

@ risk

one-of-a-kind artist book by Louise Phillips, 2009



At the end of 2008, the Oxford Children's Dictionary removed "nature words" to make space for "technology words" thereby adding a whole new meaning to the term "endangered species" as even words such as beaver, goldfish, herring, lobster were threatened by removal potentially leading to extinction. Note: faced with public outcry, Oxford has allowed "beaver" to remain in its Canadian dictionaries.

@ risk seeks to illustrate the vanishing of animal and plant words from the dictionary by using symbols or drawings as words. Further references to language include the use of traditional library forms like the library card and the library card pocket.



Artist: Louise Phillips

Title: @ risk

Subject: animal and plant words being removed from the Children's Oxford Dictionary to make space for new technology words

Description: one-of-a-kind accordion fold artist book with pocket and insert card

Dimensions: ink on cotton paper, drawing and hand lettering
 book flat: 33.75 x 6.75 inches, book folded: 6.75 x 6.75 inches
 pocket: 8 x 8 inches
 insert card with word list: 3 x 10 inches

Date: 2009



Language evolves and words that are not commonly used have been removed from dictionaries in the past. For example, Merriam-Webster's 11th Edition from 2003 removed out microreader, record changer, pantdress, lantern pinion, sheep-dip, pocket-handkerchief, ten-cent store and traffic manager.

Old words or "lost words" in 2008

- Christmas words: carol, cracker, holly, ivy, mistletoe
- Fairy story words: dwarf, elf, goblin
- Christianity words: abbey, aisle, altar, bishop, chapel, christen, disciple, minister, monastery, monk, nun, nunnery, parish, pew, psalm, pulpit, saint, sin, devil, vicar
- Royalty words: coronation, duchess, duke, emperor, empire, monarch, decade
- Nature words: acorn, adder, almond, apricot, ash, ass, beaver, beech, beetroot, blackberry, bluebell, boar, bramble, budgerigar, bullock, buttercup, canary, cheetah, carnation, catkin, cauliflower, chestnut, clover, conker, colt, corgi, cowslip, crocus, cygnet, dandelion, doe, drake, fern, fungus, ferret, gerbil, goldfish, gooseberry, gorse, guinea pig, hamster, hazel, hazelnut, heather, heron, herring, holly, horse chestnut, ivy, kingfisher, lark, lavender, leek, leopard, liquorice, lobster, magpie, melon, minnow, mint, moss, mussel, nectarine, newt, otter, ox, oyster, pansy, panther, parsnip, pelican, piglet, plaice, poodle, poppy, porcupine, porpoise, primrose, radish, raven, rhubarb, spinach, spaniel, starling, stoat, stork, sycamore, terrapin, thrush, tulip, turnip, vine, violet, walnut, willow, weasel, wren
- Farm words: allotment, bloom, bacon, blacksmith, bran, bray, bridle, brook, canter, county, diesel, manger, marzipan, nectar, oats, pasture, porridge, poultry, prune, sheaf

"New words" in 2008

- Computer/tech words: blog, broadband, MP3 player, voicemail, attachment, database, export, chatroom, bullet point, cut and paste, analogue, celebrity, tolerant, vandalism, negotiate, interdependent, creep, citizenship, childhood, conflict, common sense, debate, EU, drought, brainy, boisterous, cautionary tale, bilingual, bungee jumping, committee, compulsory, cope, democratic, allergic, biodegradable, emotion, dyslexic, donate, endangered, Euro
- apparatus, food chain, incisor, square number, trapezium, alliteration, colloquial, idiom, curriculum, classify, chronological, block graph

Adapted by L.Phillips, 2015