



jcannonbooks

Because everybody
needs an editor . . .

and a newsletter

I know, right?*

Why would a small university (2,100 undergrads) in Michigan's Upper Peninsula that has a pioneering fire-science program, a student-maintained fishery, and an annual Snowman Burning festival be best known (to me anyway) as a national arbiter of overused words and phrases?

It is what it is, I guess.

These are Yoopers, as they call themselves, so maybe they run out of things to do during the eleven-month winter. Whatever the reason, I praise Lake Superior State University and its dedication to the removal of clichés. Here is the 2022 Banished Words list that became available December 31, in case you missed it. [And you can click here to go to the university's website](#) to learn more about the list, its history, and life in Sault Ste. Marie.

Wait, what?

I admit to using this within the last year. I still kind of like it, but I'll try to quit.

No worries

It's meaningless, says the university, even though Google Assistant still recommends it as an automated reply option for those too lazy to think up their own words.

At the end of the day

Why hasn't this been banned already? ~~Wait, what?~~ It has? Yep, the university did so in 1999, but the expression continues to be so aggravating that it made the list again. A friend discovered years ago that it has value as part of a cliché mash-up: At the end of the day, it is what it is.

That being said

Yeah, it has.

Asking for a friend

Funny the first time I read it. Not funny the other ten thousand times.

Circle back

It haunts business meetings, government gatherings, and breakout sessions at the National Association of Wagon Train Guides convention.

Deep dive

Suitable only for submarine commanders.

New normal

What took you so long, Lake Superior State University? It was a banishment contender last year, but it made the list this year.

You're on mute

As we wish all clichés would be.

Supply chain

I don't know, is this so terrible? Could it be that we just transferred our Covid resentment to this term? Problems in the supply chain are responsible for the increased cost of everything you will ever need, want, or imagine, but what other term should we use? Cancer has caused misery for millennia, but we haven't stopped using the word or replaced it with something like Potentially Fatal Abnormal Cell Growth, or Clarence. And as much as the university and its experts may not like supply chain, it's still not as awful as icon and iconic (which were banished in 2009, and we thank you, LSSU).

- **From*

Ready for a deep dive



Wait, what? You have no worries at the end of the day, so that being said, and you realize that I'm asking for a friend who is circling back, how can I take a deep dive into the new normal when you're on mute and have supply chain issues? (Pixabay; photographer's name not listed.)

Get a grip on yourself

To read the following item on the [Take My Word for It](#) blog, [click here](#).



A patient on a farm near Freeport, Illinois, awaits her turn with Doc.

Sitting down to write a book is messy and complicated, ruins your posture, takes months or years, weakens your social skills, and clogs your brain. Even some people who make gobs of money writing manuscripts aren't very good at it.

But so?

If the urge to write burns inside, you write.

Novel.

Journal entry.

Poetry.

Letter to the editor.

Ransom note.

You write.

People who read this post probably have written stuff as part of a job. Reports, stories, analyses, and emails to customers, colleagues, and bosses. Some things you want to write, some things you don't. But consider a text I received from a friend who has worked long and hard as a reporter and editor, making

sense of what comes along the relentless news conveyor belt and helping other writers do the same. She texted that as the new year started, she wanted to write something for herself.

At practically the same time, I had the unexpected and much appreciated chance to read a story that another friend had written about his work as a veterinarian. It was in novel form and names were changed to protect the innocent, but since we have been friends forever, I knew who was who and what was what. His story aimed to add context and dimension to the years he spent keeping dairy herds healthy in northwestern Illinois. He wanted his children and grandchildren to know more about the social rewards and the personal demands. He succeeded. And he made my point. Writing with such sincerity and grace is fulfillment. Who doesn't want his or her voice to be heard? To know that a time on this earth meant something? To affirm that life choices were valuable and had significance for family, friends, and self?

More, give me more of that.

Think how lucky you are that when you write for yourself, you don't need a formula and it doesn't come out sounding like James Patterson or Nicholas Sparks. Writing for yourself is not a spotlight that flattens humanity, but a fleeting candle that provides depth and relief. Writers reveal themselves, and letting people read your words takes courage.

And does a heartfelt letter to a friend hold less value than a novel? Do stories that present the fullness of life to children, grandchildren, and friends rank below Jack Reacher cracking someone's skull or a seven-volume history of the Industrial Revolution? Purpose can eclipse form, so it's worth listening to the voice that prowls. Not the one that says three chocolate chip cookies are left in the kitchen. The one that says you have something to say and it needs to be in writing.

Writing for yourself has another benefit. If you have not experienced it, you have not felt the plane of existence that many call the "full human." Okay, I'm the only one who calls it that, but it refers to a magical time when you write and get so absorbed by the words and their direction that you notice nothing else. The sun sets, the seasons change, and Covid disappears, but you see none of it. It's glorious and even shocking that time can pass this way. It's like a runner's high but easier on the knees.

Go ahead and write something for yourself. And if you want to share it, we'll be right here waiting.

Recent reads



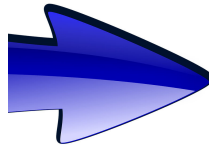
Yay

(Just one man's opinion)

Galway Elegy, Ken Bruen. Great lines, great characters.

Billy Summers, Stephen King. A structure like clockwork.

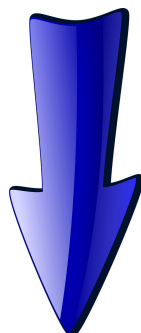
Norwegian by Night, Derek B. Miller. Excellent and sad.



Meh

Velvet Was the Night, Sylvia Moreno-Garcia. Sluggish start, better finish.

The Quiet Boy, Ben H. Winters. Odd, allegorical weirdness.



Ugh

The Skeleton Road, Val McDermid. Way below her usual high standard. Boring first half, predictable second half.

The Sentinel, Lee and Andrew Child. Worst Reacher to date, an impressive feat.

The Disappearing Act, Catherine Steadman. Tripe. Ridiculous. Sophomoric.

Kind regards,
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