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A/NOEDC/ELR/mc

7 July 1997

Dear Mr Baron,

Thank you for your letter of 30 June concerning words not covered by the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

I am pleased to be able to tell you that an entry for *meme*, coined by Richard Dawkins in *The Selfish Gene* in 1876, appears in Volume 3 of the *Oxford English Dictionary Additions Series*, which is in fact due to be published later this month.

Sac, used as a colloquial abbreviation of 'sacrifice' by chess players, was included in the first volume of the *Additions Series*, published in 1993; the earliest evidence which was found for the term was in the November 1965 issue of *Chess Life*. As regards *chessic*, the Reuben Fine quotation which you mention is already in our files, but there is no further evidence for the term and, unless this is forthcoming, it cannot be regarded as a candidate for the *OED*, since our inclusion policy is based on the existence of evidence of use over a period of time in a range of printed sources.

It is too early to speculate on whether *sindophile*, *sindophobe*, and *sindocast* will become established vocabulary; I have noted with thanks the reference which you provide, which is now in our quotation files.

We have been supplied by an earlier correspondent with citations (as yet unchecked) for the appearance of the term *drapetomania* in the *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* (Summer 1974, p. 247) and the *American Journal of Psychotherapy* (1971 Vol. 25 pp. 228-239). I have also located a reference in C.R. Wilson and W. Ferris *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* (1989, p. 1356) which credits the term's coinage to Dr Samuel A. Cartwright of the Medical Association of Louisiana in the 1850s. I expect *drapetomania* to receive serious consideration for inclusion in the next edition of the *OED*.

The development of the Internet has indeed provided us with a great deal of terminology for investigation, *spamming* and *surfing* being among the terms we have researched. Although the next edition of the *OED* is some way off (publication is currently planned for 2010), such terminology is likely to make earlier appearances in the smaller dictionaries published in more frequent editions by the Oxford Dictionaries Department.

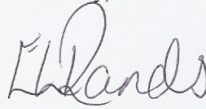


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Thank you for your interest in our work. (It will not, unfortunately, be possible to give you a by-line for any of the terminology mentioned!)

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'E. Rands'.

Eleanor L. Rands
Senior Assistant Editor
Oxford English Dictionary

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