphors have anything to do with piglets squealing.

This forerunner of Surrealism is a releasing agent, a dowser. Whether his *greguerías* offer genuine insight into the inscape of reality is up to each reader of VERBATIM, each verbatimocrat, to judge. She or he might well wonder what this hoo-ha about *greguerías* has to do with language. An even better question is: what isn't to do with language?

Qasidas, medieval Arabic poems, ended traditionally with a panegyric of some notable. Ramón's prose-poems celebrate the mini-wonders of the world and, of course, himself. As Beau Brummell said of a dandaical coat: "I wear it to advertise myself."



[Walter Redfern is an Emeritus Professor at Reading University. He is the author of sixteen books on language matters, including puns, French writers, and cliches and coinages.]



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-BOB MCKENTY

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## EPISTOLA

An expression I have been hearing more and more, and still more, to the point of irritation, is various forms of "... go ahead ..."

It may be "... go ahead and ..." or "... Just go ahead and ...," etc.

It came to my attention at a conference in St. Louis where I heard a young man give a treasurers report with an average of 5.5 "go aheads" per minute!

When I talked to him about it, he was completely surprised and claimed I was wrong. I knew if he kept talking, I could prove my point. Sure enough, he offered up a couple "go aheads" in his denial.

While I don't think I'd kill anyone for the overuse of this phrase, they might kill me for complaining about something they think I'm making up. ("Go ahead, make my day!")

So if you could just go ahead and send me some information about this phrase, I'll just go ahead and sign off for now. I need to go ahead and get some real work done.

Roger Backes Madison, Wisconsin

















## Blog This

Steve Lawson Colorado Springs, Colorado

Since the late 1990s, the weblog, or blog (or, uncommonly, 'blog) has been one of the most popular methods of publishing on the World Wide Web. A weblog is a web page that is updated on a more-orless daily basis with entries or *posts*. The content of a post can vary widely, but the typical entry contains a link to another web page along with a sentence or a paragraph indicating why the person who wrote the entry chose to link to that particular page. The posts are date- and time-stamped and arranged in reverse chronological order, so the newest entry is always at the top of the page. That way, frequent readers of a blog can start reading at the top, and stop when they reach the first post that they've read before. Those time-related factors—frequent updates arranged in reverse chronological order—are the defining aspects of the weblog. Some blogs read like diaries, others like commentary on current affairs.

Few new words have been coined that are based on the original term, weblog, but now that blog has been clipped from the original, it has taken off with any number of derivatives. Blog is a synonym for weblog, but, unlike weblog, blog has also been verbed, meaning 'to create a new entry in a weblog,' or simply 'to write,' e.g., "Here are some photos from the wacky, New York-based BDSM-themed workout that Cory blogged about earlier this week" , or "I talked with Dave Winer on the phone a little while ago, and I notice he's already blogged the conversation!" As the examples show, usage of the verb form is not yet standard; does one blog an event (in the same way one would *log* it, or *note* it, or *cover* it in the journalistic sense), or does one *blog about* an event (as one would write about or talk about it)?

People who keep blogs are known as *bloggers* as in "how about we make tomorrow … a Bloggin' Lovefest. Devote one post to a blogger you love." *Blogger*<sup>TM</sup> is also the name of one of the software tools that allows bloggers to update their weblogs easily and save older posts automatically in an archive.

With the proliferation of wireless networks in hotels and convention centers, it has become relatively easy for bloggers to post to their blogs using properly-equipped laptops while they are actually still witnessing the event they are writing about rather than waiting until later to sum things up. This is called *liveblogging* as in "Donna Wentworth has been liveblogging the proceedings of iLaw Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on Copyright." Liveblogged entries make up for in immediacy what they lack in spellchecking.

A particularly neat coinage is *blogrolling*, the practice of posting a list of links to other weblogs. Such a blogroll list looks like a roll, or register, but it also recalls *logrolling*, the practice of mutual back-scratching in the world of politics or literature. When blogs were in their infancy, it was considered de rigueur for blogging to be reciprocal—"you blog me and I'll blog you back." Now, there is more of a blog hierarchy, with some blogs and bloggers being exceptionally well known, and others toiling in (often deserved) obscurity. It can no longer be assumed that the most popular weblogs will reciprocate when it comes to blogrolling.

The term *blogerati* has been used to refer to some of the most prominent members of the weblog culture: "Perhaps I should get around to creating a Blogarhythm website. One that would track and predict when certain members of the blogerati are going to go off their rockers again." No self-respecting blogger would refer to him- or herself as a member of the blogerati, and usage of the word implies a gentle (or not-so-gentle) mockery. The term is, of course, based on the Latin literati (in English use, according to the OED, since Robert Burton borrowed it in 1621 to refer to China's learned class). The blogerati themselves may be more familiar with the word *digerati*, used to refer to the movers and shakers of digital business and culture. Perhaps that link to digerati explains blogerati's relative popularity compared to blognoscenti (as in "The Raging Cow strategy has annoyed some members of the blognoscenti"). Blognoscenti also seems truer to its source word, cognoscenti (from the Italian, used in English since the late 18th century, also according the *OED*), but a Google search shows many fewer uses of blognoscenti as compared to blogerati.

The science fiction writer William Gibson famously coined the term *cyberspace* in his novel *Neuromancer* to refer to the "virtual space" in which electronic communication takes place. Some blog-

















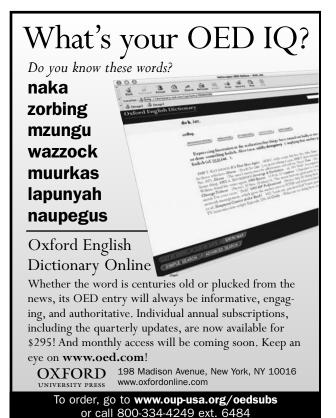
gers have used the term *blogspace* to refer to the world of blogging, but the most popular word for that concept at the moment is *blogosphere*. The word was apparently coined by William Quick, of the *Daily Pundit* (an achievement recognized by William Safire in his *New York Times Magazine* column of July 28, 2002). Based, of course, on *atmosphere*, *stratosphere*, and similar words, the gaseous connotation of *blogosphere* seems appropriate, given the constantly changing world of weblogs, which are held together through the loose bonds of interconnected hyperlinks, and which seems to be expanding indefinitely (and which can be a forum for a lot of hot air).

Another word for the same concept is *Blogistan*, coined, no doubt, during late 2001 or early 2002 when all eyes were on Afghanistan, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, and their Central Asian neighbors. *Blogistan* gave rise to extensions such as "Radio Free Blogistan," and "The Distributed Republic of Blogistan," but has fallen into disuse. Perhaps this is because world affairs have moved on, or perhaps it is simply because *blogosphere* seems more appropriate. Unlike the *blogosphere*'s infinitely expandable universe, *blogistan* would seem to have distinct (if permeable) borders.

Blog rot appears to have been coined by blogger Buzz Bruggeman, a term which he defined as "not staying in the game and offering up great stuff on a daily basis." The Laughing Librarian weblog uses the same term to describe a blog that peters out after a few weeks or months (after trying the less-catchy term blog decay), pointing out that nobody can be great literally every day. As a nonce-word, blog rot has more going for it than just assonance and the one-two punch of short one-syllable words; it also recalls link rot, the well-established term that describes the tendency of links on the World Wide Web to go bad over time (as web pages are taken down or moved).

Weblogs have become a fixture of online culture after just a few years. Similarly, the language of blogging and bloggers has become noted by the linguistic establishment. Weblog, blog (n. and v.), blogger, and weblogger all have draft entries dated March 2003 in the OED Online. For the newest permutations and coinages, though, the enterprising linguist will have to go to the source and brave the blogosphere.

[Steve Lawson is the Humanities Librarian at Colorado College. Steve is himself a blogger, but can't claim to be a member of the blognoscenti.]



#### EPISTOLA

Re: p. 12 of VERBATIM XXVIII/1, I note three slips (one legal, one of verbiage and one oversight) in one short page. Legal: "The terms used by those not legally married range from the legal (common law marriage) to the jocular (shacking up)." Wrong: Those who are found by a court to have entered into a valid common law marriage are legally married. As I tell my law students, being married is rather like being pregnant: you either are, or you aren't. Verbiage: "Cohabitating is a clinical, sterile word used by statisticians." Poorly educated statisticians, perhaps. The preferred word is, of course, cohabiting. One inhabits a house rather than inhabitates it. Oversight: "Now that many same-sex couples can have their relationships registered in Vermont and New York and in some Scandinavian countries as a civil union or registered partnership, new terms should emerge." They already have. I guess that no one has ever suggested, suggestively, to the author, "I'll 'C U' in Vermont."

Robert E. Rains

















Dickinson School of Law

#### Tom Pearce, Tom Pearce, Lend Me Your Good Ear

Jerome Betts Torquay, Devon

Tom Pearce, Tom Pearce, lend me your grey mare,

All along, down along, out along, lee, For I want for to go to Widecombe Fair, Wi' Bill Brewer, Jan Stewer, Peter Gurney, Peter Davy, Dan'l Widdon, Harry Hawke, Old Uncle Tom Cobley and all, Old Uncle Tom Cobley and all.

Telephone-canvassing has become a powerful tool in local and national politics. Three months practising the art, on a candidate's behalf in the southwestern coastal and rural fringes during the General Election of 2001 exposed me to a rich tapestry of voters' voices, as well as names that grow increasingly surreal as memory telescopes the experience.

Some names predispose both owner and caller to a fruitful exchange with an undercurrent of good humour. William Shakespeare proved to be a genial retiree from the Midlands, Richard Turpin answered as "Dick Turpin," and Francis Drake was keen to singe the other side's beard, as it were.

Other names provoked the good humour only in the canvasser, as when those apparently fitting some ludicrous pattern occurred near each other in the selective non-alphabetical list. What strange seaside feast could bring together Mesdames Stout, Trout, Winkles, Scoffham, Butter, and Salt? From what undiscovered draft of a Hardyesque novel of bucolic angst do Miles Hitherday, Helen Harrower, Mandy Hempseed, and Aaron Ettles hail?

There are surnames, particularly of the hyphenated kind, that are disasters waiting to happen. Faced with a *Bodley-Tickell*, either careful practice with the stresses on the first and last syllables, or a private pre-emptive venting of the supporter-alienating slip "Bodily-Tickle" may be in order.

Rehearsal is also advisable when dealing with all-female households sharing surnames like *Slagg*, *Bastard*, and worse. Speech gremlins delight in subverting innocent enquiries in the hope of producing unfortunate utterances such as "Which of the three *Hoares* am I speaking to?"

However, even the most off-script of responses at least proceeds from a human being, which gives the quick-tongued a chance to establish an informative dialogue. This is hardly possible with the answering machines the caller constantly triggers, and occasionally can start talking to before realisation comes. Various of the commercial ones become familiar opponents, acquiring pseudo-personalities and labels like "the plummy-voiced git" or "the cooing Canadian."

