

ALPHABETICAL CIRCUMAMBULATIONS

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I recently ran across the following generation-gap misunderstanding in a column written by Earl Wilson:

" Florence Ziegfeld? I never heard of her," a teenager said with a yawn to a 40-year-old extolling the great glorifier. " Sure ... Florenz Ziegfeld who married Billie Burke!" screamed the older one. The teenager yawned again: " Billy Burke? I never heard of him either."

Well, I remember Florenz Ziegfeld, and I remember Billie Burke, and I dedicate this reminiscence respectfully to their shades:

Abundant, bedecked chorus doll -- endlessly
Fasting! Genetical hormones induce
Juicily kissable lactical members
Notwithstanding ...
Opulant, piquant,
Quivery, rapture-filled ... Sacrosanct, though,
Until virgin weds. Whom? ... X.
You, Ziegfeld?

Alphabetical versification is addictive (and may even be dangerous to your health). If F. Scott Fitzgerald had been given to wordplay, could he have written the following tribute to his wife, Zelda?

Amoral angel, bifurcate bawd,
Coyly capricious duopod ...
Eyelids embellished, flirtily frocked;
Glittering gewgaws (handily hocked) ...
Impishly innocent, jaunty, jejune,
Kissably kittenish, loveable loon:
Marry me! Make me notably nowed --
Overjoyed ... osculant ... peacockish proud!
Quinquagenarian, randily roused;
Skippetyskippeting, tenderly toused.
Unsanctified Venus vied
With wanton wick xenogenic;
Yielding ye, zestfully, Zelda Z.