Words of 1964

Linguists argue how far the structure of our language is determined ultimately by the structure of reality and how far by cultural forces. Several of the new words of 1964, including *sociolinguist*, point to activity in this area, and it is a controversy which remains unresolved. This talk won't deal with the theoretical question, but we'll see something of the wide range of influences that drive the growth of English: new discoveries, new ways of looking, new theories; influences from other societies, or from different groups within our own society, the young, ethnic minorities, the professions. Even in a brand new scientific word for a brand new substance there are layers of history to be uncovered.

First though, how did I establish my list of the words of 1964? Look at an example of an entry in the online edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary*. [slide *ecofact*]

The entry consists of several components: Headword, pronunciation, etymology, Category (it's an archaeological term), Definition, and lastly a series of quotations which illustrate the use of the word, indicate the sort of publications in which it is found, and give an idea of the period during which it was current – here the 2002 citation shows that it is still in use in contemporary English. What we're interested in today is the date of the first quotation, which gives its earliest attested appearance in the language.

With the on-line version of the *Dictionary* it is easy enough to search for all the words whose first attested appearance is in a particular year. This doesn't necessarily tell us when the word was coined. Slang words are often in use for decades, or for ever, without appearing in print. I remember *grotty* as part of the spoken language well before 1964, which is the date of the Dictionary's first citation of the word. The same is true of technical jargon. *Byte* (a group of eight binary digits or bits) was doubtless in use among IBM *computerists* before it first appeared in a published journal . [slide *byte*]

My list is only provisional. The entry for *byte* (where the earliest citation is 1964) contains a warning that it was added to the Dictionary in the 1972 edition and has not been fully updated. A quick Internet search throws up at least one earlier published occurrence for *byte*, and if the Dictionary's lexicographers confirm this the date of entry for *byte* will be put forward to 1962, or 1959. At least two other words on the 1964 list (*triggerable* and *kidology*) can be found in a published source earlier than that cited at present.

The list is also provisional in the sense that we can be absolutely sure that not all the words which first appeared in 1964 have yet made it into the Dictionary. During the time I've been working on this talk there have been two updates to the on-line edition. When I started there were 370 words of 1964; now there are 375, and the number will continue to rise.

[slide *date of addition*]

The time lag between first published appearance of a word and its addition to the Dictionary is often very long. The first four words on the list of new entries at the last update have first citations ranging from 1777 to 1860.

The number of words appearing in 1964 is roughly in line with the other years of the decade. [slide *1960-69*]

Don't be alarmed. I shan't attempt to talk about more than a fraction of the words on the list. I've chosen them to illustrate the variety of sources of English, and also to recall something of the far off world of 1964.

Yamaguchi-gumi

[slide *Yamaguchi-gumi*]

The Yamaguchi-gumi is a major criminal gang in Japan, its origins going back to 1915 when its first leader, Harukichi Yamaguchi, was a union boss among dock-workers in Kobe. Presumably the

name was well known in Japan before 1964, which was the year it first appeared in English – in an English language newspaper in Japan, the *Mainichi Daily News*.[1] The word illustrates the willingness of English to adopt foreign words, and its source emphasises the international nature of English – not just that it is spoken in most parts of the world, but that international users of the language also contribute to its growth.

[slide *foreign language words*]

Altogether the Dictionary contains 507 words classified as Japanese, 143 of which entered English since 1945. Apart from *Yamaguchi-gumi*, four others made their first appearance in English during 1964: *yakuza* (a gangster or racketeer), *gaijin* (non-Japanese, foreign), *ninja* (one trained in the art of ninjutsu) and *shunga* (literally *spring picture*, a pornographic or erotic picture). *Gaijin* and *ninja* first appeared in Ian Fleming's *You Only Live Twice*, *yakuza* and *shunga* in western news magazines.

In addition the Japanese name *Suzuki*, for the regime of musical training developed by Shinichi Suzuki, entered English in 1964 when *Newsweek* reported: 'When Pablo Casals heard a Suzuki recital in Tokyo, he rushed to the stage shouting "bravo", and hugging the children.'

Words were brought into the language during the year from about a dozen European, African, North and South American and Pacific languages. Some of these were the names of exotic *things*, such as the *nyatiti* (an 8-stringed lyre-like instrument of the Luo people of Kenya) or the *muriqui* (the woolly spider-monkey of Brazil) which comes from the Tupi language via Portuguese. *Mbaqanga*, jazz influenced South African Township music that emerged in the 1950s, is from the Zulu for steamed maize bread.

Other new words refer to *ideas* imported from abroad, including *conscientization*, which was adopted from the Liberation Theology associated with the Brazilian reformer Paulo Freire[2] – it means roughly the same as the later term consciousness-raising. Several German theoretical terms were introduced, such as *Gesellschaft* (a relationship based on duty rather than affection) and *Umwelt* (the outer world, or environment, as it affects the organisms inhabiting it).

