

## KICKSHAWS

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Kickshaws is currently being assembled by a series of guest editors. All contributions should be sent to the editor in Morristown, New Jersey.

Did Qfwfq eye Kgwgk?

Find out in Cosmicomics, Italo Calvino's sci-fi fantasy, wherein witnesses to cosmic creation give their testimonies. The reader is given no guide to pronunciation, but one character has the perfect palindromic name, XuaeauX, retaining capitalization for the first and last letters. The primeval dust seems inhabited by an inordinate number of palindromic characters: Qfwfq (the narrator), Kgwgk, Pfwfp, Lll, Dean (k)yK, Granny Bb'b, and the somewhat imperfect Xlthlx -- no doubt early spellings employed the single thorn letter, edh, for the "th".

Not intentionally wishing to offend other memorable characters, I will only mention Captain Vhd Vhd, Mr. Hnw, Mrs. Ph(i)Nk<sub>o</sub>, Mr. Pber<sup>t</sup> Pber<sup>d</sup>, G'd(w)<sup>n</sup> and Z'zu. But, I am drawn back to the palindromic folk and grieve at the paucity of modern palindromic words -- it seems that the earliest denizens of the universe favored them.

Here is an offering of words meant to fill this gap in an admittedly already crowded English language:

PANAMANAP	siesta at the canal
KANSASNAK	Corn Thins
AKRONORKA	the creature in the Cuyahoga River
AVOCETECOVA	ballerina not quite good enough for <u>Swan Lake</u>
OCTOOTCO	firm that manufactures eight-hole flutes
DIOTOTOID	shaped like two ears
AJAJAXAJAJA	the bravest bird in the <u>Iliad</u>
SUNEVENUS	the equinox
SECRETERCES	money paid to Roman typists
NONALEVELANON	organization for treatment of acrophobics
ROTATOYOTATOR	tire-changer in an auto dealership
SULUMINIMULUS	Philippine protozoan
TROPICANACIPORT	Florida citrus depot

Additions?

"Nameless here for evermore"

Boston boasts the NO-NAME RESTAURANT. It is easy to imagine the debates which preceded that choice of appellation. But the process is

not new. Anatomists, usually remarkably creative in the naming of newly-discovered body parts, succumbed a number of times to the same device. Hence the INNOMINATE ARTERY, INNOMINATE VEINS and INNOMINATE BONE -- all three of which, oddly, are large and important. There is also a SUBSTANTIA INNOMINATA in the brain, which is quite small, and whose function is yet to be clearly defined.

An ANONYMOUS writer may be nameless for several quite different reasons, and if sufficiently insignificant, may be termed an ANONYM-UNCLE. ANOMIC APHASIA is a speech disorder in which the patient has specific difficulty in naming, and an ANONYM is "an idea that has no exact term to express it" (Webster's Third), an idea, I agree, badly in need of a name. Where else is this linguistic cop-out to be found?

### A Logological Anonym

Language is produced and language is understood; language is spoken and language is written. A simple two-by-two matrix is thereby engendered, and three or the four boxes are easily filled with very common English words: to produce written language is to WRITE, to understand written language is to READ, to produce spoken language is to SPEAK, and to understand spoken language is to What? UNDERSTAND may correctly be used here, but we understand what we read and we understand what people tell us -- the word does not distinguish between the written and spoken word. The same may be said of COMPREHEND. The verbs HEAR and LISTEN also fall short in that they acknowledge the auditory property of spoken language, but do not signify understanding.

It is clear that WRITE, READ and SPEAK are not themselves "pure" (one may read or write music, for example), but they fill their slots much better than any single choice for the understanding of spoken speech. Is there an English word, even an obscure or obsolete one, with this specific meaning? Are there other languages with such a word? The idea of such a word appears to satisfy the requirements of being an anonym.

### Hospital Deliti

The folks in charge of signage (their non-Websterian word: they make signs) at our hospital have recently changed from all-plastic, one-piece signs to signs made of individual letters stuck on to a plastic base -- presumably for budgetary reasons. This allows the mischievous passer-by to peel one or more letters off the sign, a process hereby designated DELITI. Some lines of letters are removed entirely, leaving only the blue plastic background -- no doubt the ultimate commentary on officially-written hallway instructions. Sometimes, only one or two letters remain; no old message is decipherable, nor any new one.

