

Canticon

The Whorl list — 6 messages, 4 voices, 01 Jul 1997

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/383>

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m.driussi — 01 Jul 1997, 00:44

Reply: Item #0471995 from WHORL at LISTS.BEST.COM@INET01#

Nutria,

Re: Cant, as a matter of fact, Talon compiled a list of cant terms used in THE BOOK OF THE LONG SUN and I'm still working my way through it using the OED, which so far has nearly all of them. But I'm always happy to take up an offer for help, so here's a few I haven't been able to find in the OED:

Abram

beggar's root

hornbuss ["buss" most likely = "kiss"]

ice [pre-1969, USA]

iron (you're for ~)

jump (full of ~; he's ~ for religion)

kate ["lockpick"]

larger ["more importantly"]

lay [OED has ten pages devoted to "lay"; in Vironese cant it is used in at least five ways, four of which I think I've found]

--breakin' ~.

lily

nanny nipper

Thanks in advance!

=mantis=

David Langford — 01 Jul 1997, 12:39 · follows m.driussi

In-Reply-To: <199707010049.RAA29891 at lists1.best.com>

Mantis wrote:

Talon compiled a list of cant terms

used in THE BOOK OF THE LONG SUN and I'm still working my way through it using the OED, which so far has nearly all of them. But I'm

always happy to take up an offer for help, so here's a few I haven't been able to find in the OED:

Here's some stuff from Eric Partridge's =A Dictionary of Historical Slang= (abridged 1972), with addenda from =1811 Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue: A Dictionary of Buckish Slang, University Wit, and Pickpocket Eloquence= or [1811] for short ... the latter was reprinted and extensively remaindered in the 1970s and 80s.

Abram

A malingerer: C.19-20 nautical; ob. 2, As adj., c.: mad, C.16-17, C.17-18 ... // abram, v. To feign sickness: ?ca 1840-90 ... // Abra(ha)m-cove or -man. A pseudo-madman seeking alms; a genuine lunatic allowed on certain days to leave Bethlehem Hospital ... ca 1550-1700. 2. Also, in late C.18-19, a mendicant pretending to be an old naval rating cast on the streets. // [1811] gives "naked" as primary meaning -- also allowed by Partridge -- and agrees on Abram Men, pretended mad men.

iron (you're for ~)

[1811] Money in general. To polish the king's iron with one's eyebrows; to look out of grated or prison windows ... Iron doublet; a prison.

kate ["lockpick"]

A master or skeleton key: c. of late C.17-mid-19. cf JENNY; JIMMY: esp. BETTY. 2. Hence, a picklock: C18-mid-19. 3. (Also katy, Katy.) A wanton: (mainly Scots) coll: C.16-early 19. // [1811] agrees: A picklock (cant).

larger ["more importantly"]

large, adj. gen. used as adv. Excessively: (low) coll: from ca 1850. Thus, dress large, i.e. showily; go large, i.e. noisily; play large, i.e. for high stakes; i.e. boastfully. cf. FINE AND LARGE.

nanny nipper

nanny. A whore: late C.17-C-19: coll. Ex Nanny, the female name. Mostly in combination: see, e.g., NANNY-HOUSE. // nipper. A thief, esp. a cut-purse or a pickpocket: c.: ca. 1580-1830. // nipper, v. To catch; to arrest: ca. 1820-1850. // [1811] confirms: Nanny House. A brothel. // Nip. A cheat. Bung nipper; a cutpurse.

By the way, no one on this learned list will have missed the upfront joke that Tick the catachrest speaks in catachresis ... but is there an echo there, too, of another communicative pet in James H. Schmitz's well-loved sf story "Novice" (incorporated into =The Universe Against Her=, 1964): a "crest cat" called Tick-Tock?

Dave

David Langford
ansible at cix.co.uk

m.driussi — 01 Jul 1997, 14:01 · follows David Langford

Reply: Item #6198742 from WHORL at LISTS.BEST.COM@INET01#

David Langford,

Hello there and a hearty welcome aboard!

Thank you for the cant terms--I'll put up another wanted list after I've exhausted the OED (ha! OED is never exhausted: mantis loses patience and eyesight).

Interesting tip re: Schmitz's "Novice." I'm not (yet) familiar with the story. Re: Tick talk, vizcacha made a listing (it should be in the archives) of Tick's words and phrases just so that we could all agree on something. <g>

=mantis=

Derek Bell — 01 Jul 1997, 18:55 · follows m.driussi

Strong language ahead!

One cant term that's intruiged me is "shaggy". Apart from meaning matted, in Ireland it's slang that's means something akin to "fuck". I'm not sure how common this meaning is outside Ireland or if Wolfe intended it in this manner - it's certainly an appropriate meaning for the places it's used.

Tercel

m.driussi — 01 Jul 1997, 20:02 · follows Derek Bell

Reply: Item #6323607 from WHORL at LISTS.BEST.COM@INET01#

Tercel,

Re: "shaggy," that's it on the nose, in coarse slang according to OED. Verb and workhorse-of-all-modifiers. FWIW&IMHO Wolfe is using it in this sense.

=mantis=

Jim Jordan — 01 Jul 1997, 17:34 · follows m.driussi

At 12:44 AM 7/1/97 GMT, you wrote:
Nutria,

Re: Cant, as a matter of fact, Talon compiled a list of cant terms used in THE BOOK OF THE LONG SUN and I'm still working my way through it using the OED, which so far has nearly all of them.

Good. My memory has not completely gone. (At 47, you never know...). I knew I remembered a post on this, but could not find it.

So, the good old OED has them. I could have guessed that, but at 47....

But I'm

always happy to take up an offer for help, so here's a few I haven't been able to find in the OED:

Abram - mad; naked. As I dimly recall, the first is the one that fits.

beggar's root - "rooting" is stealing. Rooting implies that several men are going out on robbery bent.

hornbuss ["buss" most likely = "kiss"] - buss may mean "steal." Horn is the nose, in the dictionary. I thought it might mean to kiss the penis when I first read it. It might mean to blow one's nose. I cannot recall the context.

ice [pre-1969, USA] - noun: diamonds; verb: imprison

iron (you're for ~) - iron can be money or courage; but an iron house is a prison. My guess is that Wolfe is using iron as prison, but I don't recall the context.

jump (full of ~; he's ~ for religion) A jump is an act of theft in which the thief takes advantage of an open door or window for a quickie. Thus, it seems to be used in the lupine underworld for "energy, energetic."

kate ["lockpick"] - a pick-lock or skeleton key.

larger ["more importantly"] - no entry.

lay [OED has ten pages devoted to "lay"; in Vironese cant it is used in at least five ways, four of which I think I've found]
--breakin' ~. Breaking is burgling, from "breaking in". A lay is a place where a theft can be committed.

lily - a lily is a credulous person, a born sucker. I took it in Wolfe to mean "believable."

nanny nipper - a nanny is a brothel. A nipper is a cutpurse or pickpocket; to nip or to nipper is to arrest. No listing for the two together, so you'll have to find it elsewhere or make a guess from context.

Thanks in advance!

=mantis=

Yer welcuhm. Ifn you have more, lemme know, and that's lily.

Nutricious