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Dickensian Eponyms

ERNEST L. ABEL
Wayne State University, Detroit, USA

Charles Dickens created almost a thousand fictional characters, many of whom have become synonyms for distinctive types of people or their peculiar traits. This article surveys seventeen Dickensian eponyms, cites their first appearance as such, and provides examples of their usage in magazines, books, and the Internet.

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Charles Dickens was arguably the most popular writer of the nineteenth century. During his thirty-five-year writing career he wrote twenty novels and five short-story collections in which he created a fictional world populated with an estimated 989 different characters. Many of these characters have taken on a life of their own as synonyms for distinctive types of people or their peculiar personality traits. This article is an historical survey of seventeen Dickensian characters whose names have become part of our vocabularies.

Mr Bumble

In *Oliver Twist* (1837–1838), Mr Bumble is the beadle (a minor official) in charge of the workhouse where Oliver was born. Dickens describes him as "a fat man, and a choleric." But it is not his appearance that is Bumble's defining characteristic; it is his sense of self-importance. Bumble's most memorable comment, in response to being told that in the eyes of the law he was responsible for his wife's thieving, is "the law is an ass."

The *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*) does not have a citation for "Bumble," but there are many occurrences of the eponym as both a pompous minor official who is smug in his own sense of importance, and as an incompetent bureaucrat. The earliest citation for the first meaning is an 1877 Victorian memoir mentioning a boy "brought to the school by a veritable 'Bumble'" (Blanch, 1877: 41). The second and more common usage of official ineptitude or gaffe appears in noun and verb forms. "The greatest bumble for a Washington representative," comments *Television/Radio* magazine (Anonymous, 1979: 123) "is to be surprised with some development in the Congress or the regulatory agencies." The botched relief efforts in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in 2005 raised many questions about how FEMA (the Federal

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Emergency Management Agency) could "bumble so badly" a fiasco attributed to its being "a bureaucratic backwater largely staffed by political hacks" (Van Dyk, 2007: 200).

When petty officials collectively act like Mr Bumbles, their pompous incompetence is known as "Bumbledom." That eponym first appears in 1856 as an epithet for a group of British members of Parliament taking part in a parade — "the collective Bumbledom of Westminster" (Anonymous, 1856a: 12). In America, Britain's prohibition of cremation was disparaged as "bumbledom" by a writer in the *Journal of the American Medical Society* (Anonymous, 1899: 831). "One would certainly have thought that cremation [. . .] [was] well within the private liberty of individual choice," said the sympathetic writer, "but bumbledom thinks far otherwise. And unfortunately, what bumbledom says on this subject, 'goes' without appeal." "Bumbledom" again surfaced in the US in 1944 at the Republican National Convention when Connecticut Congresswoman, Claire Booth Luce, accused President Roosevelt of turning American democracy into "a dictatorial bumbledom through his management of the war" (Women's Museum, 2009: 1).

"Bumbleism," a lesser-known cognate, also not recorded in the *OED*, debuted in 1841, shortly after *Oliver Twist*'s publication. In a story about two women competing for a job, "feminine Bumbleism," epitomized by the "'low' style of education, combined with the prospective sedative of parochial whipping" wins out over "the merciful heart that throbbed beneath the faded silk gown" (Silverpen, 1847: 36). Toward the end of the century, Parliamentary "Bumbleism" was cited as thwarting early manufacturing of little "steamers" (i.e. motor cars) in England, enabling "foreign builders to get that lengthy start of us which thus far they have maintained" (Precursor, 1899: 455). Unlike "Bumbledom," "Bumbleism" has slid into relative obscurity.

Mr Chadband

The Reverend Mr Chadband in *Bleak House* (1853) is a "yellow man, with a fat smile, and a general appearance of having a good deal of train-oil in his system," the kind of man who pretends religious piety for his own gain.

This Dickens character has become an eponym for a sanctimonious, longwinded hypocrite. In 1854, a year after *Bleak House* was published, a dinner party for Britain's politicos was satirized for not having had "a Chadband for a Chairman [. . .]" (Anonymous, 1854: 117). During a government debate in 1898, one member of Parliament dismissed a clause in a proposed law as being so prolix it could pass as "a Chadband clause;" then on further consideration, said he was actually "complimenting it by calling it a Chadband clause" (Swift MacNeill, 1898: 702).

Chadband's particular penchant for empty rhetorical fervor gained noun status by 1860 when the behavior of some pious gentlemen was described as "savoring of Chadbandism" (Yates, 1860: 65). Six years later, an art critic, commenting on what he regarded as the disappearance of heart and spirit in recent works of art, lamented "we have lately had *Chadbandism*, not only in theology but in painting" (Bayley, 1866: 308).

"Chadbandian" made it first appearance in 1889 as "Chadbandian sweetness and unctiousness " (Hapwood, 1889: 9). Rarely encountered in modern novels, the eponym appeared as a backhanded compliment for the absence of "Chadbandian

ooze" (Keefer, 1989: 208). George Bernard Shaw turned the eponym into a verb, "to chadbandize on the wickedness of such crimes" (Shaw, 1913: 189) but no one seems to have adopted his verbalization.