Whatever the electoral results, it left one canvasser marvelling at the variety of regional and social accents still found among the middle-aged and above, from velvety local burrs to the distinctive Scots, Midlands and Geordie of incomers, or the cut-glass-and-whiplash of Hauteur Heights. At the beginning of the twenty-first century they are alive and well and living in the West Country, wi' Bill Brewer, Dick Turpin, Aaron Ettles, Mandy Hempseed, Will'm Shakespeare, Francis Drake, Old Fruity Tone Robot and all.

[Jerome Betts has taught EFL in Torquay and Totnes for the past thirty years.]

#### SIC! SIC! SIC!

Prices [of gasoline] are hitting near-record highs, blamed by oil industry officials on an unstable foreign supply and a low inventory—or artificial manipulation of the market by oil-industry critics. [from The Journal News (Westchester County, N.Y.) August 29, 2003. Submitted by Stephen E. Hirschberg, MD, Elmsford, New York. "Oh, those manipulative critics!"]



"This has revealed an Achilles heel at the heart of the North American power system." [Heard during a news broadcast on the U.K.'s Classic FM radio station reporting on the power failures in the U.S. and Canada. Submitted by Tony Hall, Aylesbury. "I suppose if you have a heel in your heart you have to expect the odd mishap?"



#### HORRIBILE DICTU

Mat Coward Somerset, Britain

One of the spam emails which I receive most often is headed "Best Dating Site for Interracial Singles." This bothers me. I've met plenty of *multiracial* singles and innumerable *interracial couples*—but surely you can't be an interracial *single*?

I'll tell you something else that bothers me: is the phrase "spam emails" tautologous? I suspect it is, but I just can't bring myself to write *spam* and leave it at that; either the usage is as yet too unfamiliar, or I'm the wrong generation, or both. In my defence, let me note that my computer has the same problem; its spellchecker doesn't recognise *spam* (unless it's typed with an upper case initial.)

No doubt VERBATIM readers will be able to sort that one out for me. This column is always delighted to hear from readers, via the magazine's usual addresses, commenting on Horribiles already discussed or nominating their own.

In a recent issue, I wondered whether the Pentagon's employment of teen slang was designed to lessen the impact of controversial statements. E. Noel Fletcher of Los Angeles takes this thought in a different direction, by looking at the broadening of the application of the term *rip off* in the 1960s. "By calling both *rip offs*, activists suggested moral equivalency between an overcharge at a newsstand and a bank hold-up by radicals. Ultimately any profit from any activity was deemed to be a *rip off*. The usage was unthinkingly adopted by people who did not realize their acceptance and use of that terminology in daily discourse promoted a radical agenda."

Raymond Harris of north London forwarded a letter he'd received promising that "the book is finally on it's way to you," and added this note: "Greengrocer's apostrophe—from a bookseller!" I wonder if Mr Harris was delighted or horrified by this just plain errant apostrophe (not really a greengrocer's apostrophe, which is usually added to give an added fillip to a plural, such as *banana's*); both, I imagine, if he's anything like me.

A number of people have suggested "complete stranger" as an example of superglued words; can



there ever be a *partial* stranger? (Which reminds me, if you'll forgive the diversion, of a routine performed decades ago by the British comedy duo, Morecambe and Wise. "I'm not a complete idiot, you know," huffs the straight man. "Why," replies the comic, "which bit is missing?")

Sports commentators can generally be relied upon to help me fill this page. Lately, I've noticed they've become very fond of using *ordinary* to mean *bad*: "England were worse than disappointing out there today, John, they were downright ordinary." *Very ordinary* has become quite common—if you see what I mean—but the other day I heard ordinariness taken to new heights, when an opening post-game gambit of "That was a very ordinary display by the boys today, John," was effortlessly topped with "It was very ordinary indeed, John, shockingly ordinary—that was an *extraordinarily* ordinary performance by the boys." Got that? The boys weren't very good.

I think I've just got space to briefly revisit an old favourite—the "parental guidance" plague, and the strangulated euphemisms it gives rise to. A current British TV advertisement for a children's film is the first I've seen to warn that the picture "Contains mild language." Shouldn't *mild* language be the opposite of the dreaded *strong* language—and therefore desirable—or has *language* really become a synonym for *obscenity*?

I'll end this time with an example of admirable honesty on the part of a British politician. *Hansard*, the parliamentary record, recently recorded an exchange which began with an opposition MP asking: "I welcome any steps to try to improve the quality and depth of regulatory impact assessments, some of which, I think we all recognise, have been lamentably superficial, but would the honourable gentleman consider the case for a system of routine post-implementation audit of regulatory impact assessments and the costs actually imposed on business by legislation, so that we can generate a feedback to the process of pre-legislative regulatory impact assessments that might over time improve their quality?"

The honourable gentleman in question replied: "I do not understand that."

[Have Horribiles for this column? Send them to Mat c/o editor@verbatimmag.com.]



## INTER ALIA

#### Ersatz Languages

Gordon S. Jones Draper, Utah

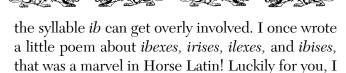
Some years ago, I asked S.I. Hayakawa, the noted linguist, what the technical term was for what I called "ersatz languages." Sam was Senator Sam then, known as "Sleeping Sam," because of his habit of going to sleep on the floor of the U.S. Senate. Anyway, Sam said he really didn't know, though he was, of course, familiar with them. He suggested that I get in touch with the people that publish VERBATIM. They would know what to call them if anyone did.

This answer was not as much help as you might expect, since my reason for asking was that I was thinking of writing an article for VERBATIM about ersatz languages. The upshot was that I didn't write the article, and then Melanie Falcon did ("Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Pig Latin But Were Afraid To Ask," XXVII/1).

What I wanted to write about, and am now writing about, is Horse Latin, a much more dignified and useful language, the one we spoke in our family as children and in which we still converse from time to time.

In Horse Latin, one inserts the syllable *ib* before each vowel sound in a word. *Horse Latin* itself becomes, then, *Hiborse Libatibin*, the silent *e* meriting no notice. The *i* is always long, and almost always stressed. *Bibooks, mibusibic*, the *ibarts*, and (especially) the *nibeighbibors*, all were discussable and discussed in Horse Latin. Whereas Pig Latin makes only the one minor change no matter how long the word, so that *ansubstantiationtray* is immediately recognizable to the uninitiated, *tribansibubstibantibiibatibon* is a total muddle, making Horse Latin much more satisfactory as a "secret" language.

Not that Horse Latin is perfect. As the last example demonstrates, Horse Latin does tend to lead to long words, and one can easily go astray in the middle of sesquipedalian constructions (sibesquibipibedibalibiban cibonstribuctibons). And words using the letter *i* a lot, or (even worse)



have forgotten it now.

A regular feature of our family reunions is the singing (with great gusto) of "The Garbageman's Daughter," and then its repetition (with even more gusto) in Horse Latin ("Thibe Gibargibagemiban's Dibaughtiber"). My staid eldest sister once joined me in belting this one out to a transfixed (not to say horrified) group of my friends at a party at our house in Virginia. That may have been the high point of my experience with this happy tongue.

Although her article was devoted to the decidedly less satisfactory Pig Latin, Ms. Falcon does mention Horse Latin (or at least a dialect of it), mis-identifying it as "Oppish." As it happens, I speak fluent Oppish as well as Horse Latin, and I can tell you that Ms. Falcon's informant seriously misled her. Rather than inserting the *op* syllable after each consonant in a word, in fact Oppish inserts the syllable before each vowel sound. No wonder Ms. Falcon could not pronounce *umbrella*. It should actually be the easily managed *opumbropellopa*, or in the true dialect, the (equally unintelligible to the non-Horse Latin speaker) *ibumbribelliba*.

When I first ran into Oppish, it was called "Hoppigopinsopon topalk," after the Higginson family of Denver, Colorado (*Copoloporopadopo*), who claimed to have invented it. Though only experienced then in the *ib* dialect of Horse Latin, I was immediately able to understand the native Op speakers, and after taking a few minutes to re-wire my brain, able to speak it as well. (My cousin's family speaks a dialect they call Chicken Latin, which uses the syllable *ik* instead of *ib* or *op*. The *i* is kept short, as in *chicken*, which make it difficult to pronounce, in my opinion.)

I am grateful to Ms. Falcon for breaking the ice in VERBATIM on ersatz languages, and hope that she will accept these few notes on the subject in the spirit in which they are meant.

Ibi ibalsibo hibope thibat wibe wibill sibee mibore ibartibicibles ibin Hiborse Libatibin ibin thibese pibagibes.

[Mr. Jones lives (and loves words) in Draper, Utah.]















#### EPISTOLAE

Kathleen E. Miller's article on naming wars (VERBATIM XXVIII/1) mentions the major participants in the First and Second World Wars.

Curiously, she ignores Russia, the biggest player in both wars in terms of the size of army and number of casualties.

As a member of the Triple Entente with Britain and France, Russia entered the war against Germany and Austria in August 1914. Their military reverses and heavy losses were a major cause of the Revolution in 1917. In March 1918 they made a separate peace with Germany.

In World War II, Russia joined with Britain in fighting Hitler after the Germans attacked them in June 1941. They continued in the war until their troops captured Berlin in May 1945. They lost about eleven million combatants and seven million civilians.

As far as names go, the Russians never called it World War II. To them it is always *The Great Patriotic War*; clearly showing their view of it as a fight for national survival, rather than a global conflict.

Incidentally, John Curtin was Australian Prime Minister, not Austrian.

Andrew Tucker London

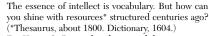
[We received many, many letters about use of succession where we meant secession in that same issue, for which we can only say, you evidently don't have to be Homer to nod. This is currently in the running for "Worst VERBATIM Error Ever." Further nominations, unfortunately, always accepted.]



Perusing the piece "Say It with Words" in the latest VERBATIM (XXVIII/1) I was reminded of a cartoon that appeared not long ago in *The New Yorker*. It depicted a couple seated at some distance from each other on a bench in a bistro. She appeared distraught; he looked perplexed. The caption went something like this: "You can't blame me if you misunderstood. I never said, 'I love you'—I said, 'Luv ya.' Big difference!"

W S Haubrich, MD

## CAN YOU PASS THE "VOCABULARY TEST"? e essence of intellect is vocabulary. But how can



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Today I received an email message containing this gem: "We will need to be nibble to take advantage of this."

[Is there] a word for a phenomenon that sometimes afflicts me in conversation—mixing up the vowels in two words which are synonyms? When I want to say *mainly* or *mostly*, I often come out with *moanly*, and then when I try to correct myself, *mastely*. I can't think of another set of words that produces that confusion, so perhaps it doesn't deserve a word of its own.

Chris Mills

P.S. Speaking of malapropisms, a friend of mine (whose first language is not English) is fond of saying, "and Bob's your ankle."



A couple comments on the article "Say It with Words" (XXVIII/1) In Latin, the word order *Te amo* is at least as likely as the order *amo te*.

