

American Dialect Society
2013 Words of the Year
NOMINATIONS to be voted on by
the American Dialect Society
Jan. 3, 2014, Minneapolis

MOST USEFUL

because: introducing a noun or noun phrase (e.g., “because reasons,” “because Internet”)
selfie: a photo taken of oneself, typically with a smartphone and shared on social media
slash: used as a coordinating conjunction to mean “or” or “and/or” (e.g., “come and visit slash stay”)
strug(gle) bus: metaphor for a difficult situation, as in “I’m riding the struggle bus.”

MOST CREATIVE

bitcoin: an anonymous, decentralized, digital, encrypted currency and payment system
catfish: to misrepresent oneself online, especially as part of a romantic deception
doge: an Internet meme with intentionally ungrammatical exclamations over an image of a dog (typically the Shiba Inu breed)
robo sapiens: a class of robots with human-like intelligence

MOST UNNECESSARY

cronut: a croissant-doughnut hybrid
sharknado: a tornado full of sharks, as featured in the Syfy Channel movie of that name
stack-ranking: a method of ranking employees on a primitive curve (used and abandoned by Microsoft)

MOST OUTRAGEOUS

fatberg: large deposit of fat, grease, and solid sewage found in London sewers
revenge porn: vindictive posting of sexually explicit pictures of someone without consent
s(c)hmeat: (blend of *sheet* + *meat*): meat product grown in a lab
thigh gap: a space between the thighs, taken by some as a sign of attractiveness (also *box gap*)
underbutt: the underside of buttocks, made visible by certain shorts or underwear

MOST EUPHEMISTIC

demised: laid off from employment (used by the bank HSBC)
least untruthful: involving the smallest necessary lie (used by intelligence director James Clapper)
slimdown: reinterpretation of “shutdown” used on Fox News site

MOST LIKELY TO SUCCEED

binge-watch: to consume vast quantities of visual entertainment in one sitting
drone: (trans. verb) to target with a drone, typically in a lethal drone strike
glasshole: a person made oblivious by wearing Google Glass, a head-mounted computer
Obamacare: term for the Affordable Care Act that has moved from pejorative to matter-of-fact shorthand

LEAST LIKELY TO SUCCEED

birthmas: a simultaneous celebration of a birthday and Christmas
Harlem Shake: a video meme featuring comic, convulsive dancing accompanied by excerpt of the song “Harlem Shake” by the DJ Baauer
Thanksgivukkah: confluence of Thanksgiving and the first day of Hanukkah that will not be repeated for another 70,000 years

MOST PRODUCTIVE (new category)

-coin: (from *bitcoin*) type of cryptocurrency (*peercoin, namecoin, dogecoin*)
-(el)fie: (from *selfie*) type of self-portrait (*drelfie* ‘drunk selfie,’ *twofie* ‘selfie with two people’)
-shaming: (from *slut-shaming*) type of public humiliation (*fat-shaming, pet-shaming*)
-splaining: (from *mansplaining*) type of condescending explanation (*whitesplaining, journosplaining*)
-spo: (from *thinspo*) type of photo or video montage intended to inspire viewers to lose weight or stay fit (*fitspo, sportspo*)

WORD OF THE YEAR

Nominations to be made at final meeting.
