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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE...

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What Will Be Picked for WOTY 2015

“I’ve got a little list of society offenders who might well be underground and who never would be missed....” or some variation of this famous song from across the pond might be the beginning of the search for WOTY—the ritualistic dance by dictionary type people who search for a term that best characterizes human activity in the preceding year. So far, the tally among the dictionarians offers the following for 2015:

Merriam Webster	ism
Oxford	emoji (a smiley face; or, a face with tears)
Society for the German Language	<i>Fleuchling</i> (=refugee)
Australian Dictionary	sharing economy
Dictionary.com	identity
Collins	binge-watch

Two word-watchers who’ve been dancing with words for about as long as anybody feed their nominations to the voracious linguists who congregate at the American Dialect Society’s meeting each January—this year in Washington, D.C. They have been chasing this objective since 1990 when the ADS began the scramble to name the WOTY for English. Professor Allan Metcalf of MacMurray College (Jacksonville, Ill.) came up with the idea of WOTY in 1990 and David K. Barnhart (dictionary editor since 1966 in the Hudson Valley) jumped on the bandwagon in a heartbeat. They are going to Washington this year “loaded with words and phrases.” But anybody can make nominations for WOTY-2015 by going to the ADS Web site. Just google American Dialect Society and follow the prompts for WOTY.

What's going to happen in Washington is anybody's guess. The attendees are invited to an open session of the ADS on Thursday night January 7th to wrangle over candidates and to draw up a ballot to be voted on Friday evening January 8th. Meanwhile Metcalf and Barnhart have been sounding out each other for what words might be looming in the wings. As usual there will probably be categories of words crowned in the end of deliberations by a single WOTY. Some of the categories will no doubt include Most Likely to Succeed; Least Likely to Succeed; Most (and least) Outrageous; Brand-spanking New; etc. The categories are never chiseled in stone.

Barnhart has been accumulating possibilities starting at the close of last January's meeting in Portland, Oregon. His lists include, among other words, the following:

Trump (as in *Trumpian, Trumpmania, Trumpdom, Trumpish, Trumpism, Trumpist, Trumpness, Trump-o-phile, Trumpphobia, Trumpologist, Trumponomics, Trump phenomenon, Trumpspeak, Trumpy*, etc.)

Bern: *feel the Bern*

Berniementum

birthright citizenship

bus: **drive the bus**

Cadillac tax

Emailgate

Facebook politics

Ferguson effect

health exchange

hostilize, -ation

ISISisation

kick the can down the road

lamestream, -er

post-Boehner

post-Paris

postrational

self-sabotage

shovel: **drop the shovel**

undercard (new meaning) also called **happy hour (debate)**

Not all of Barnhart's scratching are producing political words, though bear in mind we are now in a political cycle that is very active.

There are sports terms *deflategate*, *FIFAgate*, and *footgolf*;

In business there is *unicorn* (for "a heavily financed new company");

In law enforcement there is *stingray* and *swarm theory*;

In education there is *STEM* (for science, technology, engineering and math) and *opt-out* (*v.* and *n.*);

In linguistics there is *neo-Wharfian*, *-ism*; and *ethnolect*; and *Mx.* (for "Ms." or "Mr."); and *emojify*;

In Science there is *moment magnitude scale*; and *science* (*v.*); and *recurring slop lineae*;

In materials science there is *microbead*;

In human behavior there is *hanger* (meaning "hunger-driven anger") and *hangry*; and *microaggression* and *swing for the fence(s)*; and *crybully*; and *phubbing*;

In fashion there is *high-low* (for a hemline that is "high in front and low in back");

In religion there is *Francis effect* and *Francismania*;

In medicine there is *Ebola-proof*, *-ed*, *-ing*; and *post-Ebola syndrome*; and *cold cap therapy*; and *iHunch*;

In finance there is *put on a diet* (meaning "to reduce a budget").

This list is brief, and consequently very incomplete. Where one is in this world can influence the WOTY selection process. If you are in California *water* may be your Word of the Year; but if you're in Baltimore it may be *injustice*; living in Northern New York State may make *escape* a more appropriate WOTY. However, if you're in Indonesia it may be *cyclone* or *volcano*.

The atmosphere in academic meeting can get rather contentious. But all is intended to be fun at the WOTY sessions of ADS.

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