Virtually all grammars say the verb was normally at the end of its clause unless some special emphasis was desired. St. Augustine famously wrote "Sero te amavi."

One of my favorite languages for "I love you" is Hungarian: *szeretlek*, where the *-lek* ending specifies both the subject "I" and object "you" (and also illustrates vowel harmony). I believe other combinations of subject-object pronouns have no special form.

Dan Pratt



## CLASSICAL BLATHER

#### It's Only Music, Don't Be Scherzo

Nick Humez argentarius@juno.com

"Recent neuroimaging data," writes Aniruddh Patel, "suggests an overlap in the processing syntactic relations in language and music." Perhaps it comes as no surprise that the field of music is rich in its own terminology describing gradations of volume and tempo (forte and piano, lento and allegro), techniques specific to particular musical instruments (pizzicato, scordatura, con legno) and the forms that a movement or part of one within a compositions can take, (rondo, scherzo, da capo aria, coda).

It is no accident that most of these terms are Italian, for it was in Italy that the musical paradigm shift from high Renaissance counterpoint to the beginnings of the baroque first occurred, the rest of Europe following suit. Claudio Monteverdi wrote the first Western opera (Orfeo, 1607) even as Shakespeare was catching his breath from producing King Lear and Macbeth (1605-6).<sup>2</sup> And it was not musical style alone that percolated north from the sunny Mediterranean: As Switzerland exported mercenaries, so Italy exported musicians and their instruments. One of the proudest assets of Louis XIV's court was his famous string orchestra, the "Twenty-Four;" it would have been a surprise if there were no Italians among them, let alone no Italian violins.<sup>3</sup> François Couperin's L'Apothéose de Lully, a trio sonata with narration describing the entry into heaven of Jean-Baptiste Lully, the Sun King's star court composer, concludes with a reconciliation between Lully and his younger rival, the Italian composer Archangelo Corelli, with the proviso that Italian movement names be henceforth known by their Gallic equivalents.<sup>4</sup> Wishful thinking on the part of the French: Italian terminology had already had a corner on the discourse of music (and arguably how we map it onto our minds) for a century; and so it continues down to the present day.

Terms referring to *tempo* 'time' include *allegro*, 'fast' (literally, 'happy'), *andante* 'going along,' i.e.



not too fast, adagio figuratively 'slow,' literally 'a proverb or adage,' thus by analogy, 'in a sententious manner,' lento (the normal Italian word for 'slow'), and largo 'large,' hence 'very slowly;' allargando means 'broadening the tempo.'5 These may be further modified by appending moderato 'moderately' ma non troppo 'but not too much' or assai 'enough,' i.e. 'very.' Faster than allegro are (allegro) vivace 'lively' and presto 'nimbly,' which is very fast indeed. Metronomes will sometimes carry scales indicating corresponding settings for the tempo described in words; thus the Franz Electronic Metronome advises setting the quarter note equal to between 100 and 152 beats per minute for presto, 80 to 160 for vivace, 84 to 144 for allegro, 66 to 126 for moderato, 56 to 88 for andante, 50 to 76 for adagio, 52 to 108 for lento, and 42 to 66 for largo.6 (There is considerable overlap among these subjective categories.)

Volume is indicated by forte 'strong, loud,' indicated in the musical score by the single italic letter f, and piano 'soft,' p in the score; the pianoforte (nowadays shortened to piano) was so named because it allowed one to play both soft and loud passages on it without the addition of supplementary ranks of strings (as on a harpsichord—Italian (clavi)cembalo, originally 'zither with keys,' whence French clavecin, 'harpsichord') or ranks of organ pipes. Mezzo piano (mf) and mezzo forte (mp) are intermediate steps between loud and soft (mezzo means 'middle'), louder or softer being indicated by superlatives: fortissimo, 'very loud,' represented by ff and pianissimo (pp). Crescendo means 'growing (louder),' and diminuendo, 'diminishing (in volume),' while sforzando means 'beginning loud, dropping quickly to soft' (derived from the verb sforzare, 'to constrain').

Since the string section is the core of most orchestras, it may come as no surprise that there are a host of terms referring particularly to string technique. *Pizzicato* means 'plucked,' its opposite being *arco*, 'with the bow.' Not just the horsehaired side of the bow need be used, however; there is a technique called *col legno*, 'with the wood,' in which the strings are struck by the back of the bow.<sup>8</sup> *Tremolo* 'trembling' is produced, according to Laszlo Boehm, "by the extremely rapid alterna-

















tion of a very short down-bow and up-bow with the upper end of the bow." String scores include special marks for detached notes: A dot above a note indicates *spiccato* 'unhooked, lopped off,' a quick-tempo short stroke in the middle of the bow in which the bow actually bounces off the string; a vertical wedge over a note means *martellato* 'hammered' or *secco* 'dry,' played with short bowing and a forceful, sudden release. Other special effects in bowing are *sul ponticello* 'on the [little] bridge,' in which the strings are bowed very close to the bridge of the instrument, producing a reedy sound, and *sul tasto*, which means 'over the fingerboard' (literally 'on the touch'), producing a sound Boehm calls "flute-like."

volta. (Volta literally means 'turn.') An additional section appended after a repeated section (or, in sonata form, after the recapitulation) is called a coda 'tail').

It is to Italian that we owe the names for instruments in the string section themselves. The original word *viola* seems to have come from Provençal *violar*, thought to be an imitative verb for the sound made by a bowed stringed instrument. Italian originally distinguished between the *viola da gamba* 'leg fiddle,' which had gut frets and was held between the knees, and the *viola da braccia* 'arm fiddle,' whose name survives both as English *viola* and in its German name, *Bratsche*. A little *viola* was a *violino* (whence *violin*); a big one was a

## ... the same effect can also be produced by a kettledrum, almost always with humorous intent.

Con sordino means 'with the mute;' this is one of several terms used by string players but common to other musicians as well. So are legato (literally, 'tied,' hence 'smoothly'—the root is the same as that of ligature, religious, and obligation), arpeggio a 'broken chord,' from arpa, 'harp,' staccato('short,' literally 'untied'), and glissando ('sliding,' in which one goes from one note to the next not by discrete steps but in a continuously varying pitch.  $^{10}$  Slide trombones are particularly good at this, but the same effect can also be produced by a kettledrum, humorous almost always with intent. (Percussionists also use the terms tremolo and secco, the last in the special sense of 'dry and muffled;' the term suffocato 'suffocated' refers to damping a pair of cymbals immediately after they are struck.)

Playing with expression is guided by a number of Italian terms as well: cantabile 'songlike,' agitato 'agitated,' con fuoco 'with fire,' grave 'serious,' piangendo 'tearful,' and espressivo 'with expression'). Performance instructions include da capo 'from the beginning,' literally 'from the head') or dal segno 'from the sign,' i.e. a mark indicating the beginning of the repeated passage) al Fine 'to the end,' generally indicated by the italicized word Fine and a double bar). First and second endings are designated respectively by Prima volta and Seconda

violone (now called a double bass in English and a contrabasso in Italian), and a violoncello 'little big viola' became shortened in English to 'cello. 12 (The apostrophe is now generally omitted.) Other instruments in the string family have long ago gotten their gold watches and retired, such as the pocket violin favored by 18th-century dancing masters and the arpeggione, a six-stringed, bowed bass viol in guitar tuning, whose fleeting existence in the early 19th century would be utterly forgotten but for a single splendid sonata written for the instrument by Franz Schubert, nowadays played on the double bass.

The names for the voice parts in a choir are likewise Italian: bass from bass, 'low,' tenor from tenore—a word nowadays carrying several meanings including 'content,' 'substance,' 'true intent,' and 'harmony' as well as the tenor part in music, originally where the melody was held (tenuto)—alto meaning 'high' (i.e. higher than the tenor part) and soprano from sopra, 'above.' 13 (Note that alto and soprano have the masculine ending -o: Though these two parts are now generally sung by women, the Renaissance choir almost invariably consisted of men on the three lower parts—the alto part was in effect a high tenor line—and boys on the top.)

We are also indebted to Italian for the names given to a number of forms of musical compositions: *aria* 'air,' *fugue* (the French adaptation of

















Italian fuga, 'flight,' referring to the way in which the voices seem to chase one another; an entry of two voices of a fugue in close succession is referred to as a stretto, Italian for 'pressed, strict,' sonata 'sounded')—of which there were originally two forms, the sonata da chiesa 'church sonata') and sonata da camera 'chamber sonata,' of which the latter won out—sinfonia 'symphony,' rondo 'round,' so called from its returning to a single refrain in between different bridge sections), menuetto 'minuet.' In the evolution of the symphony from the baroque dance suite the minuet was eventually replaced with a scherzo 'pleasantry, jest,' a fast movement usually in triple time—whose name is pronounced "scairt so."

In the last century and a half, many composers from other nations began using equivalent terms in their own languages to get away from the terminological dominance of Italian. As of this writing, however, it seems unlikely that moderato will be supplanted by French paisible, espressivo by English heartfelt, or agitato by German bewegt. In consequence, musical Italy may still boast a lasting terminological and conceptual victory, achieved on the same principle attributed to Confederate colonel Nathan B. Forrest: "Git there fustest with the mostest."15

#### Notes:

1 Patel, "Language, Music, Syntax, and the Brain." Nature Neuroscience 6:7 (July 2003).

2 Nowhere is the shift from Renaissance to baroque more salient than in Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672), who as a young man studied for several years with Giovanni Gabrieli in Venice, and after several court appointments back home in Germany returned for additional lessons with Monteverdi. Schütz's voluminous output is in a style that nicely serves as a "missing link" between the late Renaissance polyphony of the Gabrielis and German early baroque masters such as Dietrich Buxtehude; a prime example is the Schütz Christmas History cantata (1664), still frequently performed. In England, on the other hand, physical separation from the rest of Europe often made for a time lag in cultural developments already well underway on the Continent; thus it was not till the very end of the 1600s that the British got the hang of writing music in the new style, e.g. Henry Purcell's sword-and-sandal opera Dido and Aeneas. (Dating from 1689, the year after the Glorious Revolution that brought William and Mary to the throne of England, it has a quaintly crashing libretto by

Nahum Tate, better known for a number of psalm versifications which found their way into hymnbooks and are still sung today. The opera offers such doggerel delights as a chorus of witches and fiends who sing, "Destruction's our delight;/Delight our greatest sorrow:/Elissa [i.e. Dido] bleeds tonight,/And Carthage flames tomorrow!")

3 Cremona alone had three illustrious violin-making houses. Andrea Guarneri opened his own shop there in 1654; both he and Antonio Stradivari (1644-1737) had learned the craft from Nicolò Amati, active in the same town till shortly before the latter's death in 1684.

