

By ANNE DONNELL

I like those explanations of the odd things we say daily. Here are two for you to “deliver.” Hodgepodge, cold turkey. Thanks! -RR (Regular Reader)

“Deliver” sounds too much like “labor and delivery.” Mothers of the world, you know what I mean. And now it’s *televised*! Pant and push in public. George Orwell had no idea!

[ATA (According to Anne) – George Orwell (pen name of Eric Arthur Blair) 1903-1950, British novelist, essayist, critic, a leading political writer of his day. Best known now for his novels *Animal Farm*

and

1984.

The latter is about a society marked by huge government and mind control, a dystopian society. (Dystopian societies feature repressive control systems.)

Wikipedia

adds, “Many of its terms and concepts, such as

Big Brother

,

[doublethink](#)

,

thoughtcrime

,

[Newspeak](#)

, and

[memory hole](#)

, have become contemporary vernacular since its publication in 1949. Moreover,

1984

popularised the adjective

[Orwellian](#)

, which refers to official deception, secret surveillance, and manipulation of the past in service to

a

[totalitarian](#)

or manipulative political agenda.”]

Speaking of *memory hole* (actually refers to a device that distorts memory, perhaps to the point

of disappearance) I have one I keep it nearby. In my head.

So, on to business. *Hodgepodge* means a mixture of many things, a confused mess. The word dates back to the 15th century and came from a French word (*hocher*) which meant “to shake together.” That was applied to a stew (*hochepot*), and, sailing across the channel one day (English Channel, that is), became the English *hodgepodge*. At least that’s the story from *QPB Encyclopedia of Word and Phrase Origins*.

The online newsletter “A Phrase A Week” defines *cold turkey* as “the sudden and complete withdrawal from an addictive substance and/or the physiological effects of such a withdrawal. Also, predominantly in the USA, plain speaking.” The latter dates back to the 19th century. After some hemming and hawing about American turkeys (cute stuff like “Let’s talk turkey”), the British author of the newsletter says, “In the state of drug withdrawal the addict’s blood is directed to the internal organs, leaving the skin white and with goose bumps. It has been suggested that this is what is alluded to by ‘cold turkey.’ There’s no evidence to support that view. For the source of ‘cold turkey’ we need look no further than the direct, no nonsense approach indicated by the earlier ... meaning of the term.” I’d say he quit talking turkey somewhere a few lines back. He could be smoking turkey.

Also online, Evan Morris (“The Word Detective”) writes, “There are a number of stories about the origin of ‘talk turkey,’ many of which involve Pilgrims and Indians, and all of which strike me as deeply implausible. But... an early form of the phrase was ‘to talk cold turkey,’ most likely using ‘cold turkey,’ a simple, uncomplicated meal, as a metaphor for simple, unadorned, direct speech. With ‘talk cold turkey’ already a popular idiom meaning ‘give it to me straight; tell me the unvarnished truth,’ it seems natural that ‘cold turkey’ came to mean ‘quit suddenly, with no tapering off or equivocation.’”

ONLINE DEPARTMENT “Pastor’s False Teeth” (Thanks, J.A.) *The first Sunday a pastor with a new set of false teeth preached, he talked for only eight minutes. The second Sunday, he talked for only ten minutes. The following Sunday, he talked for 2 hours and 48 minutes. The congregation had to pull him down from the pulpit, and they demanded an explanation for the super long sermon. The pastor explained the first Sunday his gums hurt so bad he couldn’t talk for more than 8 minutes. The second Sunday his gums hurt too much to talk for more than 10*

minutes. But, the third Sunday, he put his wife's teeth in by mistake and he couldn't shut up. [And I say to that, if only he could have had his wife's BRAIN, and I'm surprised he has a wife.]

ONLINE II "Summary of Life" (Thanks, D. W.) *GREAT TRUTHS THAT LITTLE CHILDREN HAVE LEARNED: 1) No matter how hard you try, you can't baptize cats. 2) When your mom is mad at your dad, don't let her brush your hair. 3) If your sister hits you, don't hit her back. They always catch the second person. 4) Never ask your 3-year old brother to hold a tomato. 5) You can't trust dogs to watch your food. 6) Don't sneeze when someone is cutting your hair. 7) Never hold a Dust-Buster and a cat at the same time. 8) You can't hide a piece of broccoli in a glass of milk. 9) Don't wear polka-dot underwear under white shorts. 10) The best place to be when you're sad is Grandma's lap. GREAT TRUTHS THAT ADULTS HAVE LEARNED: 1) Raising teenagers is like nailing jelly to a tree. 2) Wrinkles don't hurt. 3) Families are like fudge - mostly sweet, with a few nuts. 4) Today's mighty oak is just yesterday's nut that held its ground. 5) Laughing is good exercise. It's like jogging on the inside. 6) Middle age is when you choose your cereal for the fiber, not the toy. THE FOUR STAGES OF LIFE: 1) You believe in Santa Claus. 2) You don't believe in Santa Claus. 3) You are Santa Claus. 4) You look like Santa Claus. SUCCESS: At age 3 success is dry pants. At age 12 success is having friends. At age 17 success is having a drivers license. At age 35 success is having money. At age 50 success is having money. At age 70 success is having a drivers license. At age 75 success is having friends. At age 80 success is dry pants.*

BW (Bigtime Word) *juvenescence* – transition from infancy or early childhood to youth. FRIENDLY REMINDER: Valentines are for youth of all ages. ☐ Get out there and shop.