

**American Dialect Society**  
**2004 Words of the Year Nominations**

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**angel**, *n.*, among American military medical personnel in Iraq, a soldier killed in combat. The earliest cite I have is 2004.

**backdoor draft**, *n.*, the filling of military jobs through reactivation of former troops or through forced enlistment extensions known as stop-loss orders. Although bandied about during the 2004 presidential campaign, *backdoor draft* was used as early as 1999 during the Clinton administration in online discussions between military personnel.

**clone and kill**, *v. phr.*, a catch-phrase common among persons who believe whole humans (including fetuses) will be cloned and then destroyed for scientific study or organ harvesting. After lurking in the background of the national discourse since 1997, *clone and kill* came to life, as it were, when cloning human cells became a reality.

**clear**, *n.*, and **cream**, *n.*, euphemisms for performance-enhancing drugs. Both usually used with the definite article: *the clear*, *the cream*. Both terms came out of the so-called BALCO doping scandal, involving baseball-player Barry Bonds and track athlete Marion Jones, among others, with the drug supplier Bay Area Laboratory Cooperative.

**Eurabia**, *n.*, a (perceived) political alliance of Europe and Arab nations (in opposition to Israel, Jews, or the United States). Egyptian-born writer Bat Ye'or popularized the term *Eurabia* but did not coin it. As 2004 closes, Europe undergoes an examination of its continental character: while it has long perceived itself as fundamentally Christian, it finds its identity in question as it debates whether to accept mostly Muslim Turkey into the European Union at the same time Muslim immigrants arrive in record numbers from Malmö to Madrid. The term dates to at least 2001.

**FLOHPA**, *n.*, collectively, the states of Florida, Ohio, and Pennsylvania, said to have been important in the 2004 American presidential election. From the postal codes for the three states: FL, OH, and PA. Coined in 2004.

**gorram**, *interj.*, a euphemistic oath, used in place of an actual curse word. From Joss Whedon's space cowboy television series *Firefly*.

**haji**, *n.*, Among American soldiers, an Iraqi; any Muslim, Arab, or native of the Middle East. Also hadji, hajji. Haji is an honorific given to Muslims who have made a pilgrimage to Mecca, but the word often takes on a pejorative sense when used by American military personnel. There is some evidence that a similar usage was common when the British controlled what is now Iraq. See *haji mart*.

**haji mart**, *n.*, among American military in Iraq and Afghanistan, a flea market, bazaar, or roadside vendor. Usually derisive or jocular. From *haji*, a term for any native of those countries, which in Arabic and Farsi is a term of respect for Muslims who have made a pilgrimage to Mecca. Often capitalized as if it is a proper noun, *haji mart* probably succeeds through its play on the American retail chains "Wal-Mart" and "K-Mart." This was probably coined in 2003.

**hillbilly armor**, *n.*, scavenged materials used by soldiers for improvised bullet-proofing and vehicle hardening, esp. in Iraq. First cite 2004.

**Little Gitmo**, *n.*, the detention area for protestors arrested at the 2004 Republican National Convention in New York City, after the nickname for the US military base at Guantánamo Bay in Cuba, where prisoners captured as part of American military actions in Afghanistan and Iraq are being held. Also **Gitmo on the Hudson**. Coined in 2004.

**mash-up**, *n.*, a blend of two songs or albums into a single cohesive musical work. Probably the first best-known example of a successful mash was Freelance Hellraiser's 2002 mix called "A Stroke of Genius," created by judicious grafting of riffs from The Strokes's "Hard to Explain" with Christina Aguilera's "Genie in Bottle." Both the term and the trend originated in the UK around three years ago, but stateside, rapper Jay-Z was a 2004 mash favorite. Among other works, his *Black Album* rhymes were mixed by Danger Mouse with the Beatle's *White Album* to create the *Grey Album*, and by DJ N-Wee with slackeriffic Pavement's album *Slanted and Enchanted* to create the *Slack Album*.

**non-analytical positive**, *n.*, circumstantial evidence used in place of medical tests as reason to suspend a sports player for a doping violation. Very much a nice bit of 2004 jargon. First cite is April 2004.

**phish**, *v.*, to acquire passwords or other private information (of an individual, an account, a web site, etc.) via a digital ruse. Much talked about this year, but the term dates back to at least 1996.

**podcasting**, *n.*, the automated distribution of broadcast programs to portable digital audio players via simple Internet syndication. From *iPod* (the most popular portable MP3 player) + *broadcasting*. Coined in 2004 by British journalist Ben Hammersley, applied to the concept by Dannie Gregoire, and popularized by former MTV VJ and well-known blogger Adam Curry.

**spim**, *n.*, unwanted commercial messages received in an instant messaging program. From *spam* + *instant messaging*. Dates to 2003, I believe.

**visibility whip**, *n.*, a worker responsible for orchestrating the presentation of placards, chants, and other demonstrations of support among delegates at a political convention. Despite the name, ordinarily one doesn't see or hear a *visibility whip*, but this year during the Democratic National Convention in Boston, convention director Don Mischer, in the background of a CNN broadcast, fired an f-bomb off on the air when balloons weren't falling as planned. I have a first citation of 1988.

**wiki**, *n.*, a community-built web site that allows content to be edited by anyone. From the Hawaiian *wiki* which means fast, or *wikiwiki* which means very fast. Wikipedia, Wiktionary, and Wikinews are examples of huge sites using wikis, although many smaller such sites exist, too, often for small software projects. This term was not coined in 2004 (dating to at least 1998), but has definitely come to be a more common part of technology-related discourse.