4 Couperin's sonata was published in 1725; Lully had died back in 1687, in his 55th year, from gangrene contracted after he accidentally skewered his own foot with the staff with which he was conducting a performance of his Te Deum. Archangelo Corelli, 21 years his junior, retired from public life at about the same age, having exercised great influence over the musical scene at Rome as its foremost violin performer and teacher; though he was by no means a prolific composer, his work was highly influential, in part because it showed how to reconcile the formal demands of contrapuntal writing with the emergence of the violin as a soloistic instrument. Even the English were said to prefer his music to Handel's well into the early nineteenth century. See the articles on Corelli and Lully in Stanley Sadie, ed., The Norton/Grove Concise Encyclopedia of Music (New York/London: W.W. Norton and Company, 1988)—a remarkably good reference resource for those without either shelf space and/or money sufficient for the classic 20-volume Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicans.

5 Thus Milton's boxed set of two poem-essays on cheerfulness ("Hence, loathéd Melancholy....") and melancholy ("Hence, vain deluding joys....") are respectively entitled L'Allegro ('the happy one') and Il Penseroso ('the thoughtful one'). Milton's 20th-century editor Merritt Y. Hughes (John Milton: Complete Poems and Major Prose, New York: Odyssey Press, 1957, p. 68) dates the two poems to "late in Milton's years at Cambridge, before he went to Horton," i.e. prior to 1636, his 28th year.

6 My Franz is a Model LM-FB-4, manufactured in New Haven, Connecticut under U.S. patents #2,150,967, #2,715,841, #2,817,208, #3,230,785, and #3,284,650.

7 An early type was called the *fortepiano*.

8 The finale of the Symphonie Fantastique of Hector Berlioz, a vision of a witches' sabbath, includes a distinctive col legno passage of eight measures for most of the string section, starting about three dozen bars from the end of the

9 Boehm, Modern Music Notation, New York: Schirmer Books, 1961—an invaluable aid to composers and performers alike.

10 In pit-orchestra slang a staccato chord is often colorfully called a *stinger*.

11 No relation to the Late Latin word viola, for the flower we now call the violet; this appears instead to be cognate with the Greek word for the same flower, ion.

















12 For a discussion of the *-one/-oon* suffix, meaning 'big one' see my earlier Classical Blather column "Juney Toons," VERBATIM XXIV/2 (Spring 1999), pp. 18–21. 13 The Latin terms were *bassus*, *tenor*, *altus*, and *superius* respectively.

14 During the 1990s I was the classical music stringer for the Maine Sunday Telegram and its sister daily, the Portland Press Herald. It took five years for my features editor, Jane Lord, to get around to asking me, "Just what is a shirs-oh, anyway?" This was an epiphany: I realized that if my editor didn't know, or even how to pronounce it, perhaps many of my readers might benefit from a glossary too, so inserted one into my weekly preview column, Classical Beat, the first slow weekend thereafter. The present essay is a much expanded version of the first ten inches of that column, published in the Telegram on October 15, 1995. 15 Although he had "little formal education," according to the Cambridge Dictionary of American Biography (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995, page 247), Forrest, a former livestock dealer, planter, and slave trader who went on after the Civil War to be the first Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan, was reported by Generals Basil Duke and Richard Taylor to have actually said—in perfectly grammatical English—"Get there first with the most men."

[Nick Humez last wrote for VERBATIM on words for lies and lying. Look it up (XXVIII/2) if you don't believe us.]



## **EPISTOLA**

I'm a new and French reader of VERBATIM, which I discovered recently when I bought the eponymous book edited by Erin McKean, itself found while browsing in an English-language bookstore in Paris. After I read it with what I can only describe as finger-licking pleasure ("unputdownable," as reviewers of thrillers are fond of neologizing), I asked for a subscription for my birthday and, what's perhaps more surprising, actually got it, together with a lovely handwritten note from the UK publisher.

But to the point of this "Epistola," for there is one. I wanted to note a small mistake (most likely a typo, given the erudition of the article) in Nick Humez's otherwise tremendously entertaining article ("Pants on Fire," XXVIII/2). The end of footnote 1 states that "[in French], a liar is a *menteux*."

Close, but no cigar: the correct word is actually *menteur*. I swear this is true!

Finally, I read with interest Ms. McKean's EX CATHEDRA column in the same issue, and found myself hoping that one day I would muster enough courage to actually submit an article to this magazine that manages to be at the same time so learned and so much fun. Perhaps an article on the French Verlan, since one is sought. In which case I will try to "illuminate without condescending" and tell your readers that Verlan is not really like "the Pig Latin of French," with all due respect to VERBATIM's editor. The latter does exist, and is called Javanais (which is also French for the much more official Javanese language, so I'm afraid it's not a politically correct name, but c'est la vie ...). As in Pig Latin, Javanais is (or was, as it went out of fashion years ago) spoken by adding a nonsense syllable (always av or va, hence its name) after each consonant. Thus, a simple bonjour becomes bavonjavour, and the more complex chaussure 'shoe' is reshaped into the hardly intellegible chavaussavurave. Unlike in Pig Latin however, the first consonant of the word is not moved to the end. Verlan, on the other hand, consists of phonetically switching the first and second syllables of some (not all) two-syllable words, so that for instance bonjour becomes jourbon, or bizarre turns into the odd zarbi. Verlan itself derives its name from l'envers 'reversed' in Verlan. Since these rather simple beginnings, Verlan has evolved somewhat, so that some Verlan words are more difficult to decipher than others, but that is another story.

I apologize for being so finnicky (or finicky, or finiking, or finical, take your pick ...), but I assume that is a common trait of a number of your readers. In fact, it is likely that these small matters have already been pointed out to you. But perhaps not by French readers, you know, the kind that actually live in Paris and laugh themselves silly when they learn that some grown-ups in the U.S. earnestly believe that the epitome of a patriotic act is to rename French fries into "Freedom fries"...

Olivier Kaiser



#### AS THE WORD TURNS

#### Latin Lovers

Barry Baldwin Calgary, Alberta

Eleanor Dickie, in her *Latin Forms of Address* (2002), counts 244 terms of endearment against 149 insults, a statistic that may weaken the image of Romans as unsentimental cold fishes.

Just a sample here, omitting the scores of obvious adjectives (e.g. *Dearest*, in regular/comparative/superlative forms). For those VERBATIM readers who remember their Latin, I add it parenthetically.

In Plautus' *The Little Carthaginian* (vv. 360–63), a swain thus wheedles his girl: "My pleasure, my delight, my life, my pleasantness, my kiss, my honey, my colostrum, my softest little cheese."

Another Plautine comedy, *Donkey Girl* (vv. 693-94), features this tart's address to a slave: "Duckling, dove or puppy, swallow, jackdaw, tiny little sparrow."

Suetonius (*Life of Caligula*, ch. 13) says the besotted populace hailed him as "Star, chick, babe, nursling."

The poets Martial (*Epigrams*, bk. 10 no. 68) and Juvenal (*Satire* 6 vv. 191–96) rebuke women for using Greek love-talk, especially *Zoe kai Psyche* ('My Life and Soul'), "words fit only for under the blanket."

They were, though—mocks the philosopher-bard Lucretius (*On the Nature of Things*, bk. 4 vv. 1160–69)—useful to the man as euphemisms for his lady's physical defects. This verbal technique is also recommended in a fragment of Philaenis' sex manual (all ancient sex manuals were attributed to women).

Dorothy Sayers, in *Busman's Honeymoon*, provides the best gloss: after the wedding night, Harriet Wimsey (née Vane) lies wondering if Lord Peter's first words would be in English or French.

The first passage's *pleasantness* (amoenitas), along with (elsewhere) my commodity and my opportunity, affords scope to Marxist cash-nexus analyses of love. Little eye (ocellus) is a bit loaded—



Roman graffito-mongers often drew penises with an eye in the tip. Little lip (labellum) may be a paradoxical pun on labes ('ruin,' a regular insult). Kiss is here savium: Catullus would later introduce basium (whence baiser, bacio, beso, etc.), poetically heaping his kisses onto Lesbia to the tune of 3,300 (Ralegh's Now Serena Be Not Coy extends them to infinity)—we may agree with Shakespeare's amorous Antony, "There's beggary in the love that can be measured." Honey (mel—there are several cognate terms, plus a Pompeian wall-scribbler's aphorism "Lovers like bees live in honey") is the obvious ancestor of amatory American, albeit there is no Latin equivalent to "Hi, Honey, I'm Home." Colostrum (same in Latin), unexplained and untranslated by Dickie, denotes beestings, another compliment with possible barb. Cheese (caseus) in Australian slang (so Eric Partridge) stands for wife (Cockneyesque rhyming slang, cheese and kisses = 'missus'). In view of its concomitant adjective (molliculus), I deduce that the Roman lover would express this cheesy compliment "con brie-o."

In the remorselessly zoöphile second address, duckling (anaticula) is a unique sobriquet; although Northern English duck (or ducks) and theatrical camp duckie come to mind, while in eighteenthcentury slang a ship's quartermaster was a duckfucker. The dove (columba) had a reputation for lechery. As with us (cf. the poem Jackdaw of Rheims), jackdaws were proverbial thieves. The sparrow (passer) was particularly libidinous, not only at Rome, Chaucer's Sumner being "as hoot and lecherous as a sparwe." (I won't dilate on British sparrowfart 'dawn,' except to wonder if these birds are really that flatulent and who has actually heard them erupt?) Some interpret Catullus' poem on his mistress' deceased sparrow (clearly Not A Well Bird) as a lament for his sexual impotence, a Northern English expression for which is my bird's dead. Dorothy Parker has the last word here: "That thing he wrote, the time the sparrow died/Oh, most unpleaant—gloomy tedious words!/I called it sweet, and made believe I cried;/The stupid fool!—I've always hated birds!"

Of the Caligulan compliments, *chick* (*pullus*) was Roman (also old American) gay argot—cf. the remarkably open allusions to prison homosexuality in

















Elvis's *Jailhouse Rock*—while the American sense of *star* 'hardened criminal' well suits this emperor.

Two final titbits, neither in Dickie. At school, we learned Mercimoni Lepidi! What a smart baggage!' for its grammar, but I fancy the Romans were more concerned with the genitals than the genitives. A barmaid in Petronius' Satyricon is called a bacciballum. Nobody knows what this means. 'round as a berry' is one etymological possibility. I have seen it rendered butterball, not a candidate for revival in this age of Calista Flockhart and other Hollywood living skeletons. 'Pretty round thing' and 'absolute peach' are two other modern British translations. A French effort is un superbe brin de fille. Two Teutonic stabs are ein allerliebstes Weibschen and ein putziges Schnuckelchen-German is really not designed for amatory discourse. A good example, this, of the day-to-day problems that confront classical editors; as Robert Frost remarked, "Poetry is what gets left out of the translation."

[Keep a lookout for much more from Barry Baldwin in future issues.]



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## Let There Be Light

Larry Tritten San Francisco, California

As someone who tends to drink low calorie beer, it occurred to me recently that some brands are marketed as *light* beer and others as *lite* beer. The difference between the two is a matter of stylistic ambience, and I by far prefer the former. To be sure, the word *lite* is inescapable when one is buying low calorie products. The makers of many of them obviously consider purposely misspelled words appealing to consumers (or possibly to trademark lawyers), although it is a practice whose charm is lost on me. *Light* is an Old English word that has a certain buoyancy and even subliminal sense of zest, but *lite* is a mutated neologism that is to the written word what a siren is to melody.