But there are wordplay imps at work as well. With varying shades of subtlety, one reads:

ME	for MEN
C AN	for CT SCAN
REGISTER HER	for REGISTER HERE

VOLUNTEER OFF                    for VOLUNTEER OFFICE  
 RADIATION THERA Y            for RADIATION THERAPY  
 PULMONARY UNCTION          for PULMONARY FUNCTION  
 PLEASE US        HE DO        for PLEASE USE OTHER DOOR

and, in at least four separate locations, PUB IC ELEVATOR (in no in-  
 stance leading to the room where trusses are made) .

What results have others noted (and not, certainly, contributed to)  
 from this "money-saving" technology of stick-on letters?

### Squares and Spirals

The three-by-three square at the right is of a familiar        T E A  
 type: the words read the same across as down. There is an    E E L  
 added restraint, however: the first word is also a diagonal.    A L A  
 It isn't too hard to construct a  
 four-by-four or even a five-by-five        F L E E        A E A E A  
 square with this property, although        L L Y N        E E M I S  
 some of the words are obscurities        E Y E S        A M A S A  
 in Webster's Second. Can anyone        E N S E        E I S E N  
 construct a six-by-six square with        A S A N A  
 this property?

And consider the matrix of letters at the right:                T I N G  
 The three across words and the four down words are all in     A D E  
 Webster's Second. If one begins with the central D, moves     G O R  
 east, and then clockwise, the word DEROGATING is pro-  
 duced by the spiral. Can anyone build a matrix such as this from a spi-  
 ral with more than ten letters where all across and down words are  
 Websterian?

### Abbreviary

The road sign one block from my house reads ST. PAUL ST. It is  
 doubtful any English speaker would have difficulty correctly reading  
 "Saint Peter Street". The bank on the corner is the NORFOLK CO.  
 TRUST CO., the abbreviation once again standing in the same short  
 phrase for two different words (County and Company). A look at an  
 atlas discloses a few more possibilities of this sort:

MT. HEADLEY, MT (Mount, Montana)  
 LA. CHARLES, LA (Lake, Louisiana)  
 DENVER CO., CO (County, Colorado)

Are there other entries, or is this list to be as small as it seems?

Our officially sanctioned abbreviations and acronyms are gathered  
 in New Acronyms, Initialisms, and Abbreviations, 7th edition (1981).  
 Here are shortenings by the many thousands. Of the 676 possible bi-  
 grams, only six are not represented: XG, YQ, YX, YZ, ZQ and ZX.  
 The savings in type or paper made possible by these entries is commend-  
 ably staggering. Yet, please note that the journal whose full title is  
 Metsantutkumuslaitoksen Julkaisu, is to be abbreviated Metsantutkumu-

slaitoksen Julk.

### Long Word Updates

This intriguing topic won't go away. Articles by Darryl Francis and Rudolf Ondrejka listing numerous examples appeared in the August 1978 and February 1979 *Word Ways*, and in May 1980 the editor published for the first time the fully-spelled-out name for the protein Bovine Glutamate Dehydrogenase (3641 letters).

Medical works are a rich source of long words. It appears that the longest name for a medical condition for which there is no difficulty obtaining examples in current medical literature is PSEUDOPSEUDO-HYPOPARATHYROIDISM (30), coined in 1952 by Albright, Forbes and Henneman, but with a hyphen after the first O. The latest edition of Dorland's Medical Dictionary, as well as the Index Medicus list of Medical Subject Headings, published by the National Library of Medicine, does away with the hyphen. The Index Medicus (IM) list is a good source for long words, as each listing is a major topic under which one looks for current references. IM lists a 29-letter condition, ECCENTRO-OSTEOCHONDRODYSPLASIA, but notes that the name has been changed to MUCOPOLYSACCHARIDOSIS, Type 4. A 29-letter illness not in these sources, but a chapter heading in the Handbook of Neurology, is PHOSPHORIBOSYLETHANOLAMINURIA.

The longest entry of all in the current IM contains 38 letters: GALACTOSYLGALACTOSYLGLUCOSYLCERAMIDASE. If patients are found deficient in this enzyme, expect to find a name of 45 letters with HYPO in front, and MIA at the rear of this name.

IM lists also the pair ARABINOFURANOSYLNUCLEOSIDE and ARABINOFURANOSYLNUCLEOTIDE, which are two 26-letter non-synonymic words varying in only one letter. A surprisingly palatable new long medical word, both in IM and Dorland's, is the 28-letter COUNTERIMMUNOELECTROPHORESIS. Starting with ELECTROPHORESIS, this word keeps adding prefixes, and may be in a position eventually to break all records for words not simply the spelling-out of chemical formulas.

