83 Old Slang Phrases We Should Bring Back - mental_floss on YouTube (Ep.208)

List Show
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John: Hi. I'm John Green. Welcome to my salon. This is Mental Floss on YouTube. Here at Mental Floss, we've got a growing collection of slang dictionaries, so today I'm gonna share with you some old school slang...

1. ...like how "a wet sock" means a limp handshake.

The goal here of course is to bring some of these awesome slang terms back into style so let's get started.

[Intro with music]

2. "Happy cabbage" is a sizeable amount of money to be spent on self-satisfying things. You know, like cabbage, this was the old days.

3. "Pang-Wangle" is to live or go along cheerfully in spite of minor misfortunes, like Mickey Mouse who goes along cheerfully despite having a dog whose a friend and also a dog whose a dog and also come to think of it Thor who goes on despite having Loki as a brother, and Yoda who goes on despite Luke Skywalker's incessant whining.

4. "In the ketchup" means in the red or operating at a deficit.

5. "Flub the dub" means to evade one's doody--No, duty.

6. "A pine overcoat" is a coffin.

7. "A butter and egg man," has nothing to do with breakfast preferences, it's actually, according to one dictionary, a wealthy but unsophisticated small town businessman who acts like a playboy when he visits the big city.

8. "Zib" is a nincompoop.

9. To "give someone the wind" is to gilt a suitor which now a day we call the Rose ceremony at the bachelor.

10. The 1909 book *Passing English of the Victorian Era: a Dictionary of Heterodox English Slang and Phrase* captured some great phrases that were falling out of favor even back then. For instance, they called sausages "bags O' mystery" which they are. Meredith, what kinda sausages? *Pork* sausages? Another quarter for the staff pork chop party fund.

11. "Cop a mouse" meant to get a black eye not to be confused with the terrifying Cockamouse from *How I Met Your Mother.*

12, "Don't sell me a dog" was a fancy way of saying "Don't lie to me."

13. A "door-knocker" was a type of beard quote "shaved leaving hair under the chin, and upon each side of the mouth forming with moustache something like a door-knocker". Damn hipsters.

14. A bald head was called a "fly rink."

15. A "gigglemug" was a habitually smiling face. Whereas, of course, a giggle mugshot is a picture of Robert Downey Jr. after he got arrested.

16. A "nose bagger" was quote "someone who takes a day trip to the beach. He brings his own provisions and doesn't contribute at all to the resort the he's visiting."

17. If something or someone was "not up to dick," it was not healthy.

18. "Take the egg" means to win. I guess this was back in the days before, like, trophies. Although, come to think of it, an egg might be better than a dundy.

19. "Whooperups" were quote inferior noisy singers. I'm looking at you William Hung and also, you, me.

20. A "rain napper" was an umbrella and

21. your mouth was your "sauce box." Context is everything.

22. Alright I gotta keep my sauce box moving. Here's a multi-purpose bit of slang, according to the 1967 *Dictionary of American Slang* "pretzel-bender" can mean a peculiar person, a player of the french horn, a wrestler, or a heavy drinker. You add all of those meanings of "pretzel-benders" together and you have Meredith's future husband. Am I right, Meredith?

Meredith: Oh yes.

John: Yeah, I'm right.

23. So what happens when a pretzel-bender drinks to much? Well, we get to use some of our old slang terms for being drunk. Like "having your flag out", or

24. being "soapy-eyed", or

25. "full as a tick", or

26. "seeing snakes", or

27. "canned up", or

28. "zozzled." We enjoy the occasional zozzling. That's why we keep tequila on the wall of magic.

29. Or you could be "owled" or

30. "striped" or

31. "squiffed" or

32. "swacked."

33. Moving onto old phrases used to describe excessive heat, and they need a needed a lot of them in the days before air conditioning, "hotter than Dutch love in harvest".

34. You also frequently heard "the bear got him"; the bear in this case was heatstroke.

35. "Full of moist" and don't get mad at me for saying the word moist, Internet; It's just a word, all words are created equal, moist is just, it's a beautiful word, moist, I'm gonna say it one more time, moist.