Yet the word *lite* is one of the milder subversions of the integrity of the written word that consumers are exposed to. Misspelling words for effect is a ubiquitous practice among the purveyors of products and services in America. Whether it exists to the same extent in other countries I don't know. Most of the tricks one can perform with words have descriptive terms, such as metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, and so on, but I am unable to find a term that defines misspelling words for effect, and I suspect the reason is that the practice was virtually nonexistent until merchants and advertisers pioneered and refined it. As advertising techniques go, it is exceeded in popularity only by anthropomorphism, i.e., humanizing products—peanuts, toilet bowls, blobs of dough, you name it. Yet making the language do pratfalls for our amusement is a concept that seems to me essentially gauche and irritating. Walk down an aisle in any supermarket and you can see the language doing not just pratfalls, but half gainers, nose dives, and flip flops. You can see it skid, lurch, and plummet. Korn for corn. Cheez for cheese. Kleen for clean.

If I seem a little too stuffy in my attitude, let me make it clear (not *kleer*) that I'm all for having fun with words. Metaphors and similes, the actors and musicians of language (to indulge in a bit of metaphoric anthropomorphism), delight me. But there is a poetic urge implicit in the use of

















metaphors and similes. Misspelling a word for effect seems to me no more congruous with stylistic integrity than putting a lampshade on one's head at a party is in tune with theatrical integrity. Metaphors and similes do arabesques, glissades, and entrechats, not pratfalls.

My lurid imagination conjures up a dreamlike image: William Strunk and E.B. White, the authors of the perennially popular Elements of Style, wheel their cart up to the checkout stand in a supermarket, and the cart contains Ry Krisp, Rice Krispies, Cheez It snack crackers, Kleenex, Quik chocolate milk, Cookie Stix, So-Dri paper towels, Chicken in a Biskit snack crackers, Wisk detergent, Kozy Kitten cat food, Reddi Wip, Ty-D-Bol toilet cleaner, Diet Rite cola, Brite floor cleaner, Star Kist tuna and Sun Kist orange juice, Kool-Aid, Morningstar Farms Chik patties and nuggets, and Kleen Guard furniture polish. Looking over that list, with its preponderance of words with the letter k, I find myself remembering something said by Willie, one of the two old vaudeville comics in Neil Simon's play, The Sunshine Boys: "Words with a k in it are funny. You didn't know that, did you? If it doesn't have a k it's not funny."

The pervasive use of the letter k in the words in the above lists substantiates this. Clearly the names of the products are skewed to amuse the consumer who, it must be assumed, with his good nature invoked, will automatically respond by favoring the product and thus buying it. I understand the premise, but personally remain unamused. I don't think it's because my sense of humor is deficient. In fact, I've always had a weakness for anthropomorphism and find such things as a gentrified peanut who wears a monocle, gloves, spats, a silk top hat, and carries a cane, to be lethally amusing. but a name like Reddi Wip makes me wince rather than smile, and all of those ostensibly whimsical ks are no more entertaining to me than a swarm of typos (the writer's blood enemy), which is exactly what they resemble.

On the plus side of the matter, I was heartened to observe while touring the aisles of a supermarket that those products using the word *lite* were outnumbered three to one by those using the original spelling of the word. Like an explorer in an exotic

realm, I encountered other sights ranging from the fanciful to the outré. Contemplating *Clamato* tomato cocktail, with its hybrid moniker that incorporates a misspelling, I thought of a passage from "Conversations With Helmholtz" in Woody Allen's collection, *Getting Even:* "I explained to Dr. Helmholtz that I could not order the *Lobstermato* (a tomato stuffed with lobster) in a certain restaurant. He found that a particularly asinine word and wished he could scratch the face of the man who conceived it." An apt reaction, I think.

Elsewhere on the shelves I came across *Olde Tyme Stix*, and marveled at the combination of Chaucerian English and new wave word boggling. I wondered how the crew behind *Cap'n Crunch* had failed to give him a an alliterative *k* word name, which seems more fitting for someone whose cargo is sweetened corn and oat cereal in a box designed to entice children. And I pondered the niceties of *ketchup* vs. *catsup*, learning subsequently in my etymological inquiry that ketchup is the proper word, its misleading *k* notwithstanding,

There will be those who, reading this, think I should liten up and go with the flow, so to speak. But it isn't that I don't think language should be playful, I just think that in its playfulness it should exhibit the intelligence of a comedian like George Carlin rather than the goofiness of a clown with a putty nose and big shoes. Suppose the inclination to blight the language in the way described were contagious and spread into other areas of usage. Imagine a literature that included titles like Long Day's Journey Into Nite, Tropic of Kaprikorn, and Lite in August. The next time you reach for a product whose misspelled name communicates its meaning with all of the style of a drunk performing with a hula hoop, then think about such a world and tell me to liten up again.

[Larry Tritten has written for The New Yorker, Vanity Fair, National Lampoon, and Spy.]

#### SIC! SIC! SIC!

Steve Reinders recently heard a WITI-TV reporter in Milwaukee explaining that someone "... was murdered to death." (Some people just don't know when to stop!)

















#### Famous Last Words

Paul Bayliss Liverpool

I heard a story recently about a man who, knowing that his days were numbered, wrote out a speech to be delivered at his funeral. It was nothing especially spiritual or philosophical, just a final goodbye to friends and family. His best friend was given the somewhat unpleasant task of delivering what were, in many respects, last words from beyond the grave. It has to be said, it must have been a friend he could trust—he didn't have much opportunity of a comeback if he was misquoted.

It seemed very odd to me but, more than that, it seemed to me to be cheating. The utterance of one's last words should be spontaneous and off the cuff. The most famous last words manage to combine a stunning insight into the mysteries of life, combined with an element of well-timed humour. Taking time to prepare beforehand rules out any chance of delivering inspired words of heroism or philosophical genius, or, even better than that, words spoken with an element of tragic yet comic timing. Just as it's always amusing to see people falling over, it's always a pleasure to hear about a stranger snuffing it in darkly humorous situations.

Many famous last words will, of course, be apocryphal. Some will have been embellished down the years while others will have been spoken by the soon-to-be-departed hours or even days before their final curtain. Others may never have been said at all but, sadly, the person quoted won't be able to defend him or herself. They'll just have to live with it from beyond the grave.

Captain Oates' renowned words "I am just going outside and may be some time" are recognised as one of the most courageous final utterances. Suffering terribly with gangrenous feet on Captain Scott's doomed expedition to the South Pole in 1912, Oates had already asked his companions to leave him behind and save themselves. They refused to do so, but as he rose to leave the tent on the morning of March 17th and made his heroic announcement, his colleagues knew that he was walking to his death.

There are many other examples of stoicism in the face of the ultimate adversity. Roman gladiators would reportedly salute the Roman Emperor with "Hail Caesar, those who are about to die salute you," a remarkably generous tribute under the circumstances, whilst the writer and politician Erskine Childers kindly advised the firing squad at his execution "Come close boys, it will be easier for you." Similarly, Joachim Murat, French cavalry commander and king of Naples, said to the men just about to pull the trigger, "Soldiers, save my face; aim at my heart. Farewell." Vanity to the last and most probably in vain as well.

However for leniency in the face of outright provocation, it would be hard to beat Richard I, who offered forgiveness to the young man who had just shot him with an arrow before ordering his attendants to "Take off his chains, give him a hundred shillings, and let him go." Young offenders getting away with it even then.

Those who can inject their last words with a touch of gallows humour deserve our utmost admiration. Voltaire, when asked to renounce the Devil, retorted quite succinctly from his deathbed, "This is no time for making new enemies," whilst Anaxagoras, Greek philosopher and school-teacher, will be revered by schoolboys everywhere for his response of "Give the boys a holiday" when asked did he have any final wishes.

It is, however, famous last words with an element of comic timing that prove to be the most memorable. Scottish essayist Thomas Carlyle's last words were reportedly "So this is death, well ..." Whether Carlyle was about to come up with a memorable insight into death we shall never know. It probably wouldn't have been as funny as the words he managed to get out. In a more public arena, John Palmer, the eighteenth-century English actor, managed an inspired theatrical exit from this mortal coil. Appearing on stage in the play The Stranger, Palmer's last line, and indeed last words, were the prophetic "There is another world and a better place." Little did he know that the other world wasn't so much around the corner than a couple of seconds away and hurtling straight towards him.

















It would take a fine effort to upstage Palmer's impeccable timing, but politician Henry Temple managed to do so, 67 years later. Obviously not wishing to accept a particularly gloomy prognosis from his doctor, Temple's last words, uttered with a tragically ironic authority, were "Die, my dear doctor? That's the last thing I shall do."

I've given some thought to my final verbal offering to the world since hearing about this man's funeral speech. As well as obviously hoping that they will be a long way off, I've decided that, without resorting to rather unsporting preparation beforehand, there's not a great deal one can do to prepare those last words. Unless you're in front of a firing squad or the like you're unlikely to know for certain that this really, really is it.

I'd like to think my final words would be short and sweet, to the point and tinted with an element of courage. My personal favourite famous last words are in fact a single word. Cicero, when faced by his assassins, didn't mince his words. "Strike" he said. They did. A famous last word.

[Paul Bayliss is fresh from graduating in Politics at Leeds University as a mature student. His other love is cricket, a game that he plays, he says, to a decidedly average standard.]



#### EPISTOLAE

Enjoyed Pat Sheil's article, "I before E."

But I guess they teach English a bit differently down under. In an early grade in the early '30s in deepest, darkest Wichita, Kansas, I was taught: "i before e, except after c, or when sounded like a, as in neighbor or weigh." Obviously the word eight should be added to that short list.

William R. Harmon



I wonder if any of your readers have knowledge of examples of equivalent homonyms that pick out a same class?

I have just one clear example so far, as illustration: the word *acid*. This word means substances that taste sour and turn litmus red. Acids also corrode metals. But in modern chemistry *acid* means 'proton-donor.' Acids as proton-donors satisfy exactly the same extensional conditions as as acids as sour-tasting, etc.

This example is possible in virtue of the rise of an explanatory theory able to account for the features of acids. But could there be examples that do not depend upon this?

I have a possible example: the word *will*. *Will* can mean 'desire.' It can also mean a sort of personal power, namely to act, or bring about a bodily movement. These senses, or the concepts expressed, are not identical. But the extensions are virtually identical, namely the actions in each case.

And this example does not hinge upon some theoretical superiority derived from modern science.

My point is, could there be a multitude of such homonyms in English?

If so no one seems ever to have noticed, the question would surely be of interest to your readers who in turn could probably furnish many examples.