### Volcanic Bulletin!

I have not referred to the logologists' favorite long word, PNEUMONOULTRAMICROSCOPICSILICOVOLCANOKONIOSIS (hereafter called P-45), because there is no evidence that this has ever been used in medical literature. The reason for this has now been revealed with the publication of the Third Volume of the Supplement to the Oxford Dictionary (O - Scythism): P-45 was a tongue-in-cheek invention by Francis Joseph Xavier Scully, in his 1936 book, Bedside Manna.

More recently, a UPI dispatch from Portland, Oregon indicates that P-45 and the eruption of Mt. St. Helen's have found each other. A Dr. Sonia Buist, the report reports, who is "of Oregon Health Sciences University", has received a grant to study P-45 in persons exposed to the volcanic dust. Since a grant will certainly lead to publication, we can

expect the word to surface (not resurface) in the medical literature, at last legitimatizing itself. . . . Stay tuned.

### Logological Awakenings

The harassed cateress in the Final Net Hair-Spray TV commercial catnaps after many hours, during which her hair never wilts. Suddenly she awakens, saying the word "strawberries", the only loose end in her hectic day.

A friend who deals in opals reported that he was awakened from sound sleep by the term "Opal-Essence", the clear choice for a name he needed for his business enterprise. I have had at least one such experience: having failed to imbed the letters in the word MASSACHUSETTS into any dictionary entry, I was awakened one night from sound sleep by a solution, SOUTH AMERICAN BLASTOMYCOSIS. I immediately checked it and found it to be correct. This is a name of a disease I had in my medical vocabulary (I've never seen a case), but I was most impressed that my brain should care to be working on the problem while I slept, that it had the resources to check one word against the many thousands in my memory banks and that it decided the answer was of sufficient importance to wake me. As a neurologist, I find this entire process remarkable, and have asked friends, colleagues and patients if they have had similar experiences.

One individual recalls that during a period of intense mental effort -- writing a Ph.D. thesis -- he had several such awakenings. In each instance, a single word woke him -- a word missing from the text he had written that day, but clearly the word he had reached for to express an idea. He now, some years later, recalls APPREHEND, CONFOUND and TRANSMUTE as awakeners, but there were others.

Most people I ask have not had this type of experience. I have been careful to exclude dream material, or the fresh insights into old problems which may reveal themselves on normal morning awakening.

I have questioned some artists and musicians but have not found any who has been wakened by a new melody or original artistic inspiration. I suspect this is just a sampling error on my part. Yet, musical and non-verbal artistic matters are generated in the non-dominant half of the brain (usually, the right half), and verbal material in the dominant side (usually left). Do verbal processes, especially novel ones, have greater ability to rouse the sleeper than non-verbal? Are the verbal processes mostly extraction of a word from vocabulary-memory stores, as seems to be the case in the examples given, or are other types of verbal processes awakeners? What experiences have Word Ways readers had when it comes to spontaneous awakening due to internal mental processes?

### Websterian Captions

Even the most dedicated of lexicolexics must be heartened by Webster's illustrations, a step (and possibly the only one) ahead of the OED. Brought to life are the BUTTERIS and INFULAE, the JERKINHEAD and

SQUINCH. Our newest words in the Addendum seem (alas!) unworthy of illustration.

There are strange words hidden in these illustrations and their captions. In the first column below is listed sixteen two-word phrases taken from the captions of illustrations. The illustrations are listed in the second column. Your objective is to match up the two columns. None of the two-word phrases is itself a bold entry in Webster's Third, the source of these lists. Answers can be found in Answers and Solutions at the end of this issue.

- |                        |                        |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. bearing strip       | a. airbrush            |
| 2. brush rigging       | b. altimeter           |
| 3. color cup           | c. aneroid barometer   |
| 4. dental socket       | d. basketball court    |
| 5. double tee          | e. brachiopod shells   |
| 6. exhausted box       | f. branch              |
| 7. holding wood        | g. cardioid            |
| 8. idler pinion        | h. centering           |
| 9. inner race          | i. direction indicator |
| 10. jaw plate          | j. drill               |
| 11. reference index    | k. dynamo              |
| 12. restraining circle | l. glove               |
| 13. setting knob       | m. hand drill          |
| 14. slit binding       | n. roller bearing      |
| 15. tracing point      | o. undercut            |
| 16. two-groove         | p. vise                |

### Pseudoredundancy

I recently reviewed a curriculum vitae for a man which included the information "born Natal, South Africa". A redundancy? No. A pseudoredundancy. The Expression "Colorful Colorado" is a weaker example of the same phenomenon, weaker because the first word is a translation of the original meaning of the second word, rather than a synonym in the same language.