From the Indian sub-continent we acquired *mattar paneer*, reflecting our ever-growing taste for South Asian cooking, and the phrase *big-up*, meaning someone in the upper ranks of society, roughly equivalent to *high-up*. *Big-up* was used in a debate in the Pakistan National Assembly. 'There is a competition in the big-ups in the import of cars,' complained the speaker. 'Why cannot there be a competition for raising the lot of the common people.' This reminds us again of the international character of English; it is one of the languages of the sub-continent and speakers there not only give us foreign language words, but also contribute their own innovations in the use of English.[3]

English tends to welcome these imports; other languages are more reluctant, notably French. To draw attention to English inroads into French an anxious French academic coined the word *franglais* in the 1950s, and it first appeared in English in 1964.

pentazocine

[slide *subject areas*] About half the new coinings of 1964 come from academic specialisms, mostly the physical and life sciences, and medicine, so we'll look now at how science provides names for new substances and processes.

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1 Not all Japanese gangs appear in the Dictionary. The inclusion of *Yamaguchi-gumi* reflects both a judgement of the importance and permanence of the gang's place in Japanese society, and the continued appearance of the word in a range of English language sources.

2 Freire was imprisoned and then exiled following a coup in Brazil in 1964.

3 Some decades later the word also appeared in a Caribbean source, but I don't know whether this was an independent coinage or the result of contacts between the Caribbean and Pakistan.

[slide *eponyms*]

One device is to name them after the scientist who discovers or invents them – just as the Yamaguchi-gumi was named after its founder. There were a number of such scientific *eponyms* in 1964. *Tosudite* is a clay, so-named in a Russian periodical after the Japanese geologist Toshio Sudo who discovered it, the word subsequently being taken into English. In particle physics the *pomeranchon* and *reggeon* are named after Isaak Yoklovevich Pomeranchuk and Tullio Regge. The Drake equation (for estimating the number of extraterrestrial civilisations in the galaxy) was proposed by astrophysicist Frank Donald Drake in 1961, and named after him in a book (*We are not Alone*) published in 1964. The *Apgar score* is established by a simple procedure for assessing the health of new born babies, which was devised in the early 1950s by Virginia Apgar (1909-74), and first named after her in 1964.

In chemistry and biochemistry the many new substances and compounds that are discovered each year are named in a more systematic way. [slide *Lavoisier*]

The need for systematic and consistent nomenclature was recognised from the beginnings of modern chemistry, the ideal being, I suppose, a name whose components would transparently reveal the composition and structure of the thing named. [slide *pentazocine*]

But as we see from the entry for *pentazocine* the so-called chemical or systematic name for most substances would be far too complex to be useful as a name. Hence the use of so-called *trivial* or non-systematic or semi-systematic names. *Water*, for example, is a traditional trivial name for the compound hydrogen oxide. But for most substances the need for consistency has driven scientists to follow conventions even in forming their simpler names.

Pentazocine combines three Greek words: *penta* (five-fold – not directly from the Greek *pente* but from *pentane*) + *azo* (from *a+zoe*, meaning lifeless, via the French *azote*, Lavoisier's name for nitrogen) + oca (eight-fold, from *octa*) which modifies the significance of the *-ine* suffix. The name doesn't reflect the full complex structure of the substance, but it presumably indicates the most important elements.

[slide *methisazone*] In the name of another new drug, *methisazone, methis* comes from *methylisatin* and *-azone* from *thiosemicarbazone*. *Methylisatin* contains the Greek *methu+hyle* (*wine*, *wood*) and *isatis* (*woad*), while the *-azone* ending again contains the *azo* or nitrogen element. *Methisazone* is therefore a long way (further than *pentazocine*) from reproducing systematically the structure of the compound. On the other hand it is not an arbitrary formation, but follows established conventions. For the sake of consistency with other languages, methisazone was renamed *metisazone*, which became the British approved name in 1998.

In addition to their approved non-proprietary names, drug compounds also have various other names under which they are marketed.

Now look at another word, *phytoestrogen*. [slide *phytoestrogen*]

Estrogen (from the Greek *oistros* + *gen*) was a proprietary name for a drug marketed by Parke Davis in the 20s and 30s, but they were persuaded to give up their copyright in the name when the scientific community agreed that it should be used for any substance with the property of regulating the menstrual cycle. The *phyto-* element is from the Greek for plant or tree. Phytoestrogens are sometimes called plant-oestrogens, which seems a perfectly good name so we might ask why we need the Greek prefix. The general reason for plundering dead languages for the building blocks of scientific names is that it facilitates communication across borders – the same reason that made scientists and doctors in the past write everything in Latin. In this case, when phytoestrogens were named in English in 1964 there were already equivalent French and German names.

radwaste

We've been looking at words from the fields of pharmacology and medicine. In the 60s the image of *sciency* things was often less benign. The one product of science that everyone knew about and

worried about was the hydrogen bomb. The language of nuclear strategy introduced some chilling terms – in 1964 we heard of *underkill*, the risk that a nuclear strike might not kill enough people to achieve the strategic goal. The earliest citation occurs in a discussion of Barry Goldwater's presidential campaign.