Sincerely, James Lamb



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#### You've Got Game

Gloria Rosenthal Valley Stream, New York

One of the joys of being a word person is converting others to word-personhood. Holidays are perfect opportunities to make word-lovers out of your friends and relations through the giving of wordy presents, especially exciting word games.

The following list includes "brand new this year" games (marked \*), "within the last few years" games, and "classics we love but need a reminder" games. I've played every game listed here so I know whereof I praise.

Age categories are exactly as stated in the rules (whether "12 to adult" "12 and up", etc.). We've covered everything from stocking stuffers to eight days of gifts. Please note that prices often vary from one retailer to another, especially from these "suggested retail prices." To seek discounts, check toy and bookstores, or Google the name of the game and you will be directed to company websites, *amazon.com*, *boardgames.com*, and more.

Here, then, are my favorite games grouped, not by preference, but by price for your convenience. These games made the list because they are eminently playable with easy-to-understand rules and good packaging containing high-quality components. A few games are not technically "word games" but are related in a way sure to please "wordy" people. In short, these are the games you want to grab when somebody says, "Let the games begin."

\*Apples to Apples Crate Edition; 12 to adult, 4 to 10 players, \$29.95. New this year: an elegant wooden "crate" of Apples to Apples, a game where players match characteristics on green cards to a person, place, thing or event on red cards. The beautifully crafted crate holds more than 1,000 cards from the original game and two expansion sets. And Apples is the only game where you can go online and create your own cards that fit into the game exactly like those already there. (I did it and have a whole set on Broadway theater.)

Oxford Dilemma; 12 and up, 2 to 6 players; \$29.95. One of two worthwhile spelling games on this list. This one has a board, money, cards with

three levels of spelling difficulty on each, bonus words, a scholarship fund, and a dreaded Eight Ball causing bankruptcy. But wait! You can stay in the game by taking out a student loan. A variation of play, when a player must first identify the word to be spelled by its definition alone adds another dimension. So what two words fit this definition: a great game to give as gifts? All right, spell *Oxford Dilemma*.

Quickword; teen to adult, 2 or more players. \$25.00. Blue, green, pink and gray cards describe each play. Colors determine the various challenges: list all the words you can think of relating to a specific category (e.g. "superstitions"); write words for six different categories beginning with the letter indicated by a spinner; write words beginning with the letter designated by the spinner, plus the letters on the card, and more. Everybody ponders and writes at the same time and every game is different, depending on color, card, luck, skill and speed (timer included).

\*VisualEyes; 8 and up, 2 to 8 or more players, \$25.00. Can you see pictures of a smashed bottle and a calendar page and think: "broken date?" Not so easy when you're picking these images out of eighteen different pictures on extra large dice, all on view for all to see. You must make the connection before anyone else does, or before time runs out. A clock may represent hands, time, face, minutes, or hours but a doorway may not be accepted as enter. That's why VisualEyes is hilariously unpredictable. Each time you play, you see something else in the dice. Part of the fun is discovering what the pictures represent to different players. Play nice, don't fight.

WordXchange, 10 and up, 4 players or 4 teams of players, \$24.99. Here we have lettered tiles, white plastic racks (called *easels*) on which to build your words and an elegant black velvet bag to hold the pretty blue tiles. You make words by putting together letters from the board, the bag or opponents'easels and rearrange them, anagram-like. We don't normally condone lawlessness but the "stealing" feature in this game is fetching, in every sense of the word. It is fun, brain-tweaking and fast (an innovative, stand-up digital timer is watching you). And it all comes packaged in a book-like box with a magnetic closing. Neat!

















\*Wordrich, all ages 9 to 99, 2 to 4 players, \$24.95. In my quest for new and different word games I found Word Rich and struck it rich. A pouch holds letter discs in red (hearts), blue (spades), green (clubs) and yellow (diamonds). The gameboard has spaces for right-side-up discs and face-down discs. Players try to make a word by selecting one disc from the pouch and picking letters from the board. Select a face-down disc for bonus points but beware! There is a penalty for not using a bonus letter once picked. Scoring is slightly complicated but will soon settle in your brain and have you striving for extra points in a Basic Flush or a Royal Flush (both requiring letters in same suit and other requirements). You might call this Scrabble meets poker.

A TO Z; 8 and up, 2 to 4 players or teams, \$24.95. Each player has a plastic board with letters of the alphabet from A to Z in place. The object is to fill your board with chips as you call off names of items in a specific category (determined by roll of a die and cards). If you have to name things found in a doctor's office, you would announce all you can think of in that category such as nurse and magazines, and cover the n and m on your board. Time of each move is determined by another die and 15 or 30 seconds is clocked on a—take warning!—noisy flip-over timer. You might roll other choices; cover any single letter or remove chips from another player's board, foiling a near win, perhaps. Fill your card and Bingo! (Oops! wrong game), you've won.

Imatchination; 10 to adult, 2 to 6 teams, \$24.95.

Take the word *life*, for example, a word the die "told you to play" so you write every phrase you can think of (in time allotted): *that's life*; *life of the party*, *get a life*. It's fun and easy. But—there is often a "but" in word games—you and your teammate must match each other exactly to gain the right to move on the board; three matches = three moves. There is some leniency: *Los Angeles* and *L.A.* are matches, but not *erase* and *eraser*. Make those matches, earn those moves, reach that finish line.

Syzygy, 9 to adult, 1 to 12 players, \$24.95. If you've ever been tempted to construct crossword puzzles, you might want to buy this game for yourself, as well as for gifts. Each player draws nine tiles and starts creating his or her own crossword. The

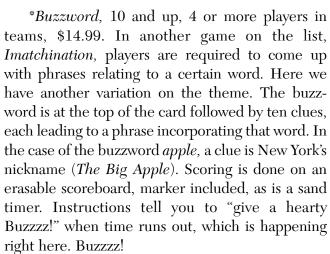
first player to use all nine tiles yells "draw!" and all players draw another tile to be added to their personal crosswords. Rearranging of letters is not only allowed, it is encouraged. The game proceeds until all tiles are used and one player announces "done!" Illegal words (as specified in most words games) and misspelled words are removed and the player with the least number of "leftover letters" is the winner. This game is fast, furious and so much fun there will not be a "cross word" spoken.

Starters, 8 to adult, 2 to 8 players and teams, \$19.99. Was there ever a word game where the players received bonus points for the shortest word? Well, there is now and furthermore, if the words are of equal length, the word with more vowels is declared shorter. Each player starts with three "Starters" (letter cards) and must write down the shortest word using these letters, not necessarily contiguous, but in the same order as drawn. After the word is announced, another player can beat it by coming up with a shorter word. Just for the fun of it, what is the shortest word you can think of using the "Starters" in this order:  $a \ g \ g$ ? We think you will be agog when you find an answer to that.

\*Who Said That? 2 to 6 adult players, \$19.95. Why are we including a game of quotations in an article about word games? Well, really, what better way to honor our language than remembering who said what? This game features some of the best quotes in entertainment, sports, the news, history, politics and more! If a player correctly names the source, he or she moves two spaces on the board. If you're stumped, a hint is available on every card with the loss of one space in your move for that help. "You're shagadelic, baby!" is right there on the box. Who said that?

Couldju, 12 and up, 4 or more players, \$19.95. "Coodju" spell uncouth backwards? How about skipping every other letter in occasional? Other spelling twists are: normal (go ahead, spell armadillo), consonants only, vowels only, and more. The toss of one die tells you how you are to spell the word and the other gives you various point advantages. Cards list the five words you are to spell plus a bonus word and a one-minute timer keeps you spelling. All right, now, spell "I WANT THAT GAME," vowels only.





Quiddler, 8 and up, 1 to 8 players, \$12.99. Word card games are great; at home, in bed (terrific solitaire here) on a plane, anywhere. Cards have letters, letters make words, players gets points. The first round starts with three cards per player and each round adds another card to your hand until you're playing with ten cards in the final round. The calligraphy on the cards is very unusual, and the rules state that "The letters shown in the center of the cards were inspired by Celtic manuscripts from 500–800 AD."

Spill and Spell, 8 to adult, 1 or more players, \$11.99. The name says it all. Spill the dice out onto the playing surface and spell words. But wait—do it in crossword style while a timer is taunting you. Scoring is quick and easy and longer words add up to higher scores. Rules suggest a variation: pick a category: sports words, slang words, movie titles, even people you know. If your words fall into the chosen category, the score is doubled for that word (or words, if you're really hot!).

\*A Play on Words, 8 to adult, 2 to 4 players, \$10.00. All word card games are not alike! In this game a Challenge card dictates how many: (three four-letter words) and what kind: Pure (all in one color) or Mixed (at least two colors) are to be laid down. The value of each card is listed on the card, along with bonus points, and that's a plus when adding up scores. The first player to play all the cards in his or her hand also gets the points of cards left in opponents' hands. An extra feature: a score sheet is printed in the rules to be easily copied. Make many copies. You will be playing this game often!



My Word, 12 to adult, 2 to 6 players, \$9.99. My word! Here is yet another version of a word card game, summed up in the opening of the rules: Earn points by quickly finding words from Letter Cards being dealt to the center of the table. Calling out words as cards are landing on the table makes this game unique and keeps the brain continually perking. They call this "Fast and Fun Wordplay." Take our word for it, it is.

\*PDQ 8 and up, 1 or more players, \$9.99. We did not think another word card game would be different enough to include but we were wrong. Three letter cards are dealt and all players (at the same time) try to think of words using those letters, in the same order, left to right or right to left (which in itself is unique and adds to the brain tweaking). First player to shout out a correct word keeps the cards, which count in scoring. There are excellent variations and we really NJY this game!

Old favorites:

Scrabble Deluxe, 8 to adult, 2 to 4 players, \$29.99. You know Scrabble (unless you're from another planet), but this deluxe version, with a rotating turntable, is a glorious "new" gift. Also, Scrabble Folio (travel) 8 to adult, 2 to 4 players \$19.99. Everything you ever wanted in a Scrabble set to take with you in a great compact version.

Scattergories, 12 to adult 2 to 6 players, \$22.99. Another category-naming game has players making lists (TV shows, breakfast foods, etc) of words starting with the same letter determined by a spin.

Taboo, 4 or more players, 12 to adult \$22.99. Can you describe the contents of this article without saying: word, game, gift, price, players? In Taboo you must convey the card's Guess Word without using any of five taboo words.

Upwords, 2 to 4 players, ages 10 to adult, \$12.99. If you ever wished you could place a letter on top of a Scrabble word to change, e.g., groom to broom, play this game where you create new words out of words already on the board.

There must be something in this list for everyone on your list—and perhaps a few that you'll hint for, as well.

[Gloria Rosenthal reviews board games year-round and hosts an annual word-lovers weekend at Mohonk Mountain House in New Paltz, New York.]



#### BIBLIOGRAPHIA

Rogue Scholar: The Sinister Life and Celebrated Death of Edward H. Rulloff, by Richard W. Bailey, (xii + 281 pp., 2003, University of Michigan Press. ISBN 0-472-11337-2, \$27.)

