

routines in 12 languages. From now on, product updates by these companies will include Proximity's linguistic software.

The Software Division of Houghton Mifflin, another very prominent player in the linguistic software market, has introduced the American Heritage Electronic Dictionary (AHED), an electronic version of the publisher's venerable dictionary of American English.

The AHED comes in three editions: a Comprehensive Edition; A Concise Edition; and a Compact Edition. The Comprehensive edition comprises definitions of 240,000 words.

In addition to proper spelling and definitions, the Comprehensive Edition supplies pronunciations, parts of speech, hyphenation points, synonym paragraphs, etymologies, usage notes, sample text and quotations,

phrasal verbs ("blast off"), derived forms ("blatancy"), inflections ("think: thought, thinking, and thinks") as well as homographs.

A user can search for a (misspelled) word or for single or clusters of letters. Wildcard searches are also supported, as well as Anagram searches ("beda" returns "abed, bade and bead").

The AHED is available for DOS, Macintosh, UNIX and VMS operating systems.

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(From the *LIS*, Press Bulletin 7, 1990)

Doublespeak in the US

● The Harris Bank of Chicago has announced a program called "rightsizing the bank," which is described as "a program to substantially reduce its payroll costs through reducing head count." *Currency Chronicle*, Harris Bank Corporation, 28 February 1990.

● Fifteen employees at Clifford of Vermont, Inc. weren't laid off. "This was not a cutback nor a lay-off. It was a career-change opportunity," said Jim McNulty, president. *Valley News* (Conn.), 3 May 1990.

● Stouffer Foods Corporation did not lay off three hundred part-time workers. "These are called schedule adjustments, not layoffs," said Roz O'Hearn, public affairs manager, *The Plain Dealer* (Cleveland), 21 June 1990, p. 3-F.

● Cray Research, Inc. is reducing its workforce through "voluntary termination," while IBM is asking for "voluntary resignations" from its "population." *IEEE Spectrum*, May 1990, p. 20.

● Workers are never laid off; they're "redundant," "excessed," "transitioned," or offered "voluntary severance." *The Wall Street Journal*, 13 April 1990, p. B1.

● Eastman Kodak is selling a camera which comes loaded with a roll of film. Once you have taken all the pictures, you take the camera to a developer who develops the film

and throws the camera away. Kodak does not call the camera "disposable" or "throwaway" – unacceptable terms in an age of increasing environmental awareness. Kodak calls it a "single-use" camera.

When Glad brought out a "biodegradable" plastic trash bag, Mobil Oil, the maker of Hefty trash bags, maintained that the plastic trash bag is impervious to degradation. But the sales of Glad trash bags went up while those of Hefty went down. So Mobil brought out its own "photodegradable" trash bag. Now the attorneys general of seven states have filed a lawsuit against Mobil Oil for claiming that its Hefty trash bags have a "special ingredient that promotes their breakdown after exposure to elements like sun, wind and rain." The Hefty boxes carry the claim that once nature has "triggered" this new additive, "these bags will continue to break down into harmless particles even after they are buried in a landfill." Mobil admitted that in its own tests it took 30 days in the sun of the Arizona desert for a bag to break down. In other less sunny climates, it takes about 120 days, and in a sunless landfill the bag won't break down at all. Said Mike Levy of Mobil, "Degradability is just a marketing tool." *Opinion Week*, 25 June 1990, p. 14.

● "I have a negative net worth," said Bill Walters during hearings before the House Banking Committee. Walters had defaulted

on \$96 million in loans from the Silverado Banking, Savings & Loan Association in Denver. Meanwhile, Walters lives in a \$1.9 million estate near Newport Bay in California with two Mercedes Benzes in the driveway. His gardeners charge Walters \$800 per month to care for his lawn. *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 19 July 1990, p. 8-A.

● The business card identifies the bearer as a "Financial Service Specialist." But you probably know the job by its former title: bank teller.

● Two land developers who illegally filled in and destroyed 3.45 acres of fragile wetlands called their act a "regrettable environmental incident." *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 28 February 1990, p. J3-B.

● The University of Arizona has prepared a "Diversity Action Plan" to promote understanding and acceptance of various groups, based on race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, individual style, and physical and mental abilities. The first thing the university will do is replace the word "minority" with "diversity," "diverse populations," or "under-represented groups." There will be a vice president for "diversity action," a "Diversity Resource Center," and "diversity specialists" who will educate others about diversity. The plan also calls for "developing courses and course material on the cultural, social, psychological and political meanings of difference in human societies." Whatever happened to fighting racism, sexism, and

prejudice? *The Arizona Daily Star*, 12 May 1990, p. 1-B.

● The child isn't bad, said the teacher. It's just that "she engages in negative attention-getting." *The Philadelphia Inquirer Magazine*, 1 April 1990.

● Faced with a desperate economic situation (meaning not enough money to meet expenses), Columbia University reduced the number of courses offered, slashed its budget, and laid off employees. What was all this called? Why, "selective excellence," what else? *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 1 May 1990, p. 2-B.

● Others may have a photo contest, but *Harvard Magazine* (July–August 1990) has a "Visual Communication Challenge."

● In its "Class of 1989 Profile Report," Rutgers University reported that "5 [percent] are available for employment," which means, of course, that 5 [percent] of the graduating class was unemployed.

● Quote of the month from *The Administrator* (XVI, No. 4), a newsletter for administrators at Rutgers University: "We also intend to reduce our utility costs by reemphasizing common sense conservation measures. If a change in the interior environment becomes noticeable, personal attire modifications can be used to compensate and achieve a proper level of comfort."

(Selections from *Quarterly Review of Double-speak*, Vol. XVII, No. 1, Oct 90)

Howlers and Groaners

'I'm looking for the Kodaly 'Buttocks-Pressing Song' – Customer in CD shop who actually wanted 'Could I but express in song' – *D. Edwards, Keighley, Yorks.*

'Beethoven's deafness can be heard in the Ninth Symphony' – School pupil's essay – *John Eyre, Ulveston, Cumbria.*

'Here Shostakovitch writes diatonic subjects but develops vast erections' – John Amis in *Music and Musicians* magazine – *Basil Pigg, Bath, Avon.*

from *Classic CD*, Nov '90