Anxiety about the bomb was partly due to the fear that it might be in the hands of someone like Goldwater, but mainly centred on the unprecedented destructiveness of the weapons, and especially the insidious threat of radio-active fall-out.

[slide *radwaste*]

These fears, for me at least, spilled over from nuclear weapons to colour my ideas of the nuclear industry. If I had heard the word *radwaste* it would have scared me. The first citation is from a job advertisement; obviously the term must have already been in informal use amongst professionals.

And if I'd known about the irradiation of our food – to kill micro-organisms, prevent spoilage and prolong shelf-life – I would have been alarmed. Three such processes (*radappertization*, *radicidation* and *radurization*) were described in an article in *Nature* in October 1964.

Although it would be some thirteen years before 'E' numbers were introduced, people were already beginning to notice the things that were done to or added to our food by the processing industry.[4] One such additive appeared in 1964, *xanthan gum*, which we're told was of use in both food processing and mud-drilling.

computerist

Compared with other branches of science and technology, the youthful discipline of computing. or *computerology*, gave us few new words in 1964.

[slide *computerology*]

Apart from *byte*, which we considered earlier, there were barely a dozen, including the acronym *GIGO* (garbage-in, garbage-out), *Alt* (as on the *alt* key on the keyboard), the names of two programming languages, *BASIC* and *SNOBOL*, the terms *multi-user* and *multi-access*, and *Backus Naur form* or *BNF*. Backus Naur Form is a conventional notation for specifying the syntax of a programming language, named after two computer scientists, John Backus and Peter Naur.[5] In the days when I was a programmer I used BNF often enough, without knowing that it had a name.

Surprisingly, the term *flat-pack* also belonged to the field of computing. In 1964 it referred to an electronic component consisting of an integrated circuit in a shallow sealed unit. It would be almost thirty years before flat-pack furniture came along.

In those days BASIC and SNOBOL represented the most user-friendly face of computing. Few of us foresaw the place computers were to have in our lives a few decades later, although the more far-seeing might have recognised in multi-user and multi-access systems the germs of micro-computers and the Internet. *Picture-phone*, which appears in a newspaper account of a demonstration at the New York Expo, was a sign of things to come.[6]

Meanwhile the previous generation of technology was still going strong, with the appearance of newer and better electric typewriters, such as the *Selectric*, whose proprietary name entered the Dictionary in 1964.

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[4] E numbers are part of the European Economic Community's implementation of world-wide measures to maintain standards in the production and marketing of food. These are codified in the *Codex Alimentarius*, published under the auspices of the FAO. The *Codex* covers all aspects of food production and includes standards for additives and labelling.

[5] According to the 1964 quotation from Donald Knuth, the notation was originally called Backus Normal Form, but Knuth pointed out that Naur had devised part of the notation, and so it should be called Backus-Naur Form.

[6] *Video-phone* appeared in 1955, apparently in a work of science fiction. Some such gadget is referred to in some of the futuristic passages in *Cold Comfort Farm*, but I don't recall the word used for it.

Near the beginning of this talk I used the word *computerist*, but it is the only time I ever have used it. In almost thirty years in the IT industry I never heard it (or *computerology*).[7] So we might have a digression on the *-ist* ending.

It's familiar enough. Cyclist, motorist, Marxist, scientist, classicist. All these *-ist* words have floated, but an awful lot of them, like *computerist*, have sunk.

[slide *Victorian -ists*]

Motor-carist, for instance. The Victorians seem to have liked coining new words with *ist*. Often this was jocular, as with *rappist* for a believer in spirit rapping, or the nonce word *camelist*, and probably also *walkist* and *swimmist*. The craze for skating (whether on ice or roller-skating) in the 1860s and 70s gave rise to *rinkist* and *skatist* (1876) although both *skater* (1700) and *roller skater* (1868) were available.[8] Sometimes the dropping of the word might reflect a subtle change in how the activity was viewed – so *psychopathist* (1853) gave way to *psychiatrist* (1874). A closer parallel to *computerist* would be *telescopist* (1870), which probably fell out of use because we are more interested in the things that can be done with telescopes than with the mere fact of using a telescope, which is true of computers as well.

ratomorphic

Another *-ist* word of 1964 was *Metabolist*.