Edward Rulloff thought that he was a genius, and so did many of those who met him, among them some of the most learned nineteenth-century Americans. His brain weighed in at 59 ounces, at "the higher ranges of normal," a posthumous embarrassment; but it was big enough to contain the mind of a philologist alongside the mind of a murderer. Rulloff's life was incredible—or, it was until Richard W. Bailey's thorough, precise, judicious, and utterly absorbing book made it credible, not least as a walk along the fine line separating learning and morality.

Arthur Conan Doyle's Moriarty illustrated the same theme. Moriarty was the genius behind all organized crime; Rulloff's crimes weren't particularly well organized, which is why he spent so much time in prison. Rulloff was a thief, murderer, and fraud: he murdered his wife and child, then spent his life on the run; he stole to survive, murdered again in the course of botched robberies, and pretended to be anyone but himself, moving from place to place in perpetual incognito.

But there was truth to the fraud. When he wasn't breaking the laws of God and man, he studied languages and philology, as well as medicine, engineering, and the law. He studied without the benefit of much formal education, but his learning was immense; when he represented himself as a university graduate in search of a teaching position or professorship, as he did on many occasions, he seemed credible enough, until someone recognized him as the infamous fugitive Rulloff, as someone always did. In the end, he didn't fool anybody, partly because, paradoxically, he wasn't fooling. His compulsive genius might as well have been a fingerprint.

Some thought that Rulloff's philological work was mere subterfuge, an attempt to escape justice, but others defended him. In the *New York Tribune*, Horace Greeley supposed that Rulloff "was driven logically into crime by his love of learning," since philology doesn't pay the bills. Samuel Langhorne



Clemens, in the same paper, regretted that Rulloff's "vast capabilities for usefulness should be lost to the world ... For it is plain that in the person of Rulloff one of the most marvelous intellects that any age has produced is about to be sacrified ... Here is a man who has never entered the doors of a college or university, and yet, by the sheer might of his innate gifts has made himself such a colossus in abstruse learning that the ablest of our scholars are but pigmies in his presence." Rulloff agreed with Clemens. He was writing a philological work on the scale of Casaubon's Key to All Mythologies. Like Eliot's character, he died before he could complete it and present it to the world as justification for all that had gone before. He hoped to sell his masterwork for \$500,000, sure that someone would buy it because knowledge, even philological knowledge, is power. Theft was merely a stopgap, a series of advances he couldn't wrangle from a publisher.

Crime aside, Rulloff was as dedicated a teacher and scholar as any on record. During one incarceration, he taught local children languages while shackled to the floor of his cell. The family with whom he lodged in New York City noted his obsessive study of comparative philology more than once. He worked on his book almost to the moment of his execution, depending on a library donated by those sympathetic to his cause. The motivation behind decades of toil and trouble was fame. He achieved fame, of course, but even considering Bailey's account, as a criminal, not a scholar.

In a desperate attempt to survive long enough to finish his book, Rulloff asked that prominent philologists examine his work and affirm that it was worth the wait, even if waiting meant justice delayed. Most of them didn't understand what he was up to. He sought William Dwight Whitney's endorsement, but there's no record that he received it. From what we know of Rulloff's philology, though, credentialed scholars who weren't confused by his theories were likely to disagree with them.

Rulloff was a constructivist, that is, he believed that language is a human artifact, not God's prefabrication. He followed an anthropological tradition in language studies best exemplified in James Burnett, Lord Monboddo, in which all current language is assumed to have derived from an original

















language, the "language of Adam." Properly understood, current languages could be used to reconstruct the original language and "unlock the mysteries" contained therein. The original language, that is, had magical powers worth at least \$500,000 to anyone with the key.

Rulloff did not follow Sir William Jones, Rasmus Rask, or the Brothers Grimm, however: he ignored the comparative method they developed, as well as its crowning achievement, the reconstruction of Proto-Indo-European. And while Whitney was drawing philology inexorably towards Saussure, Rulloff subscribed to principles like the following: "In language formed upon this plan, words are not merely arbitrary signs. They are signs, each of which is specially and appropriately significant. Their significance depends upon certain artistic relations, everywhere pervading their structure." Rulloff's system allowed etymological deductions almost impossible to comprehend: "With the return of Bacchus from India, the letter R was brought into Greece, and was there employed in the application of language. The introduction of that letter was one of the most important events in the history of the human race"; and, "From amictus, 'clothing,' is derived directly, tunica, tunic, and this affords," he said, "a beautiful illustration of his method. Thus we take from the first word the letters t, u, n, i, c, a. These all being found here, the n of the second is plainly substituted for the m of the first, both being liquids."

As Bailey points out, "Rulloff's 'method' was absurd, but no more improbable than some of the ideas proposed by respectable scholars in respectable places." Rulloff's "model of language invoked the sacred," much as did Noah Webster's: Webster also scoffed at the "New Philology" and was thus enabled to trace nearly every American English word back to Chaldean. And near contemporaries of both, like Ralph Waldo Emerson, proposed theories of language and culture consistent with the language of Adam myth.

It's too bad that we know so much *about* Rulloff's manuscript, but can't consult it. Wrong as he may have been about the nature of language and the processes of language change, something good

might have come from it. While Rulloff wanted the language of Adam for its magic, others who sought it cared more about disambiguation, the one-to-one correspondence of word and referent. In the quest for disambiguation, circa 1614, a university educated fellow invented logarithms, instead. Who knows what unexpected benefits might have accrued from Rulloff's method and conclusions? But without the manuscript, Rulloff's legacy is one of crime and sensation, not philology.

No brief review can capture the intricacies of Rulloff's life and thought, let alone the world's response to them, as described in Bailey's excellent book. While mediocre scholars remember to look under boulders and the best among us leaves no stone unturned, Bailey is a prospector and pans every imaginable source for golden facts. Beautifully narrated, unimpeachably informed, historically relevant, simultaneously critical and sympathetic, and artfully written, Bailey's book is worth its weight. *Rogue Scholar* is more than a biography: it considers family history, social history, literature, language, educational history, capital punishment, crime, and justice. Its subject is sine qua non; so is the book.

When Governor John Hoffman refused to intervene in Rulloff's execution, Rulloff reportedly said to his lawyer, George Becker, "I shall be remembered long after Governor Hoffman is forgotten. He will be remembered only as a scheming politician; I as the author of one of the grandest theories on the formation of languages. You and I, Becker, are the two greatest men of the age. I am great on philology and you are of great weight." Rulloff wasn't, after all, one of the great men of his age, but at least, thanks to Richard W. Bailey, he is remembered and, at least partially, according to his own estimate.

—Michael Adams



MOVING? You know the drill—let us know right away, by phone, e-mail, or even with a real letter, stamps and all. Don't miss any issues of your favorite language magazine.

















The Hidden Language of Baseball: How Signs and Sign-Stealing Have Influenced the Course of Our National Pastime, Paul Dickson. (230 pages. 2003. Walker & Company. ISBN 0802713920. \$22.)

Once it became clear, back in its nascent days, that baseball had evolved from a "gentlemen's game" to a rough-and-tumble, win-at-all-costs competition, overt attempts at communication within the team went out the window. Managers were challenged to develop methods by which they could communicate with their players without the opposition knowing what they were up to.

Paul Dickson, author of several distinctive volumes on the national pastime including *The New Dickson Baseball Dictionary*, explains the history, strategy and chicanery of this "art form" in *The Hidden Language of Baseball*.

Thanks to the intrusive nature of television, it's relatively easy for fans nowadays to get a glimpse of the intricacies of intra-game exchanges. The catcher waggles his fingers in various configurations to tell the pitcher what to throw. The third base coach goes through similar, if not as hidden, gyrations to pass on instructions to the batter. Infielders prepare their defensive alignments on the basis of open- and closed-mouth signals. The next time you see a close-up shot of a conference on the mound, it's likely the players will be hiding their mouths with their gloves; you never know who might be trying to read lips.

While the rules forbid television monitors in dugouts, there's nothing to keep a team from having one of their employees watching the tube from a luxury box and conveying information.

Dickson notes there are thousands of individual signals (including those from the umpires) displayed in any given game, many of which are mere camouflage, a "beard" for the real strategies. One of the biggest "no-nos" a batter can do is to "peek" down at the catcher in an effort to discern what pitch is coming. Many a harsh word (occasionally followed by fisticuffs) has transpired from such a faux pas.

While the art of sign stealing—"breaking the code" to find out what the opposition is doing—is acceptable, there are limits, writes Dickson. It's fine to have the players on the bench study the opposition for "tendencies." It's considered "cheating," on the other hand, to stash someone in the scoreboard

with a set of binoculars and a "telegraphic" device to relay such information to the dugout.

One such accusation involves one of the most famous home runs of all time—Bobby Thompson's miraculous home run which gave the New York Giants the National League championship over their archrivals, the Brooklyn Dodgers, more than fifty years ago.

As the golden anniversary of the event approached, Hank Schenz, an infielder acquired by the Giants in midseason, claimed that on orders of manager Leo Durocher, he would sit in the Polo Grounds scoreboard and send signals to the dugout via an electric buzzer to relay the catcher's calls to another confederate who would then pass along the information to the batter at home plate. Schenz stated that Thomson was the beneficiary of such information right before his "shot heard round the world," an assertion Thomson denied.

Interestingly, it seems such skullduggery occurred more often a generation ago than it does today. One would think, with all the modern methods of "snoopery" that the reverse would be the case, but Dickinson's examples are mostly from times gone by.

In keeping with his position as baseball's reigning lexicographer, the author offers a detailed glossary of "signs, signals and tip-offs." In his chapter "Notes on How to Really Watch as Baseball Game," he writes, "[T]he key to picking up signals at the ballpark is to watch the players, not the ball." The ball moves only when put in motion by others. The players, on the other hand, are always on the move. Pre-game meetings go over how the day's pitcher will ply his craft and how the fielders will position themselves accordingly.

The *Hidden Game of Baseball* is full of anecdotal information on the mental aspect of the sport which, while perhaps less dramatic than the physical prowess of the athletes, is nonetheless crucial to a successful team.

—Ron Kaplan



















Mighty Fine Words and Smashing Expressions: Making Sense of Transatlantic English (305 pp. 2003. Oxford University Press. ISBN 0195157044. \$27.50)

Long before the spot of unpleasantness known as the Boston Tea Party, American English was busily diverging from its British parent. The current differences are not such that a New Yorker is likely to identify the Queen's English as the language spoken by cross-dressers at a Wigstock festival, but they still amount to material for a good book.

Mighty Fine Words and Smashing Expressions is that book. Orin Hargraves shows that, apart from their slang, Americans are more euphemistic than the British, more politically correct, less ridden with class and other inherited distinctions and, as befits their country's global reach, more effective in distributing their coinages. Each country has matching prejudices: British English can seem snobbish to Americans, American English philistine to Britons. In fact, Hargraves' book in some ways is less about language than it is about culture.