Dolly Varden

Dolly Varden is the pretty, flirtatious girl in *Barnaby Rudge* (1841), "the very impersonality of good humour and blooming beauty." Dolly's clothes in the story, described briefly as "a smart little cherry-colored mantle, with a hood of the same drawn over her head," ignited a fashion craze for "Dolly Varden" dresses in the 1870s. The outfit typically featured a brightly colored floral patterned frock and flounced sleeves worn during the early part of the day as a cotton skirt over a separate plain underskirt (ZipZip, 2008: 1). Describing a fashionable sixteen-year-old's party dress, a contemporary fashion magazine writer commented that "of course, it (her dress) was a *Dolly Varden*" (Perry, 1872: 482). By 1875, "every girl in the whole country had a Dolly Varden dress" (Baker, 1875: 43).

A wide-brimmed hat with floral decorations "intended for wearing with these costumes" was dubbed "the Dolly Varden cap" (Anonymous, 1871: 419). Although Dickens only described Dolly's hat as garnished with "cherry-colored ribbons," the Dolly Varden hat was varicolored like the dress. Unlike the dress, however, the hat did not become very popular. "The Dolly Varden hat," wrote a style critic in 1872, "seems to be the least popular of the new styles, and is really the ugliest" (Arthur, 1872: 74).

The Dolly Varden style fad was so popular in the US that a previously unnamed brightly colored fish with reddish gold spots, was christened "the Varden" by local fishermen in the Pacific Northwest in the early 1870s (Stone, 1874: 204). Fifty years later anglers were still hopeful of "snaring a mess of *Dolly Vardens*" (Cobb, 1921: 193).

Fagin

In *Oliver Twist* (1839) Fagin is the gang leader of a group of children, mainly boys, whom he teaches to be pickpockets and petty thieves in return for providing them with food and a place to live. The earliest eponymous occurrence of the name is 1847 in a caption in *Punch* magazine for an illustration referring to France's King Louis Philippe. The king had arranged a marriage between his twelve-year-old son and the four-year-old heiress to the Spanish throne, for political gains. The indignant English public regarded the king's forcing his son to marry as tantamount to Fagin's forcing Oliver to become a thief, and Louis became the royal "Fagin of France" (Anonymous, 1847: 125).

An article in the 1914 issue of *Pearson's Magazine* has a rare reference to a female Fagin: "In addition to her other accomplishments, the queen of the shoplifters was *a* '*Fagin*,' educating others to the tricks of her trade" (Reeve, 1914: 608). The eponym is still common in England. In 2011 the *London Evening Standard* reported the arrest of "A 'Fagin's gang' of suspected teenage muggers" (Burden and Davenport, 2011: 1). In criminology, the training of children younger than eight or nine years of age as shoplifters is called "the *Fagin syndrome*." The reason is that, if caught, children this age are not typically prosecuted (Murphy, 1986: 135).

The rare adjectival cognate, "faginish," is metaphor for a demanding boss: "'[. . .] how many did you actually sell?' inquired our Faginish employer" (Wareham, 1995: 2).

Sairey Gamp

Sairey Gamp, a character in *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1843–1844), is an ignorant, incompetent, slovenly, uncaring midwife and home nurse, who drinks on and off the job, and who is never without her oversized bulky patch-covered umbrella. Dickens's repugnant caricature of Mrs Gamp is widely believed to have paved the way for professional nursing (Kalish and Kalisch, 1983) such that, by 1899, trained hospital nurses were "fast driving last generation's Sally [*sic*] Gamps out of the field" (Hope, 1889: 697).

Mrs Gamp's first appearance as an eponym is in 1850 in an article discouraging new mothers from hiring her namesakes. "What need of a Mrs Gamp," it rhetorically asks, "when its methods of hydrotherapy would enable them to do as well on their own" (M.L.S., 1850: 116).

Sairey Gamp's oversized umbrella, which was always in the way "to the great terror of the other passengers" travelling with her, was a great source of amusement in rainy England where it was (and still is) a ubiquitous appendage. Even disembodied spirits carried them: "If ghosts appear at all, they probably would appear in some attire. This one carried a Gamp umbrella" (Anonymous, 1861: 45). Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's gamp was his security blanket. He even had it when he met with Hitler, and "nervously fiddled with a rolled gamp" while agreeing to let Hitler annex Czechoslovakia in 1938 (Higgins, 2004: 245).

"Gampish" made its adjectival debut in 1863 as a synonym for an outsized umbrella ("a double bulge of gampishness") (Cory, 1897: 90). Londoners who ventured out without an umbrella were said to be "gampless," a term that first appears in 1893 ("I was once walking down Oxford street, London, when it commenced raining. Being gampless, I looked for shelter") (Lancastrian, 1893: 497).

Gamp is now relatively obsolete but occasionally makes a reappearance, resurfacing in a 1990 mystery novel in which one of the characters "felt like shrieking with laughter. Saved by a gamp" (Marric, 1990: 113).