[slide *Nagakin Capsule Tower*]

The Metabolists were a Japanese school of modernist architects whose doctrine was that in a city buildings should have both a public and private function, and should be capable of changing in line with changes in the life of the city. A noted product of the movement is the Nagakin Capsule Tower in Tokyo, designed by Kisho Kurokawa and completed in 1972. It contains 140 single-person, single room apartments, or capsules, complete with built-in gadgets. Each capsule is bolted to one of the two central shafts and designed to be easily removed and replaced. The theory of Metabolism may have been more attractive than the practice, and the Tower was not popular. It fell into disuse, and has been threatened with demolition.[9]

There are other endings that are frequently added to coin new words. The *-ese* ending, for instance, is used to turn the name of a place or group into an adjective or into the name of a language, such as *Shanghainese*, which was first used in 1964. So was *schizophrenese*, for the disconnected way in which schizophrenia patients were supposed to talk. This is an interesting example of a word which rapidly fell into disuse because it was found that the phenomenon it was supposed to name does not in fact exist. The joke ending *-eroo*, well established in American slang, was used by the Guardian to produce the word *jerkeroo*.

[slide *isms of 1964*]

The ending *-ist* is closely connected with *-ism*. 1964 saw seven new words formed with the ending *-ism*. Of these seven, only three refer to what we usually think of as *isms*, that is to distinctive doctrines or theories, schools or tendencies. *Allosterism* is a hypothesis in biochemistry. *Situationism* originally had specific reference to the ideas of the Situationist International, a

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7 The 1964 use of *computerist* refers to one who stresses the analogy between mental processes and computer programs. Later quotations seem to refer more generally to those who use computers.

8 In this connection we might note in passing that *skateboard* is another word of 1964. The first citation is from *Life*, which records that skateboards first appeared the previous fall. Two other citations of 1964 record skateboarding's connection with the surfing fraternity. A British advertisement from 1978 says the advertisers can be found 'adjoining the skateboard rink' which indicates how the craze had established itself as part of the environment.

9 *Metabolism* in this sense first occurred in English in 1960 in the title of a book by Kiyonori Kikutake, *Metabolism: proposals for a new urbanism*. The Dictionary shows its fallibility by erroneously crediting the Capsule Tower to Kikutake.

revolutionary cultural movement established in Paris in the 1950s.[10] As for *Montaignism*, it is perhaps surprising that it didn't appear sooner, given that Michel de Montaigne died in 1592.

Two of the remaining *-ism* words (*triumphalism* and *credentialism*) are labels applied pejoratively to certain beliefs and practices.[11] *Triumphalism* is an ostentatious sense of pride in the rightness and success of one's own side – first applied in the context of the Church.

Credentialism is the practice of placing undue reliance on what my mother used to call 'paper qualifications' in assessing a person's ability or merit. Along with another of the year's words, *educrat*, a pejorative term for an educational administrator, it points to a fear that education is threatened by regimentation, categorization and an over-dependence on theory.

So far we've not drawn a very happy picture of 1964, with its nuclear threats, unlovely modernist architecture, irradiated food and rigid educational divisions. It's not surprising that there were those who feared the dehumanising forces of modernity. One prophetic voice was that of Arthur Koestler (1905-1983).

[slide *Koestler*]

Koestler, whose mother-tongue was Hungarian, and who wrote in German and French as well as English, was a prolific word-coiner. There are 596 quotations from his work in the Dictionary, of which 20 represent the first attested appearance of a word. Some of these are words that he imported from other languages, such as *apparat* and *apparatchik*, *belote* or *Irgun*, but some are his own invention, such as *wasm*, *feminophobia* and *struthonian*.[12]

[slide *ratomorphic*]

Ratomorphic is Koestler's 1964 contribution. On the analogy of *anthropomorphic,* a ratomorphic view of human nature is based on the behaviour of laboratory rats. Its a vision of a society where people respond in stereotypical ways to stimuli. The word was coined as a protest against the influence of behaviourist science. If we succumb to behaviourism we place ourselves at the mercy of manipulative leaders. Like his later coining *robotomorphic*, it reflects his uneasiness, as a lifelong enemy of totalitarianism, at the regimentation of society and the threatened dominance of science and technology.[13]

welt

Koestler was not the only one to protest against such trends. We'll discuss later aspects of youth culture and the permissive society, but first we'll look at one particular group who stood out against the modern world: the Liverpool dockers.

The docks were on the verge of devastating changes. Two of the words of 1964 give a clear hint of this: *Transtainer* and *seatainer*, both incorporating the word *container*, point to the way things were going in the docks. The first container ships had begun working in the late 50s, and were to dominate sea-trade from the 70s onwards, principally based in large newly developed ports such as Felixstowe. Large ships in the pre-container age are said to have spent up to 60% of their time in port, but with new techniques they could be turned round in days or hours rather than weeks. But in the early 60s dock workers and employers alike adopted what Koestler would have called a

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[10] It reminds me of a phenomenon which helped to make me interested in language – the extraordinary pervasiveness all through the 1960s, in conversation and on the wireless and television, of the word *situation*. It had an awful fascination. People used it compulsively, it seemed, instead of words like *episode*, *incident*, *problem*, *thing*, *complex*, *dilemma*, *circumstances*, *surroundings*, *place*, *conditions* and so on.