As an American lexicographer who has lived extensively in England, Hargraves is well-qualified to deal with culture shock. A less generously reciprocal and informative author might have spun out some of the more colorful words and expressions into a few wryly humorous chapters. Not so Hargraves, whose book is crammed with data, including, by my count, 116 tables. Some of the tables are encyclopedic, not lexical, but either way they're so useful that they could ably serve a native speaker who couldn't care less about what's said or done across the pond. Among several appendices are credible overviews of Australian, Canadian, Indian, Irish, and South African English. Another appendix lists idioms and expressions which take the cake (or take the British biscuit), and gives enough material to make the reader roll in the aisles (or fall about laughing.)

"About" points to Hargraves's excellent discussion not only of that word, but of parts of speech, including countability of nouns and inflections of verbs. He advises that "Americanizing editors can usually do no wrong in systematically changing which to that in defining clauses of British English, judiciously avoiding the transformation when euphony would dictate the use of which." His coverage of words is frequency-based, and he does not include

archaic, obsolete, and dated terms, and most slang and informal usage. Fair enough, but one important topic has gone AWOL. He does not discuss pronunciation, "which is, in the end, a technical subject, and for the most part has little bearing on comprehension of the written word." Not so fast. Most people hear and speak many more words than they read and write, and it would have been rewarding to have the author's acute ear and dry wit applied, for example, to the speech habits of ABC versus BBC anchors.

Reading Hargraves' book, one can amuse oneself by imagining a surreal alternative planet in which the lexicon would entirely consist of the most cryptic, ambiguous, or hilarious names and terms in American and British English. A diner orders *Buffalo wings* followed by *spotted dick*, a homemaker washes dishes with a *J-cloth* and *Fairy liquid*, a letterwriter addresses envelopes to *ME*, *IN*, and *MO* as well as to *Beds*, *Bucks*, and *Wilts*, a driver in a *semi* hits a *sleeping policeman*, a batter *grounds out* and then is *out Leg before wicket*, in each case resuming a fielding position as a *backstop* or just *silly*, and a *stage-door Johnny* decides to *knock up* an old friend.

These are mainly words for country-specific things, but there are also lots of different words for the same thing: an American *pharmacist* is a British *chemist*, a British *shopwalker* is an American *floorwalker*. Yet for all the differences it's arguably true that, thanks to television satellites and the Internet, American and British English are closer than they've ever been. One thinks of the language reforms that Noah Webster is famous for—-or and -er spellings rather than -our than -re ones, for example—and how they commend themselves on the grounds of concision and sensible phonetics. Yet there is something to be said for the quirks and vagaries of British English as a corrective to an oppressively rationalized and homogenized world.

Full disclosure: Hargraves consulted me on points of Canadian English, and thanks me in his book. As a Canadian and hence suffering with DPLS (Dual Personality Language Syndrome), I can attest that his is a mighty smashing book to have on a nearby shelf.

—Fraser Sutherland

[Even more disclosure: the Editor was responsible for acquiring this book for OUP.]



#### EX CATHEDRA

Readers who devoured The Professor and the Madman (in the UK, The Surgeon of Crowthorne) won't hesitate to pick up Simon Winchester's latest, The Meaning of Everything: The Story of the Oxford English Dictionary (256 pages. 2003. Oxford University Press. ISBN 0198607024. \$25). As always, Winchester manages to make a engaging page-turner out of whatever he turns his hand to, and the story of the OED is no exception. He sketches the huge cast of characters (from the brilliant but somewhat socially insecure Murray and the eccentric Furnivall, down to the uneducated but deft-fingered slip sorters Miss Skipper and Miss Scott) so well that it's easy to keep them straight, and he manages to illuminate the interesting by-thebys of the enormous project (such as the internal politics of the Press and one editor's extended sojourn in Chicago) without losing hold of the main progression—and all this without the benefit of being able to arrange his book in alphabetical order. Truly a must-read for word fanatics, and a marvelous gateway book for those not yet fanatics.

An unusual present, for those of you still making your lists and checking them twice (or at this point, storing up ideas for next year), would be Lawrence Paros' Bawdy Language (263 pp., 225 illustrations. 2003. Kvetch Press. 0967200520/hardcover \$26.95/0967200539 paperback \$16.95). Not for children or the easily shocked, this book, subtitled "Everything you always wanted to do but were afraid to say" is a collection of frankly salacious and obscene language, amplified with attractive, if often lewd, margin illustrations and quotations. Two indexes, one of persons and works, and one of topics, plus a large bibliography, make this more than a curiosity. Trust me—that person on your list who has everything doesn't have this. If you're afraid of having such material sent through the mails (and aren't coming from behind a prissy electronic firewall) log on at www.bawdylanguage.com for more material, including games and links to associated sites.

If your bedside table pile includes Bierce and Mencken, you'll want to add Maggie Balustreri's *Evasion-English Dictionary* to the stack. (150 pp., 2003. Melville House Publishing. ISBN



0971865973. \$12.95). It's a pleasurable skewering of evasive language (even when it's your evasions that are the ones, like, being skewered), done with such gorgeous logic and good humor that you feel the terrible urge to read bits of it out loud to those nearest and dearest to you. Ignore that urge and give those near and dear their own copies.

If you have children in whose lives you play the role of book-giver, you'll be encouraged to learn that the late William Steig's classic, *CDC*? is now out in a new color edition. (64 pp., 2003. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. ISBN 0374312338. \$16.00) *CDC*? is, of course, a series of Steigian drawings with alphabetic captions; the fun is in deciphering the captions. It's harder than it looks, and funnier, too. ("F-N U N-E D-¢-C?" illustrated by a woman yelling a man strolling by in his underwear eventually resolves into "Haven't you any decency?")

Virent Ova! Viret Perna!! (72 pp., 2003. Bolchazy-Carducci. ISBN 0-86516-555-6. \$22.50) is the latest Latinization of Seuss by those indefatiguable translators, Terence and Jennifer Tunberg, husband and wife professors in the Department of Classical Languages at the University of Kentucky. If your Latin is rusty, the Seuss in question is Green Eggs and Ham. There's a helpful guide to reading the verses and a glossary, and the drawings are the originals. The verse, too, keeps the bouncy Seussian sound that is as much a character in his books as the ingratiating Sam.

Early in 2004 we are hoping to expand our website to include an annotated bibliography of essential books for word-lovers. In or out of print, old or new, if you have a favorite you'd like to evangelize, please send word of it to us. Please include the title, author, and publisher, and the edition and date if known or essential. We already have a comprehensive list of dictionaries and other standard references. (In other words please don't send us mail suggesting that we put the *OED* or the *Century Dictionary* or the *Word Menu* on the list, don't worry,we've got 'em!) We are hoping to find the hidden treasures and word-of-mouth wonders. Please share yours!

If you have other suggestions for our website, please let us know. We are still working on the complete linked and clickable online index and on having a SIC! of the Day email or RSS feed. Other ideas are very welcome.

















One more note: we only accept books for review in VERBATIM that are directly related to language. Although this is a fuzzy criterion, please do not send us novels, books of literary criticism, translated works for which language learning is not the main purpose, teachers' guides, workbooks, or directories. Some of these works are quite expensive (and heavy!), and we cannot return them.

—Erin McKean

#### SIC! SIC! SIC!

[Submitted by Chris Mills, who writes: "I don't know what your position is on graffiti, but I enjoyed the following sequence on a bathroom cubicle wall."]

First graffitor: Imagination is more important than knowlege. Albert Einstein

Second graffitor: But spelling helps, if your a journalist.

Third graffitor: But Its all the same.

[All errors, of course, sic!]



I. WIT(C)H 2. RA(R)ER (rev.) 3. OBE(SIT)Y 4. GE(m)OLOGISTS 5. RANK (2. defs.) 6. RARHERS (2. defs.) 7. JA(PAN)NE + D (anag.) 14. BUT + THE + AD 15. SQUAB + BUE(d) 18. POI(S)SON 19. DADAIST (2. defs.) 22. A + CUTE 23. aT SIX Entertainment's (rev.) 24. A + SIA(m)

(Suger)

(Spoonerism) 25. A(TLAS)ES (rev.) 26. S + T(I'M)ULI(p) 27. ON EASY STREET

I. WARM(ON + CER.)ING 9. microcODE PROTects (rev.) 10. N(I + R)VANA (Vanna anag.) 11. HARRISON (garrison, changing G to H) 12. R(I)YADH (Hardy anag.) 14. BUSHY (2 defs.) 16. R(I)YADH (Hardy anag.) 14. BUSHY (2 defs.) 16.

**VCROSS** 

Answers to Crossword 94

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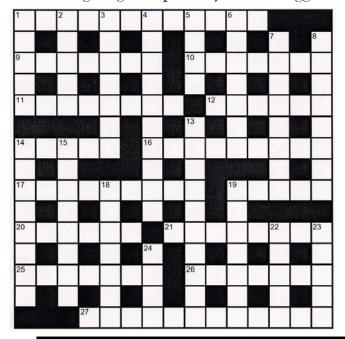






#### Cryptic Crossword Number 94

"Warmongering" composed by Robert Stigger



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#### Across

- 1 Global concern takes on German practice of military provocation (12)
- 9 Inverted sequence of microcode protects naval weapon (7)
- 10 Vanna messed up, concealing one "R" in "Grunge Group" (7)
- 11 Military post gets a new leader, Ford (8)
- 12 Hardy novel set outside Ireland's first capital city (6)
- 14 Thick, like Dubya? (5)
- 16 One caring about lack of learning (9)
- 17 That's right queer—Gabriel, a horn-player
- (9)
- 19 Clothing worn by English blokes (5)
- 20 Shire-dweller and vagrant almost scrap (6)
- 21 Like some type of congregation of no value to Rev. Spooner (8)
- 25 Retiring sailor packs ocean map collections
- (7)
- 26 I'm wearing small cut flower and spurs (7)
- 27 Wealthy doctor sees attorney (2,4,6)

As we near crossword #100, we are considering publishing a VERBATIM crossword collection. Would you want one? Please let us know at *editor@verbatimmag.com* or 800-897-3006.

#### Down

- 1 Sorceress accompanied by bears heading to Camelot (5)
- 2 Less common breed crosses river heading north (5)
- 3 Unhealthful condition of mind without rest (7)
- 4 Earth scientists, jewel experts overlooking source of minerals (10)
- 5 Noisome station (4)
- 6 "Comparatively presumptuous?" I never! Ridiculous piece of rot! (7)
- 7 Lacquered kitchenware found in Jane Goodall's center (8)
- 8 They collect money sacks (8)
- 13 Smash your melons in an outrageous manner (10)
- 14 Save the spot for Beavis's homey (8)
- 15 Row of pigeons carried by the wind without work (8)
- 18 This could be lethal, eating salt fish at Euro Disney? (7)
- 19 Early 20th century artist, a most agreeable Russian? (7)
- 22 Angst, initially pretty severe (5)
- 23 Be back at six—entertainment's inside (5)
- 24 A former name for a country almost a continent (4)