

CHEATER'S PALINDROMES: PART 1

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In the November 1990 *Word Ways*, Dave Morice's Kickshaws column gave pride of place to Cheater's Palindromes of various writers, most notably those of Jeff Grant. Many readers consider that 'cheater' is a modifying noun to suggest that some of the words in such palindromes are spurious. However, cheating in this context really implies tantalizing, as the contentious words are either obscure or of foreign origin. I illustrate with one of Jeff's classics: 'Sren-gierofotelbaecnuonorpnuyllacitcarpsiseirfhcnerfrofdrowutobmlacolehta', the local Mbuto word for 'french fries', is practically unpronounceable to foreigners. That is a simple statement of fact which can be confirmed in the huge Mbuto Dialect Dictionary. Now, for some of his less self-explanatory Cheater's Palindromes:

SAMORAEL BATS AT TIMES EMIT TASTABLE AROMAS The Pteropidae Grantii, or Samorael fruit bat, is found only on the Micronesian island of Samora where it lives in huge colonies in caves. Unlike other bats which rely upon their ears for echo location, the samoraels use their noses to detect reflections from their constant breaking of wind which, fueled by a perpetual diet of figs, has an especially sweet aroma. Nocturnal creatures, they are hyperactive at night whether it is gorging themselves on figs or indulging in a wind-assisted mating display.

'GNIEBNE! ILAEHT DEMAERCSIII', SCREAMED THE ALIEN BEING Alien beings are keen speleologists and the above statement was uttered by one particular alien being who wandered into a Samora cave at the time of day when the sleeping bats establish colonial identity by the mutual breaking of wind.

HOW DOES ONE INTERPRET 'NIE NOSE OD WOH'? The Samoran people have over two hundred words to describe the tastable aroma of their celebrated bats, and one of them is included in the above Samoran sentence which roughly translates as 'Can you detect the wretched stench-of-male-bat-suffering-diarrhoea?'

As far as I know, Jeff has not included any of his tantalizing terms in his palindrome dictionary, which is a pity, as he is a brilliant compiler of Cheater's Palindromes.