[11] The other two are *aleatorism* (the dependence on chance in the composition and performance of music) and *neuterism* (the state of being sexually neuter).

[12] From the Latin *struthio*, an ostrich – although as was pointed out in a letter to the *Listener* in 1966, it possibly should have been *struthionine* on the analogy of *leonine*.

[13] Koestler (see his interview in the Times, 17 December 1970) did not see himself as anti-science, but only against particular scientific doctrines, which he wanted to oust by means of better science.

struthonian attitude. The Rochdale Committee that reported on the docks in 1961 was equally blind, devoting only two or three pages to container ships.[14]

The dock workers clung to every right that they had wrung from the employers over the years, principally the National Dock Labour Scheme, which mitigated the harshness and insecurity of casual labour. One of the factors that made reform of the docks so difficult was that each major port had its own local conditions, and its own constitutional status. Each port was an enclosed world of its own. The employers had developed their own local cartels, and in response the workers had extracted their own local rights in fierce local disputes over the decades. In Liverpool these included the *welt*, which came to wider national notice in 1964.

[slide *Guardian on the welt*]

The *Guardian* article explains that the welt was the practice of allowing one half of each gang to rest while the other half worked, taking turn and turn about. It had originated in the early days of refrigerated ships around 1914, but had spread to other ships and had persisted ever since. The newspaper portrays it as something shocking beyond belief. The whole tone of the article is one of amazement that such a practice was tolerated. A few years later *The Economist* referred to it as an 'appalling system', and claimed that ending it would both enable better rates of basic pay and cut down the total labour force. It's arguable that in the context of the monumental inefficiencies of the docks and the immense changes that new technology would bring, the welt on its own was insignificant. Dockers said that the periods of rest enabled them to work more efficiently.

As something that had grown up in an enclosed world, it was appropriate that the practice had its own local dialect name – and one whose etymology remains unknown. Liverpool and its docks were as alien to most Guardian and Economist readers as the distant areas investigated by travellers and anthropologists – such as the world of the million or so *Maninka* speakers of West Africa, whose language was classified in 1964 as differing 'only slightly from the varieties known as Mandinka or Malinke'.

kvetch

A regular complaint heard when I was young was that too many Americanisms were infiltrating the language. Some people are still protesting about it. But the English language doesn't belong to the British, and the Dictionary aims to describe all its regional varieties. Of the 375 words of 1964, it categorizes 45 as *North American*. This compares with 48 out of 572 in 1904.

In this connection it's worth looking at the sources of the first citations to see which side of the Atlantic they are found.

[Slide: *location of first citation*]

It turns out that 158 first appearances were in non-specialist publications, of which roughly half were North American, and a third British, the remainder coming from elsewhere in the English speaking world, including English language newspapers in Korea and Japan. It's not surprising that American sources outnumber British, because there are many more newspapers, magazines and books published in America. The porousness of the frontiers between the regions of English is demonstrated by the fact that some of the North American words are found first in British publications. For example, *marv*, which the Dictionary categorizes as 'chiefly *US*' is first found in a 1964 whodunnit by British writer Julian Symons.[15]

We saw earlier that Ian Fleming was responsible for bringing in two of the Japanese words that entered English in 1964. Other novelists played their part. 1964 saw the publication of novels by Saul Bellow in America and Len Deighton in Britain, writers who have little in common beyond their alertness to how English is spoken and their willingness to draw in words from specialised communities.

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[14] See R O Goss, 'British Ports Policies since 1945', *Journal of Transport Economics and Policy* vol 32 no 1 (1997).

[15] The slang guru Eric Partridge states in the 1967 supplement to his *Dictionary of Slang*, that *marv* had been teenagers slang since the late 1950s.

[slide *Bellow & Deighton*]

Bellow's *Herzog* contains the first appearance of *dikey* (having the appearance or characteristics of a lesbian), *heimisch* (homely, unpretentious), k*vetch* (a fault-finder), *ooky* (slimy, sickly, sentimental, peculiar), *schmegeggy* (a contemptible person), and *yuck* (as a verb, to fool around or laugh, as in *yucking it up*). Apart from *heimisch* these are all classed as slang or colloquial. *Heimisch* and *kvetch* are Yiddish, the rest of uncertain etymology.

Deighton's *Funeral in Berlin* introduces three foreign terms from the world of the Cold War: *Stasi*, *Grepo* and *Shin Bet*.[16]

In addition to Saul Bellow's contributions, two more Yiddish words entered English in 1964: *schlep* (a troublesome business) and *schlub* (a worthless person). *Schlub* first appeared in a thriller by American writer Ed McBain.[17] *Schlep*, though categorized as a chiefly American colloquialism, first appeared in a British source, an article in *The Economist*, another indication of the porousness of the boundary between American and British English.[18]

palacsinta

One reason why words are introduced from America and elsewhere is that we import the things to which they refer.