Gradgrind

Thomas Gradgrind is the headmaster of a school in *Hard Times* (1854). A businessman who made a small fortune as a hardware merchant, he sees the world in terms of what he can gain rather than what he can enjoy from it. Gradgrind is the epitome of Oscar Wilde's man "who knows the price of everything and the value of nothing." Gradgrind instructs his teacher to "teach these boys and girls nothing but facts. Facts alone are wanted in life. Plant nothing else, and root out everything else. You can only form the minds of reasoning animals upon facts: nothing else will ever be of any service to them."

Gradgrind began to be used as an eponym a year after the novel's publication. In America, *Harper's* magazine (Anonymous, 1867: 585) commented on "the

powerfully-digestive compilers of information for the [US] Treasury and other Departments at Washington for the stimulation of the world of Gradgrinds." Gradgrind's philosophy was championed in the US by a "Mother's Club" (that) denounced Mother Goose and all sorts of fairy tales, and proclaimed its faith in the old Gradgrind theory of education. "[. . .] the argument, as summed up by one speaker was that no story, legend or tale should be read to a child unless it contained a fact 'in geography, natural history, history, biology and other sciences or unless it clearly exemplified a moral truth'" (Thompson, 1899: 746).

An obsession with facts, called "gradgrinding," debuted in 1927 in an article about eliminating the apostrophe from written English. "After centuries of lexicographing, proofreading and professoring, and of concurrent gradgrinding with dictionaries and grammars," the author mused it (the apostrophe) is still with us (Lincoln, 1921: 37). Although relatively obsolete, "gradgrinding" still makes an occasional reappearance. In a textbook on teaching English, Don Gutheridge comments that teachers who try to make poetry relevant for their pupils are prone to ignore the poem's aesthetics: "Theme hunting, gradrinding petal-pullers, — however diligent or pupil friendly — cannot by definition assist students in re-enacting poems out of aesthetic texts" (Gutheridge, 1999: 35).

The adjectival "Gradgrindian," which does not appear in the *OED*, became a synonym for slavish attention to fact and mechanical utilitarianism by the end of the nineteenth century. Its earliest occurrence is 1866 in a nitpicking critique of Shakespeare's *Henry V*, in which the editor assured readers "We have not a Gradgrindian devotion to facts but we hold that when facts are supposed to be worth mentioning, they are worth mentioning correctly" (Anonymous, 1866: 374). A few years later, a British literary periodical of that time commented that "the (American) *Gradgrindian* mania for facts has resulted in a system of newspaper enterprise which is certainly unsurpassed" (Anonymous, 1870: 406). The "mania for facts" prompted the Superintendent of Public Documents in Washington to complain to Congress that his office was being inundated with public documents and was in danger of creating "a race of Gradgrindian leaders who would demand nothing but facts" (Crandall, 1896: 25).

Educators, especially those in the humanities, seem particularly drawn to the eponym. The "'Gradgrindian' philosophy of education remains alive in classrooms across the country and gains increased attention with the expansion of outcome-based testing and the emphasis on covering, rather than uncovering, material," writes educator Glenn Whitman (2004: 1). A recent critique of the British education system complains that playtime has been expelled from the British educational system which "has become increasingly Gradgrindian in its concentration on education as pure instrumentality [. . .] Play liberates the child into ideas [. . .] (facts alone lead to) Gradgrindian-like barbaric government [. . .] as practiced by the 'man of realities'" (Joughin and Malpas, 2003: 31).

Gradgrindery, another eponymous derivative, referring to an excessive attention to details, is both noun and adjective. An 1880 book review characterized a recent history of the United States as the "very dreariest performance ever written, a course of Gradgrindery" (Richardson, 1882: 306). In the next century, horror fiction writer, Arthur Machen, warned that without "irrational habits, interests, ceremonies, life would degenerate into brutish and intolerable savagery or what is worse — Gradgrindery" (Machen, 1918: 16).

Miss Havisham

Miss Havisham in *Great Expectations* (1860–1861) is an embittered reclusive spinster who was jilted on her wedding day and never recovered from the abandonment. She is neglectful of her appearance, never having changed out of the rotting wedding dress she has worn for the twenty years since her wedding day. Her gloomy home, shuttered to keep out any daylight, has likewise decayed. Nothing has been changed since that day, even to the clocks which were stopped at the moment she was told of her abandonment, or the moldy wedding cake which is still in its original place. In a poll commissioned by *Penguin Books* in honor of Dickens's 200th birthday, Miss Havisham was voted Dickens's second most popular character (the first was Scrooge).

Miss Havisham's name was eponymized into "Miss Havisham syndrome," a term for a psychiatric disorder following a major disappointment. The syndrome is characterized by social withdrawal, disinterest in personal cleanliness including changing of clothing, and living in filthy and dark surroundings surrounded by mementos. The difference between people with "Miss Havisham syndrome" and those living in similar conditions because of poverty is that people with the syndrome do not live that way because of financial or physical problems.

Although originally coined to describe the clinical disorder, "Miss Havisham syndrome" is now also used figuratively by people whose lives have become suddenly disrupted. Referring to the first public health announcements of AIDs, Daniel Harris (2002: 55) wrote "deprived of one of my major pastimes, I have fallen prey to the Miss Havisham syndrome [. . .] my clock stopped at the very moment the Centers for Disease Control issued their first chilling advisory." Facing despair after a divorce, another writer grapples with the "desire to avoid the Miss Havisham syndrome" (Hampson, 2010: 146).