36. And finally, lest you think our ancestors never worked blue, we have "hot as a half-f**ked fox in a forest fire." Do we have a half f**ked fox up on the wall here? No? No? There's Linus. Fat lot of good he does us.

37. Then we have the opposite way to describe the freezing cold, "it gives a body the flesh creep" or as we know it, the shivers.

38. It could be "colder than the hinges of hell" or

39. "colder than a brass toilet seat in the Yukon" and lastly,

40. "so cold, that the milk cows gave icicles", which I'm pretty sure is scientifically impossible.

41. The 19th century Australians had some phrases we may want to adopt like, "to have one's shirt out" means to be angry.

42. Similarly, someone whose acting crazy is "off his kadoova" or

43. "off his chump".

44. To "hump the swag" means, not what you think it means, but, to carry you luggage on your back.

45. "Happy returns" describes vomiting, despite those returns being at least, in my experience, less than happy.

46. And someone whose tipsy could be called "a leanaway."

47. There's also some specific beatnik slang like, "off the cob" means corny,

48. and food related, "red onion" is another name for a dive bar.

49. To "focus your audio" means to listen carefully.

50. "Claws sharp" means being well informed on a variety of topics, you know like someone for instance whose able to host a list show about a wide variety of topics, from children's television to hoaxes to slang words.

51. But if you know too much, particularly of the kind of information that could lead you to ratting someone out, you might have "bright disease" often fatal, at least in the mafia.

52. Moving on from beatniks slang, there are actually a lot of old school ways to call someone a rat, like "blobber",

53. "cabbage hat",

54. "pigeon",

55. "viper",

56. "telegram".

57. There are also, of course many interesting words for the male and female anatomy, like for guys we have a "master john goodfellow",

58. "gentleman usher",

59. "the staff of life",

60. "the Cyprian scepter",

61. "the maypole" among many others.

62. And for females we have "the phoenix nest",

63. "the Netherlands",

64. "Mount Pleasant",

65. "Mrs. Fubbs' Parlor". I'm sure they're are others but now that you have "Mrs. Fubbs' Parlor", do you really need others?

66. Anyway, bring these things together and, at least according to the 1811 version of *Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue*, you get "Amorous Congress",

67. "basket making",

68. "blanket hornpipe", or

69. "convivial society".

70. And if you were caught cheating on your significant other a century ago, you could be accused of "carrying tackle",

71. "being on a left-handed honey moon",

72. or in Shakespeare's time, "groping for trout in a peculiar river".

73. Enough about sex, let's talk about stuff that really matters. Food. "Cluck and grunt" means ham and eggs,

74. "chicks on a raft" is eggs on toast.

75. "Bloodhound in the hay" means hot dogs with sauerkraut, and

76. "frog sticks" means french fries.

77. "Hounds on an island" is frank and beans.

78. Any kind of meat served rare is "on the hoof".

79. "A pair of drawers meant two cups of coffee, and

80. "Adam's ale",

81. "city juice", and

82. "dog soup" are all less short ways of saying water.

83. And lastly we return to my salon so that I can tell you that a "George Eddy" is a customer who doesn't tip well, and this former restaurant server would just like to tell you don't be a "George Eddy"!

Thanks for watching Mental_Floss here on YouTube, which is made with the help of all these nice people. Every week we endeavor to answer one of your mind blowing questions, this week's question comes from Emily Cotnick, who asks, "Why do you here your own voice differently than everyone else?"

This is actually a question that Mental_Floss has answered before so you can find that in the description, but basically sounds are captured by out outer ear and then strike the ear drum which vibrates and sends the vibrations to the inner ear which translates them into signals that the auditory nerve can understand and then send to the brain.

But when we speak the inner ear is picking up ear drum vibrations and in addition to vibrations inside your body, so like it's a combination of all those vibrations that makes the sound of your own voice it makes it very like mellifluous generally, and then when other people here it, it sounds less bold than you know it could secretly be. Anyway, if you have a question that you'd like answered please leave it below in the comments.

We'll try to answer as many as we can, thank you again for watching, and as we say in my hometown, don't forget to be awesome.