[slide *Pentel*]

The *Pentel* pen for instance came from Japan – with an interesting etymology. The first element in the name is usually assumed (in the Wikipedia entry for instance) to be the word *pen*, but the Dictionary explains that the company was named after its original products which were pastel paints – the company is therefore a combination of the Japanese rendering of the English words *painting* and *pastel*.

[slide *food & drink*]

Most of the imported things that provided imported words in 1964 were food or drink of one sort or another. Pop Tarts, for example. We've already noticed mattar paneer. Viticulture gave us *Amarone* (a wine from the Valpolicella region, characterized by a pungent, bitter taste) and *Pinotage* (a South African cross between Pinot noir and Hermitage). From South American Spanish we got *café Americano* (first cited in the Jamaican *Daily Gleaner* where it was described as mild American coffee, and contrasted with *café Latino*).

[slide *palacsinta*]

From Hungarian came *palacsinta* – from Romanian, and ultimately from Latin *placenta*, a small flat cake. The Dictionary quotes two uses of *Palacsinta* from the 1930s, but still regards the 1964 citation from Edmund Wilson (1895-1972) as giving the first example in English. I suppose the reason is that the earlier sources were accounts of Hungarian life, with the word merely quoted as a foreign-language word, whereas the 1964 passage shows that these Hungarian (or Romanian) pancakes had been incorporated in the life of English-speakers.

1964 saw the arrival of *Dolcelatte* cheese, but Italian food in general had long been familiar, with spaghetti and macaroni already well established in Mrs Beeton's day. A 1919 article in the *Journal of Home Economics* lists other varieties of pasta such as *rigatoni* and *penne*.

[16] In all, the Dictionary contains 261 citations from Bellow, and 454 from Deighton. Of these only a few were the first published use (8 for Bellow, 6 for Deighton). The remainder illustrated novel usages or particular shades of meaning.

[17] McBain is cited 244 times in all; on three occasions his is the earliest recorded use.

[18] Certainly I can remember a definite interest in Yiddish in this country during the early sixties, encouraged in my case by Leo Rosten's books about Hyman Kaplan. In 1968 Leo Rosten published *Joys of Yiddish*, which is cited 51 times in the Dictionary, four times providing the first citation.

pizza-face

Pizza had been around in Britain even longer, the word first appearing in English in 1598.

[slide *pizza-face*]

In 1964 American college slang gave us *pizza-face* for someone suffering from facial acne. I'm glad to say that my own facial acne was abating slowly by then, enough to avoid this particular insult. One of the later citations for *pizza face* is from a memoir by baseball player Jim Bouton: 'If we happen to see some fellow who is blessed with a bad complexion, we immediately call him something nice, like "pizza face".' Bouton may or may not have been aware that in French his name could mean spot or pimple.

American college slang was monitored and recorded by American academics.[19] In 1964 it gave us two new slang words for the male genitalia, *dork* and *nads*, and *mono*, short for *mononucleosis*, or what in Britain was called glandular fever, which, as I recall from the 1960s, was said to be common among students and to be transmitted by kissing. It was presumably college students who also gave us an example of a noun used as a verb: to *toilet-paper* is to cover (a building or a tree, for instance) in toilet-paper.

[slide *Abrahams et al.*]

Three important books appeared in 1964 which recorded the speech of groups not lucky enough to go to College. Roger D Abrahams's *Deep Down in the Jungle* had the sub-title *Negro Narrative Folklore from the Streets of Philadelphia*, and introduced two slang terms (*ho*, a sexually promiscuous woman, a whore; and *mack daddy*, a successful pimp or criminal).[20] Kitty Hanson's *Rebels in the Streets* describes girl gangs in New York. It is quoted twelve times (including for *gang-rape*) and contains the first published use of *skank* – a sexually unattractive person, usually applied to a woman, although it was later used of Woody Allen.[21] In Britain *Generation X* by journalists Jane Deverson and Charles Hamblett, based on interviews with teenagers, provides the earliest citation of the originally American slang *voom* (indicating the sound of an explosion, but usually used figuratively) and the all too British *queer-bash*.[22]

Slang turns up elsewhere too, not just in these academic or journalistic forays into youth culture. Grown up publications in the 60s liked to prove they were *with-it*[23] by borrowing the language of the teen-ager. During the 60s the sober *New Statesman* indulged in words like *ton-up*, *fab*, *campy* or *rave-in*. In 1964 it is cited as the first published use of *poofed-up*, referring to a 'pooved-up tenor'.[24]

frug

We'll look now at the hedonistic side of life, at what was already known as the permissive society. We've noted the ever expanding range of things to eat and drink. In this connection we should also note the arrival of the *superpub*, *binge-drinking* and *drink-driving*.