Wilkins Micawber

Wilkins Micawber is an amiable eccentric in *David Copperfield* (1849). A man always on the edge of poverty, he is forever optimistic for "something to turn up" to improve his circumstances, unlikely though that might be.

The *OED* does not record any nominal use of the stand-alone eponym but does document its suffixed simile as early as 1855 as a synonym for optimism ("a Micawber-like burst of confidence"). Despite the *OED*'s omission, the eponym without its suffix turns up frequently in the late nineteenth century. An early occurrence is in the characterization of someone passing by a swamp where "only the dauntless and enterprising spirit of *a Micawber* could withstand the horrors of the place" (Anonymous, 1879: 846). A different kind of optimism characterizes "the archaeologist [who] becomes a veritable 'Micawber,' always hoping 'for something to turn up'" (Volk, 1912: 181). More recently, the feckless Micawber eponym has been settled on President Obama ("Barrack Husein Micawber") and his fellow Democrats, by blogger Ron James who describes them as "in essence, the Mr Micawber party" (James, 2012: 1).

Micawber's financial formula for success or failure — spending just a little less than one's income — has come to be known as the "'Micawber Principle' as relevant

to government as it is to personal finance" (Funkhouse, 2012). Commenting on Detroit's fiscal bankruptcy, a local business newspaper notes that "the Micawber Principle is a concept that's proved difficult for the city of Detroit to practice" (Kaffer, 2012: 1).

The *OED* records the earliest appearance of "micawberism" as 1880, but it had already debuted several years earlier in 1869 as "a carnival of Micawberism; [at which] hundreds of thousands of people were waiting to see what would turn up [. . .]" (De Forrest, 1869: 340). A medical journal describing a doctor's way of practicing medicine said it was not his way "to wait until things turned up; he did not believe in 'Micawberism'" (Jacobi, 1911: 1138).

"Micawberite" is both adjective and noun. The adjectival form debuted in 1906 as "the Micawberite and uncapitalistic public" (Anonymous, 1906: 396). The noun alludes to the "Micaw-berites and Panglossians and the whole tribe of agathists who never doubt that clouds will break" (Brown, 1961: 13).

The verbal form of the eponym only appears as the gerund, Micawbering. It debuts in 1869 when a writer credits himself for inventing it. Referring to French emperor Napoleon III's indecisiveness, he opines that Napoleon "is probably 'Micawbering' — to coin a word — waiting for something to turn up" (Beckett, 1869: 197). On this side of the Atlantic, the Republican party's inability to find a candidate for the 1916 election was characterized by the *Saturday Evening Post* as "Micawbering around waiting for something to turn up" (Blythe, 1915: 8).

The *OED* places the first appearance of the adjectival "micawberish" in 1859 ("a Micawberish burst of confidence"). Benjamin Disraeli's biographer writes of Disraeili's "Micawberish financial attitude that one had only to wait for something to turn up" (Machin, 1995: 96). In a more chilling context, the eponym appears as "a micawberish attitude," one that "does not go well with a substance as potentially risky as plutonium. It is up to all concerned citizens to discredit this micawberish attitude still so prominent in the industry's propaganda" (Bunyard, 1981: 10).

The adverbial "Micawberishly" had a late debut in 1940 when a critic of America's isolationism reflected that "we in America are trying to convince ourselves that our interests are not involved in the war's outcome, just as, until Munich, the English had Micawberishly hoped their interests were not threatened by Hitler's rise" (English Speaking Union, 1940: 153). In a different political context, in which the winning margin in an election was only a few hundred votes, the losing candidate asked for a recount, "Micawberishly looking for numerical good fortune or a windfall of chance discovery of illegal rejection of ballots" (Lal, 1977: 71).

Seth Pecksniff

Seth Pecksniff is a pietistic duplicitous teacher of architecture in *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1843–1844). Pecksniff lives off the tuition fees of his students and sells the drafting work he has them do, passing it off as his own. He is a hypocrite; the archetypal phony who appears highly moral and altruistic but in reality is corrupt and self-serving.

Almost overnight, the *Civil Engineer and Architect's Journal* criticized Dickens for demeaning the architectural profession through his characterization of Pecksniff.

"Pecksniff," it sniffed, "has become both a name and an epithet of reproach, and is now frequently used as synonymous with whatever is imbecile, contemptible and absurd in architecture [. . .]" (Candidus, 1844: 375).

"Pecksniffism" became coterminous with hypocrisy as early as 1845. Poking fun at sanctimonious doctors who claim "they live, of course, only for the Profession," or "they exist but for its good" and other such platitudes, the *Medical Times* (Anonymous, 1845: 349) congratulated itself for not being taken in by such "pecksniffism." "Pecksniffery" followed in 1846 when the editor of *Punch* magazine (1846: 10–11, 149) satirically labeled an art society known as the Art Union, "the pecksniffery," because it was founded by art critic S. C. Hall "who knew nothing about art, and who as suspected of taking great advantage of artists."