An editorial heading, "When will Begin start peace talks?", is a third example -- but I made it up. What further examples does the real world offer?

### Rorschach Word Pairs

Reading Webster's Second or Third is a formidable task, made doubly so by the small size of the print. The editors understand this and have kindly peppered the pages with RWPs. These are entries consisting solely of an incomprehensible boldface word or phrase, separated by a colon from another incomprehensible word or phrase. These symmetrical figures are linguistic Rorschach patterns. (Note: the true RWP is not to be confused with similar entries that are designed expressly for comic relief, as: MIDWIFE FROG : OBSTETRICAL TOAD.)

When, in your reading, you encounter a true RWP, you encounter a true RWP, you should stop and free-associate. If you can make the

slightest sense of the pair, or, more ominously, if you know the definition, you must immediately reach for a cold brew and tune in the Red Sox game (or a reasonable facsimile).

Here is a sampling from the letter S:

SAMBUCA : TRIGON	SHOTCRETE : GUNITE
SADDLEQUERN : METATE	SMEAR DOCK : GOOD-KING-HENRY
SCHABZIEGER : SAPSAGO	SPHEX : CHLORION
SERRASALMO : CARIBE	SRANAN TONGO : TAKI-TAKI
SESUTO : SOTHO	SYMPHYTA : CHALASTROGAstra

More than two correct answers constitutes end-stage disease.

### Noon Ride?

In 1976, the equatorial African country of Chad celebrated the American Bicentennial with a series of commemorative postage stamps honoring individuals important in the early history of this country. On the 100 franc stamp we see a portrait of a famous American riding his horse through a small town, and the caption in French: ALERTE DE PAUL REVERS - 1775.

Errors on stamps have included printing part of the picture facing in the wrong direction, but this may be a unique example of a person being turned around linguistically.

### Quebeckese

A summer car trip this year to Quebec province introduced me to the official tourist map, *Les Routes du Quebec*, revised in 1980, from the Ministry of Transport. Included is an index of 1672 cities and towns, with not a few logological curiosities. Consider the isolated Eskimo communities KUUJJUAQ and KANGIQSUALUJJUAQ. Strange names in themselves, but in addition the letters of the first name are imbeddable in order (but not all adjacent) in the second one.

Fully 601 town names, or 35.9 per cent of the total, begin with either SAINT or SAINTE. Other locales, such as GRAND-ST-ESPRIT, include the ST within the name, so that the percentage using ST or STE is even higher.

The letter headings in the index require separate entries for ST-A, ST-B, . . . ST-Z, different from the S entry, resulting in 52 possible letter-headings instead of 26. This is reminiscent of the extra index designation MC for listings in phone books or other compilations of family names in this country. What other examples are there for any language where extra letter headings are required to compile lists, because of unusually frequent initial polygrams?

Most remarkable of all the town names is ST-LOUIS-DU-HA! HA! which introduces the exclamation point (twice!) into a legitimate place name. In another region within Quebec province, one finds RIVIERE

DES HA! HA!, BAIE DES HA! HA!, PETIT LAC HA! HA! and GRAND LAC HA! HA!, the river, bay and two lakes not, of course, listed in the index of inhabited places. I regret I cannot follow through with the origin of the HA!'s, nor do I know why the plural French form DES is used in the case of the river and bay. (Editor's note: Webster's Second defines a HA-HA as "a sunk fence; a fence, wall, or ditch, not visible until one is close upon it".)

I also made note of an advertising slogan for the Toronto Dominion Bank, which uses the abbreviation TD. In French, "A la banque TD, on veut t'aider". That homonym doesn't work in English. Dommage!

Shhh!

The unit of measurement of the loudness of sound is named for Alexander Graham Bell, and is called the bel. The decibel, which is one-tenth of a bel, has come to be the most commonly employed unit of loudness, and this has resulted in the main definition for the unit appearing under DECIBEL in Webster's Third Edition, not under BEL. We find under the listing for BEL "ten decibels".

It is not surprising to find the MILLIMETER defined as one-thousandth of a meter, but are there other instances where the dictionary definition of the primary word refers the reader to an affixed derivative of that same word?

Double Christmas

I finish up with a seasonal quiz supplied by the preceding guest editor, Louis Phillips. The word Christmas has been written twice -- once forward, once reversed. Can you come up with the names of well-known persons to fill in the initials (for example, S C = Sid Caesar)?

C	S	-----	-----
H	A	-----	-----
R	M	-----	-----
I	T	-----	-----
S	S	-----	-----
T	I	-----	-----
M	R	-----	-----
A	H	-----	-----
S	C	-----	-----