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[19] 'Some Problems in the Study of Campus Slang', Lawrence Poston III. Poston lists a number of students and others who provided data from their own observations or field-work. The list includes Roger D Abrahams, who was himself a notable recorder of the spoken language.

[20] The prefix *Mc-* is used to create a mock name for someone considered to be an exemplar of a particular class of person. Abrahams also introduced a new abstract noun, *neuterism*.

[21] I believe *skank* became the name of a dance, possibly related to *ska*.

[22] *Deep Down in the Jungle* is cited 27 times in all; *Generation X* 23 times. 'Generation X' is now generally thought of as referring those who were young in the 1980s and 1990s, but the term had previously been used for other lost and confused generations, including (in an article of 1952) those who had been children during the war, and, in Deverson and Hamblett's book, those who were teenagers in the early 60s.

[23] A much used phrase in the 60s, although *to be with it* was in use from the 1930s. In 1960 the Guardian wrote of the new *Time & Tide* that it was 'to borrow the language of the teen-ager, ... "with it"'. The Dictionary records the adjectival *with-it* as first used in 1962.

[24] It also used *Carnaby Street* in 1964, but (in the Dictionary's view) still using it as the name of the street. The first adjectival use of it to refer to the typical products of Carnaby Street is given as 1965.

And then there was the television. *Situation comedy* was already an established form (the term was used in 1953 to describe *I Love Lucy*) and in 1964 the word *sitcom* appeared when *Life* reported: 'Even Bing Crosby has succumbed to series TV and will appear in a sitcom as an electrical engineer who happens to break into song once a week.' *Soapie* also appeared as a colloquial form of *soap opera*. Commentators wrote apprehensively of *TV Land* as of a whole new world with its own rules and its own preoccupations, apart from the world where the rest of us lived – although it isn't a term I can recall.

For those whose drug of choice was neither alcohol nor the television there was the dubious satisfaction of hallucinogenics; a 1964 book on LSD coined the word *utopiates*, a combination of *utopia* and *opiate*.

But what the hedonistic sixties are most remembered for are popular dance music, and sexual permissiveness.

Three new dances (new to written English, that is) were named in 1964: the *frug*, the *hully-gully* and the *ska*.

[slide *frug instructions*]

The first two were, apparently, variants on the twist. I don't remember any of them, I'm afraid.

[slide *frug entry*]

But looking at some of the quotations in the entry for *frug* I certainly recognise the sort of things that used to be said about the dances of the sixties. Older people, thinking of the waltz and the fox-trot, would find it odd that a couple dancing the frug would not touch, as we see in the quotation from thriller writer Judson Philips (in his sixties in 1965). John C Holmes, a veteran of the Beat generation, was interested in the connection between dancing the frug and political activism.

Despite the ludicrousness of the middle-aged George Brown dancing the frug, older people were (as the quotation from John Updike suggests) quick to muscle in on the pleasures of the young. The record companies controlled the supply of dance music, needless to say, and grown-up music critics tried to take over the Beatles – as appears from the coining of the word *Beatlesque*, using the *-esque* ending which is more typically used with schools and practitioners of high art.

[slide *ska pictures*]

Of the three dances, I think the ska lasted longest. This may be because it had deep roots in Jamaican music. 'The ska hits London,' declared a headline in the *Daily Gleaner* of Kingston, Jamaica in March 1964. It may have resisted sanitisation. The magazine *Mademoiselle* described it as 'like The Game, set to music'. But although it may have been daring and provocative, the ska too was co-opted for adult purposes, being used at Expo 64 to promote tourism to Jamaica.[25]

Not that America and Europe had a monopoly on sexually provocative dancing. In 1964 the *Wanganui Photo News* carried a picture of a Tahitian nurse dancing the *tamure*, of which another of the quotations says: 'Ah the tamure! which was to the hula as whisky to milk.'

The new dances were closely associated with new fashions. An American newspaper described 'discotheque dresses' as 'almost always black ... a daring neckline ... a mite shorter too – right in the middle of the kneecap.'[26]

The mini-skirt, most visible emblem of the permissive society, appeared in 1962. The *mini-* prefix had been around since the 1930s, but its use boomed in the early 60s. I was first aware of it in 1960, when minicabs generated resentment among London taxi-drivers. In October 1964 *Punch* coined an abstract noun writing of a car that 'flaunted its mini-ness'.

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[25] This much is clear from what I've seen of the article in *Mademoiselle* on the Foundation Ska blog: http://skabook.com/foundationska/2014/09/skanking-models-part-deux/ (retrieved 2 October 2014). The description of the ska as like the game set to music is quoted in the Dictionary to illustrate the use of *the game* to refer to sexual intercourse.

[26] The *Tuscaloosa News,* August 1964, quoted in 'Among the New Words' in *American Speech*, May 1965.