The *OED* cites a letter written in 1903 by George Bernard Shaw as the first instance of its transmutation into the verbal form, "pecksniffing." Shaw's neologism occasionally pops up in other contexts, such as in a recent biography describing how a self-promoting advertiser plastered his name on billboards all over New York, and by "paying no attention to any of his pecksniffing social detractors [became] fabulously successful" (Curcio, 2000: 412).

The adjectival pecksniffian has remained a popular descriptive since its first appearance in 1844 in the *Civil Engineer and Architects Journal* mocking the "pecksniffian school of design" (Candidus, 1844: 376). "Pecksniffianism" debuted several years later in 1854 (Stevens, 1854: 469). Skip ahead more than 150 years to 2007, when pecksniffian was the eighth most commonly looked-up word in the *Merriam-Webster* online dictionary. The reason for such word stardom was that pecksniffian is one of Fox news pundit Bill O'Reilly's favorite words for politicians he contends are hypocrites. In 2007 O'Reilly used pecksniffian twenty-two times. To keep up with him, his wannabe-be cognoscenti audience turned to the on-line dictionary by the thousands to find out why his latest target was such a "pinhead." There were lots of "pinheads" in 2008, but apparently not as many of them were also pecksniffian because O'Reilly only used the word ten times that year. An even fewer six pinheads made the pecksniff cut in 2009 and 2010; only four qualified in 2011, and only two did so as of February of 2012.

The final cognate, "pecksniffingly," is a nonce word coined by writer Rudyard Kipling for "a half-dead empire, controlled *pecksniffingly* by a Power which is not a Power but an Agency" (Kipling, 1914: 292).

Samuel Pickwick

Samuel Pickwick is the amiable, paunched, bald, bespectacled, stubby-legged, and middle-aged founder of the club whose adventures are chronicled in Dickens's first novel, *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club* (1837–1839), better known as the *Pickwick Papers*.

Pickwickian on its own typically refers to Pickwick's appearance, especially his "Pickwickian paunch" and his ebullient, "Pickwickian joie de vivre" (Constanduros, 1948: 129). When it occurs in the expression "in a pickwickian sense," it indicates that a statement is not to be taken literally. The expression originated from a quarrel at the opening meeting of the Pickwick club in which Pickwick traded barbs with another member. The quarrel was eventually settled amiably when each agreed that

they both had "used the offensive words not in a common, but in a parliamentary sense." The expression is recorded as early as 1863 (Anonymous, 1863: 519). Towards the end of the century, an amusing legal commentary has a lawyer recognizing an unfortunate man's guilt "in a Pickwickian sense," and opines that "surely the fine should be also in a Pickwickian sense" (Anonymous, 1890: 167). A US Senate hearing in 1920 on the public school system in Washington, DC (US Congress, 1920: 1098) has another instance of the expression when a senator asked if a witness were glad a member of the school board had been reappointed. When the witness said he was glad "in a Pickwickian sense," the senator took that to mean the witness was only pretending to be glad.

Pickwickianism is the noun form of the expression, debuting in 1842, five years after the "parliamentary" duel of words. The occurrence assumes the reader will know what is intended since it appears with no explanation other than some relation to language: "there is a pickwickianism in these proud gatherings that soars above the level of the language of ordinary life" (Anonymous, 1842: 551). The adverbial form appeared a few years later in 1878 as "pickwickianly speaking" (Francis, 1878: 10).

Pickwick Papers was so popular it inspired countless branding of products with the Pickwick name. One of the earliest examples was a cigar brand: "I sold Pickwicks and Cabers a penny a piece" (Mayhew, 1851, I: 441). Other items included canes, coats, joke books, art, postcards, and calendars. Anything and everything relating to Pickwick or the Pickwick club eventually became collectors' items called "Pickwickiana." In 1907 a "Pickwickiana" exhibition was held at a gallery in London. It was so extensive the editor of *The Dickensian* (Anonymous, 1907: 201), mused, "we suppose there are few books in the language that would lend themselves to an exhibition of the scope now being held at the New Dudley gallery in connection with the immortal pickwick papers."

The Pickwick eponym was also adopted as a clinical term for a hypoventilation syndrome, called "Pickwickian syndrome." The disorder, which mainly affects obese people, causes them to have difficulty breathing fast enough or deeply enough to get enough oxygen into their system, causing sleep apnea (a stoppage of breathing for short periods). This makes them wake up often at night, which in turn makes them sleepy during the day (Burwell et al., 1956: 1). A grant program entitled the Pickwick Fellowship is currently awarded to researchers by the National Sleep Foundation, to study such sleep disorders. The term, however, is an eponymous misnomer. Although it seems to be derived from Pickwick's paunchy frame, it is instead based on Joe, a "wonderfully fat boy — habited as a serving lad, standing upright on the mat, with his eyes closed as if in sleep." Joe does odd jobs for the Pickwick club's members but, because of his obesity-related breathing difficulty, he falls asleep while doing them.

John Podsnap

John Podsnap in *Our Mutual Friend* (1864–1865) is the epitome of the complacent jingoist who "stood very high in his own opinion [. . .]." An avid proponent of British exceptionalism, he regarded the customs and manners of other countries as inferior. "'We know what Russia means, sir,' says Podsnap; 'we know what France wants; we see what America is up to; but we know what England is. That's enough for us.'"

Podsnap's most recent acolyte on the issue of national exceptionalism, according to a present-day blogger, was 2012 Republican presidential contender, Mitt Romney. Calling him "an American Podsnap," Romney was chided for accusing Barack Obama of not being up to the job of President because, among other things, he does not believe in American exceptionalism (Bates, 2011: 1).

Podsnap's wish for a world peopled by Englishmen just like himself was the inspiration behind Aldous Huxley's "Podsnap's Technique," his term in *Brave New World*, for the process of ripening all an ovary's eggs at the same time to create thousands of siblings within a relatively brief period. With this method, the director of the institute overseeing the enterprise explains, "hundreds of related individuals can be produced from the ova and sperm of the same man and woman within two years. The average production rate using Podsnap's Technique is 11,000 brothers and sisters in 150 batches of identical twins [. . .] the record for this particular factory is over 16,000 siblings."

Podsnap also exemplified the Victorian prudishness that characterized the English-speaking world beginning in the 1860s. When it came to propriety, Podsnap's guiding principle was "would it bring a blush into the cheek of the young person?" by which he meant his daughter. Podsnap became a generic term for prudish censors by 1897. In an article on prostitution, the author reflected, if someone expressed "an educated opinion, not a ranting anathema, on this matter of prostitution [. . .] Podsnap will ban the book or strive to hush the voice in the name of 'our daughters' [. . .]" (Galbraith, 1896–1897: 632).

Podsnap's prudish philosophy came to be known as "podsnappery." During the 1860s, "a female fiddler was regarded in the musical salons of this metropolis [London] as a surprising and unnatural curiosity, a freak of Nature, rather repulsive than attractive [. . .] it was unfeminine, if not slightly indelicate, for the 'young person' of Podsnappery to play upon an instrument hitherto practically monopolized by performers of the sterner sex" (Beatty-Kingston, 1883: 42).

In a broader sense, "podsnappery" also became a synonym for conformity of ideas. The *OED* cites 1865 as the first appearance of the eponym as "educational Podsnaps." Two years later at an inaugural address at Scotland's St Andrews University, philosopher John Stuart Mill referred to academic complacency as the misguided goal of education, calling it "pedantic Podsnappery," and reflected "that it would be a mistake to suppose that the educational Podsnaps are to be found only among the humanists" (Mill, 1867: 294).

The first appearance of the adjectival "Podsnappian" is 1866. In a discussion of "fiction as well as in every-day life," the writer submits that the guiding principle should be a "Podsnappian dislike of improprieties [. . .] lest it should 'bring a blush to the cheek of a young person'" (Alden, 1866: 373).

Ebenezer Scrooge

Ebenezer Scrooge is the bitter, misanthropic miser in *A Christmas Carol* (1843). Scrooge dismisses everything uplifting in life as sentimental "humbug." He was, writes Dickens, "a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinner." Although Scrooge repents at the end of the book and becomes a philanthrope, it is his miserliness and humbuggery that made him an eponym.

Scrooge was voted the most popular of Dickens's characters in a poll commissioned by Penguin Books celebrating Dickens's 200th birthday. (Next in line were Miss Havisham (*Great Expectations*), Sydney Carton (*A Tale of Two Cities*), The Artful Dodger (*Oliver Twist*), Fagin (*Oliver Twist*), Joe Gargery (*Great Expectations*), Pip (*Great Expectations*), Nancy (*Oliver Twist*), Abel Magwitch (*Great Expectations*), and Betsey Trotwood (*David Copperfield*) (Jones, 2012)).

Scrooge made his eponymic debut three years after *Christmas Carol* was published. An 1851 description of a company's security measures assured potential customers that its: "strong iron safes. would quiet the uneasy rest even of a 'Scrooge' [. . .]." (*A Guide to the Great Exhibition*, 1851: 77). Surprisingly for such a well-known eponym, the *OED*'s earliest citation is 1940.

Scrooge's eponymic debut on this side of the Atlantic occurred in 1914 in a dispute about pensions for postal workers which claimed "the American people are not hard-hearted and they surely cannot desire to see the public service run on a 'Scrooge' basis" (National Association of Letter Carriers, 1917: 93). Scrooge is often called upon whenever financial belt tightening is being discussed, as in a *Washington Post* headline "Let's Play *Scrooge* and Cut the Budget" (Samuelson, 1980: 1). Most recently, Newt Gingrich, Republican candidate for president in the 2012 election, was castigated as a Scrooge for proposing elimination of child labor protection laws (Perera, 2012: 1). For those who admire Dickens's tightfisted malcontent, there is Wharton Business School's Joel Waldfogel's *Scroogenomics*, subtitled, *Why You Shouldn't Buy Presents for the Holidays*, published just in time for the 2009 Christmas season.