The earliest reference to topless bathing suits was in 1937, when it was topless males who were causing uproar. The first topless bathing dress for women appeared in San Francisco in 1964 and quickly became an issue that moralists, social commentators and fashion pundits felt obliged to write about. *Punch* mused on the topless look, and the *New Statesman* wrote: 'A girl who wears a topless dress in the streets of Coventry or Nottingham could be doing as much for her sex as any Mrs Pankhurst.' In 1964 the topless bathing suit was sometimes called a *monokini*, and was not universally popular. 'Selling like iceboxes in Alaska,' commented an Australian newspaper, while an American paper quoted a German manufacturer of swimwear who warned sourly that 'women who cannot wear them will see to it that those who can won't.' Another new word, *braless*, underlines the obsessive interest in nudity.[27]

quark

Back to science, and the most important word of 1964.

We've seen that most new words grow out of already existing words, and are formed in response to if not compliance with the nature of the corresponding reality – sometimes following strict conventions in the correspondence with the thing named, as with certain scientific words, and at other times with an element of more creative imagination. So a *pat-down* is a search for weapons that involves patting the suspect's clothing, and *no-knock* describes an entry into a building without permission.

[slide *gonk*] Other coinings are what the Dictionary calls arbitrary, having no inherent connection with the thing named, such as *gonk*, the name of the furry, egg-like dolls that seemed to be everywhere in 1964.

With newly discovered substances we know that the discoverers probably constructed the name. Otherwise, although we might know the first published use of the word, this often won't lead us to identify the originator of it. It would be good to know who decreed that *grockle* should be the word for summer visitors to the south-west of England, or who first called New Zealand the Godzone.

Sometimes. however, is is possible to identify the creative mind responsible. The Dictionary ascribes the word *Strine* for Australian to the journalist Alistair Morrison (pseudonym Afferbeck Lauder), and we know that Koestler created *ratomorphic*.

[slide *quark 1*]

With *quark* we not only know who assigned the name but also, although it is what the Dictionary calls an arbitrary formation, we know why, because he's told us.

Quarks are a group of subatomic particles whose properties and combinations were postulated by Nobel laureate Murray Gell-Mann (born 1929) in order to explain the results observed in cosmic ray experiments.[28] Particle physicists like Professor Gell-Mann have an engaging way of smiling and saying how simple it all is, but it isn't simple for me, and I shan't risk any further explanation of quarks, or indeed anti-quarks, but pass on to the explanation of how they came by their name.

[slide *quark 2*]

Professor Gell-Mann has explained on several occasions that he associated the name with a passage in James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*. 'Three quarks for Muster Mark!' Three was significant because at that early point in the development of the theory there were three varieties (flavours) of quark

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[27] *Skinny dip* as a noun had been around since the 1940s; in 1964 it was used as a verb, showing that the custom was still going strong among American youth.

[28] These experiments involved measurements of very small quantities. One of the features of quarks is that they take a very long time to decay – a very long time, in this context, being a ten-billionth of a second, a tenth on a nanosecond. The science of very small quantities was advancing on several different fronts, with two new words with the prefix *nano-* appearing in 1964: *nanovolt* and *nanomole*. These words had almost certainly been in use amongst specialists for some time. The convention of using *nano-* to express a thousand-millionth and *pico-* for a million-millionth went back to the 1930s or earlier, according to a 1952 *Wireless World* article cited in the Dictionary. The Dictionary records a change in pronunciation of *nano-* words from *nayno* or *nahno* to the now accepted *nano* with a short *a*.

(subsequently this was increased to six). It is fitting, no doubt, that the most difficult branch of science should borrow from the most difficult work in English literature, and that someone who studied the combinations of fundamental particles should be drawn to *Finnegans Wake*, where every phrase incorporates meanings drawn from different sources.

The Professor had to explain away a difficulty facing the proposed etymology. Before he came across the passage in Joyce, he had been calling his particles *quorks*.[29] Now he was proposing to use Joyce's spelling for the word, which suggested a different pronunciation. To meet this difficulty he postulated, not unreasonably, that one of the elements making up *Three quarks for Muster Mark!* is the cry of a customer in a bar calling for *three quarts*.

Now well into his eighties, Murray Gell-Mann is still appearing in public, expounding his difficult theories in his gentle, reasonable, humorous way – not the sort of scientist that prophets like Koestler were warning us against, not at all a wild-eyed boffin treating human-beings as experimental rats or threatening us with nuclear destruction. So we'll end our survey of the words of 1964 not with the monokini or underkill, not with the big-ups or the Yamaguchi-gumi, nor yet with any of the 300 odd words I haven't had time to mention, but with Professor Gell-Mann's smiling face.

[slide Gell-Mann]

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[29] So far as I know Gell-Mann has not explained why, in advance of seeing the word in Joyce, he had been using this name, which, incidentally he still pronounces *quork*, although the dictionary says that it is usual to say *quark*. Another physicist working in the same area, George Zweig, proposed calling these particles *aces*.