"Scrooge-like" is often encountered when consumers or governments are not spending or doling out money. The consequence of these "*Scrooge*-like moods [. . .] is that unsold goods will pile up in stores" (Hall and Lieberman, 2009: 685). More creatively, the eponym is also used in the sense of not being freely given. A sports news item from 1976 quoted by the *OED* describes New York Yankee's pitcher Jim "Catfish" Hunter's hurling as a "Scrooge-like performance," meaning he did not give the opposition much to hit. Other non-economic "scrooge-like" nuances include "withholding any positive response in the face of excellence" (Bardwick, 2008: 101) and a tenacious seatbelt that took minutes to click off (Anonymous, 1980: 79).

Reverend Stiggins

The Reverend Stiggins is a duplicitous temperance supporter in *Pickwick Papers*. Stiggins comes to one of the Brick Lane temperance meetings drunk on his favorite pineapple rum, and preaches avoiding "above all things, the vice of intoxication [. . .]." *Punch* magazine turned him into an iconic hypocrite in 1856 in musing that "religion will vanish, if a Stiggins may not enjoy his big social toddy without publicly staggering through the street" (Anonymous, 1856b: 77). By the 1860s, Stiggins had become synonymous with the drunken man of the cloth. In an 1864 novel, appositely titled, *Tonic Bitters*, one of the characters is asked if he means to become "a pastor — a Stiggins?" He answers yes and tells his inquisitor to mix his hot gin with water (Knight, 1868: 292).

Mark Tapley

Mark Tapley is the perpetually cheerful character in *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1843–1844). Believing it does not take much to be happy when everything is going well, he emigrates to America in search of adversity and becomes Martin Chuzzelwit's traveling companion, always remaining "jolly" despite their misfortunes.

A "Mark Tapley" is someone who remains good humored even in the most dire conditions. The name began to be used as a generic (always with both fore- and surname) in the 1870s. One of its earliest appearances as such is an 1872 novel in which the main character "was ready to cry; she felt so forlorn. But we have seen what a Mark Tapley she could be in the midst of misery" (Amparo Ruiz de Burton, 1872: 142). The following decade, in 1886, Thomas Wright maintained that England's preeminence in the world at the time was due to manufacturing which in turn was due to its generically skilled craftsman mastering the intricacies of new technology. The English craftsman "is a Mark Tapley among artisans, coming out strongest under circumstances that would simply 'flabbergast' [other] workmen" (Wright, 1886: 534).

The earliest appearance of "tapleyism" as a synonym for unfettered buoyancy occurs in a letter dated 1857 quoted by William James (1907: 21). A few weeks after the siege of Delhi that year, a British officer described the miseries (diarrhea, a severely strained arm) he had endured and thanked God for giving him "a good share of *Tapleyism* [. . .] I think I may confidently say that no man ever saw me out of heart, or ever heard one croaking word from me even when our prospects were gloomiest."

More often than not, however, "tapleyism" usually occurs juxtaposed with its forename as "Mark Tapleyism." The earliest pairing is 1868, when *Punch* advised summoning "all the Mark Tapleyism in your constitution" (*Punch*, 1868: 221). A comment from 1903, still relevant today, muses that "a certain amount of Mark Tapleyism is essential in the make-up of a political leader" (Smith, 1903: 229).

The adjectival derivative, "Tapleyan," first appeared in 1869 in the context of a women's group, "the Tapleyan Society, [formed] for the Enjoyment of Natural Beauty under Adverse Circumstances" (Joven, 1869: 119). By the end of the century the eponymous character had spawned the "Tapleyan philosophy" of "jolity under all circumstances . . ." (Kennan, 1881: 12).

Mr Turveydrop

Mr Turveydrop is the proprietor of a dance academy in *Bleak House (1853)* who "[. . .] fools the world into acceptance of his fancied superiority." His role model for his gentlemanly "deportment" is England's "Prince Regent." But despite his manners and appearance he is a conniving, self-centered narcissist whose wife works herself to death providing for him, and whose devoted son is made to feel he must likewise be responsive to his father's needs.

The earliest generic appearance of his eponym is in a book of anecdotes published in 1864 in the south during the latter part of the American Civil War, describing a well-dressed itinerant black man who seemed "in every respect a Turveydrop in deportment" (De Fontaine, 1864: 245). The eponym reappears in a Louisa May Alcott's *Rose In Bloom* (1876: 108) where one of the characters blurts out that he'll

"behave like a Turveydrop," meaning that after dancing with his cousin he will leave her to fend for herself.

The adjectival appearance of the eponym occurs even earlier in 1853 in the "Turveydropian science of Deportment" referring to the manners of French clergy (Anonymous, 1853: 67). "Turveydropdom," the noun form of the eponym, has few appearances. The earliest is in 1878 in a short story in which one of the characters says he knows "what all Turveydropdom will conglomerate to remark (Byron, 1878: 72).

Uriah Heep

Uriah Heep is a duplicitous clerk in *David Copperfield* (1850) who constantly refers to himself as "the umblest person going," while plotting to ruin his boss and steal from his clients. One of the first things David notices about Uriah is his "clammy" handshake. Heep's palms are constantly sweaty, so much so, he was frequently rubbing them together "as if to squeeze them dry and warm, besides wiping them in a stealthy way, on his pocket handkerchief." It was "such an uncomfortable hand that, when I went to my room, [shaking] it was still cold and wet upon my memory."

Uriah's peculiar sweaty palms are medically called "primary palmar hyperhidrosis," and more familiarly "Uriah Heep Syndrome." The syndrome's sweaty palms are typically associated with emotional stress. People suffering from "Uriah Heep Syndrome" often experienced severe embarrassment, psychosocial trauma, and physical discomfort (Carter, 1994: 790). But it is Heep's "snaky twisting of his throat and body" that led to his eponymic debut in 1854, when a writer's sentences were characterized as "all twisted up, not unlike the outward contortions of Uriah Heep's humility" (Tucker, 1854–1855: 94).

A quaint metaphoric allusion to Heep's humility occurs in a description of Carpet Weed as a "genuine Uriah Heep among plants." (Spencer, 1957: 107). A more familiar allusion appears in Robert Caro's biography of President Lyndon Johnson, in which an early acquaintance of Johnson's is quoted as saying, "every time I looked at Lyndon, I saw a Uriah Heep from Texas" (Caro, 1982: 489).

The adjectival "Uriah Heepish" made its first appearance in 1886 in a review of a book about the Greek islands, in which the book's author is described as "rambling, garrulous, egotistic, bright, [and] a little Uriah Heepish" (Anonymous, 1886: 59). Other occurrences include someone whose "face [was] wreathed in a Uriah-Heepish smile of servility" (Jenks, 1896: 462) and another who was "constantly in a Uriah Heepish ecstasy of contortion" (Lewisohn, 1922: 151).

Sam Weller

When the first installments of *Pickwick Papers* appeared in 1836 the story had relatively little popularity. It was only when Dickens introduced the sharp-witted Sam Weller and his unique way of expressing himself that sales jumped from five hundred to forty thousand copies a month (Baer, 1983). The character also sparked a fad in which newspapers in England and America regularly featured a "Wellerisms" column.

A "Wellerism" is an expression in which a familiar proverb, cliché, or saying is given a humorously incongruous twist. Wellerisms have three parts to them, a quotation, a speaker who is named or in some way identified, and a punning facetious redirection of the literal meaning of the quotation, for example, "Everyone to his own liking, the old woman said, when she kissed her cow." On January 2 1839, the *Boston Globe* initiated a column of "Wellerisms" ("'It does one's heart good to look at you,' as the fox said to the chickens, when he found he couldn't get over the barn-yard wall, to eat them") that was soon imitated by other newspaper. Two weeks later, on January 19, *The New York Mirror* (239) printed its first "Wellerism" ("'That's vat I calls a strong inducement to go round,' as the man said yesterday, ven he came to a mud puddle so deep he couldn't get over without swimming"). Present-day readers can keep up with these and other Wellerisms with *A Dictionary of Wellerisms* (Mieder and Kingsbury, 1994).

The *OED* quotes one of Dickens's own letters dated 1838 for the first appearance of "Wellerian" wherein the author refers to Sam Weller's peculiar way of speaking as "Wellerian phraseology." The adjectival eponym, however, appears only sporadically. Even less common is "welleresque," which first appears in Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* (1868: 92).

Charles Dickens

Dickens had his own name transformed into several related eponyms which are still, if not commonly used, nevertheless recognizable as derived from his name. Probably the best known of these is "Dickensian."

Dickensian has several meanings. It may bring to mind the despairing poverty, filthy slums, and the squalid working conditions of London's underclass, or the exaggerated comic humor and larger than life eccentric behavior of the myriads of people populating his stories. Alternatively, it can refer to a story plot that stitches disjoined characters and situations together with implausible coincidences.

The earliest appearance of "Dickensian" is 1866, where it refers to a type of character Dickens described who is not fictional but rather the real-life smoking, spitting Americans he encountered and disparagingly wrote about when he returned from touring America in 1842.

Authors who write elaborate plots with eccentric characters are a "Dickensian type of story-teller" (Watts-Dunton, 1907: 1024). Seedy and decayed parts of a city are "Dickensian." Even though Vancouver, Canada, is regarded as "one of the world's most livable cities, the Downtown Eastside remains the site of a Dickensian squalor unmatched in Canada [. . .] (Marciano, 2010: 119).

"Dickenesque" debuted a few years before "Dickensian." In 1859 a *Saturday Review* commentary about a trial characterized the prosecutor's opening remarks as "a Dickenesque piece of pathos" (p. 523). People who act or look like characters in a Dickens novel are "Dickensy" (Stimson, 1896: 47) or "Dickensish" (Anonymous, 1890a: 281). Collections of Dickensian relics, bibliographic compilations, and articles about Dickens or his characters are called Dickensiana (Kitton, 1886: 1). The author of this article, and the legions of Dickens's other devoted fans are "Dickensites" (Lang, 1888: 233).

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Notes on contributor

Ernest Lawrence Abel is a Distinguished Faculty Professor at Wayne State University in Detroit. His family dog's name is "Dickens."

Correspondence to: Ernest Abel, Mott Center, Wayne State University, 275 East Hancock, Detroit, Michigan, 48201, USA. Email: eabel@wayne.edu