AMONG THE NEW WORDS

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Here’s another tidy installment of new words that caught our eyes as either useful or interesting or both. Some are semantically obvious coinages (Loserville, Title Town, and room roulette); others are impenetrable without some explanation of context (NASDAQ and unilateral negative optioning). One wonders ifNASDAQ will undergo amelioration in a future technology boom. A chicken-pox party strikes us as an economically sound policy for efficient childrearing, but then so does the policy for Irish family harmony outlined in Jonathan Swift’s “A Modest Proposal.” The senior editor would like to note that micromobility can become a risk to life and limb when the carport is littered with fold-up scooters and the like. Contributors of citations include Adele Algeo, John Algeo, George Cole, and Frank Nuessel, whose reading keeps us abreast of what is going on in the world.

chicken-pox party  n  [BDC 14.1 1991]  Gathering held so that healthy children may contract chicken pox from infected children at a time convenient for the parents  1995 Aug 21 Rashida Dhooma Toronto Sun final ed 5 (Lexis-Nexis) Many of you have been to a Tupperware party or a lingerie party, but a chicken-pox party? Seems some parents deliberately take their children to such “parties” so they can get certain infectious illness “to get it over and done with.”  2001 Apr 4 Paul Donohue Windsor Star final ed B5 (Lexis-Nexis; head) Chicken pox ‘parties’ are a thing of the past  Dec 26 Edmonton Sun final ed 2 (Lexis-Nexis) A POX ON THEM: [sic] Some parents in the Pittsburgh area recently held chicken pox “parties” for the sake of the children in which one child suffering from the disease would be mingled with other kids so they could get infected too.

Loserville  n  Place, literal or figurative, inhabited by the defeated  1987 Oct 13 Scott Ostle Los Angeles Times home ed 3/1/4 (Lexis-Nexis) These aren’t the old Twins, representing Loserville, USA. They even have newly designed uniforms this year. All these kids know about Minneapolis is that it’s where Wheaties are made. They don’t know about past athletic failures.  2001 Jan/Feb Sharyn Wizda American Journalism Review 34 (Lexis-Nexis) When Bush’s campaign took off after he surprisingly “won” the debates, Gore returned to
Loserville as far as the press was concerned. 2002 Jan 17 Mark Starr *Newsweek* np (Lexis-Nexis) Local sports columnists began to dub the town “loserville” and the succession of miserable failures cast a pall over Boston that perfectly matched the national mood of mourning. Oct 9 *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* home ed 4C (Lexis-Nexis) Few things in life are inevitable, but among them are death, taxes and the Braves losing in October. The Atlanta Braves: America’s regular-season team. [¶] The Yankees and Diamondbacks were gone! It was supposed to be easy. But the legacy of Loserville lives on.

**micromobility** *n* Transportation by means of a scooter, skates, or other easily portable device 2000 Aug 13 Anne Putz *Houston Chronicle* Business 3 (Lexis-Nexis) Micro Mobility Systems, a Swiss company that worked with K2 to develop one of the first of the new two-wheeled scooters, has sold about 750,000 this year and expects sales of at least 1.2 million by year’s end, excluding the Christmas season, salesman Thomas Pingel said. Aug 30 Jennifer Sherry and Pearl Liang *South China Morning Post* 5 (Lexis-Nexis) For the benefit of those who have been in hibernation this past year, here’s the potted bluffer’s guide. For a start, mini-scooters, micro-scooters, kick-scooters and skate-scooters are all exactly the same thing. The Razor, manufactured by JD Corporation, and the Micro, by Micro Mobility Systems, currently dominate the market. Both brands are owned by K2, which also owns the patent for the much-imitated single-action folding mechanism. Dec 1 Lena Corner *Independent* (London) Features 7 (Lexis-Nexis) “We are working to a different time-scale than everyone else. We are not just making scooters,” [Wim Ouboter, a Swiss banker] says. “We are making micro-mobility transport systems. This is a long-term vision.” 2001 June 14 *Wall Street Journal* B4 (Reuters) “Scooters were similar to in-line skates,” [Robert Lafferty] said, referring to the last big trend in what some industry insiders call “micromobility”: the rollerblade boom that hit in 1996, then flattened out.

**nasdaq** *v* Decline rapidly 2001 Oct 28 Adam Schefter *Denver Post* 2nd ed K-01 (Lexis-Nexis) Yet while his quarterback rating has Nasdaqed, [Brian] Griese has been criticized for not making enough big plays. 2002 Jan 29 *San Antonio Express-News* Metro 2E (Lexis-Nexis) When the editors of the Sunday New York Times [sic] book review needed to find a word to describe a drop in nominations for last year’s best books, they turned to a new verb, reports Kate Kelly in the Wall Street Journal [sic]. [¶] “This year the process nasdaqed,” they wrote, noting that nominations for the year had tumbled 20 percent. Feb Stephen McClellan *Business and Management Practices* 6 (Lexis-Nexis) Yet, much of the operator sector was ‘nasdaqed’ (yes, it is a new verb describing rapid and destructive decline). Aug 4 Dave Murphy *San Francisco Chronicle* final ed J1 (Lexis-Nexis) People who saved up to retire in the next couple of years, but now have seen that retirement savings Nasdaqed beyond all repair. [sic] They’re like runners near the end of a marathon who get told, “Did we say this was 26 miles? We meant 36.”

**new-concept weapon** *n* Nontraditional means of causing harm to an enemy 1995 July 31 *Aviation Week and Space Technology* 55 (Lexis-Nexis) The U.S.
Defense Dept. is expanding its Advanced Concept Technology Demonstration program to a $1-billion effort in Fiscal 1996, from $681.5 million last year, and is adding 12 new projects to the 10 currently underway. ACTD projects involve an early operational test of a new type of weapon before the Defense Dept. has invested as heavily on development as it does in a regular acquisition. The program is designed to explore high-risk technologies in new-concept weapons that have no counterpart in the current inventory. . . . A lightweight, low-cost, air-launched decoy that would imitate an attacking aircraft to fool ground and airborne air defense systems. . . . A sensor suite to monitor a hardened facility engaged in producing chemical, nuclear or biological weapons. . . . An automated network of sensors designed to detect biological warfare agents at an airbase or port facility. . . . A combat identification system for air-to-ground as well as ground-to-ground operations.

Members of the People’s Liberation Army have laid out the case for Internet insurgency in People’s Daily, the ruling Communist Party’s authoritative newspaper, and in a hot-selling book. “A planned stock market crash, a computer virus attack, making erratic the exchange rate of an enemy’s currency and spreading rumors on the Internet about enemy leaders can all be considered new concept weapons,” PLA colonels Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangsui wrote in “Unrestricted Warfare.” “The battlefield will be everywhere.”

A new concept of weapons provides direction for new-concept weapons, while the new-concept weapons give fixed forms to the new concept of weapons. With regard to the flood of new-concept weapons, technology is no longer the main factor; the true underlying factor is a new concept regarding weapons.

room roulette  

Process whereby one gets hotel or other accommodations.
June 14 Antonia Zerbisias The Toronto Star 2d ed B8 (Lexis-Nexis) Right from the get-go, at CBC’s opening reception for the 19th Banff Television Festival Sunday night, the fairytale-like ballroom of the Banff Springs Hotel was packed with pinstripes. And it ain’t cheap once you’re here, believe me. (My boss better brace himself for the expense claims.) [¶] Which is why, after pitching and catching projects, the second biggest game here is “room roulette.” [¶] No, that isn’t some kind of sick serial sex-off but what goes on at the historic Banff Springs when the Toronto TV swells arrive and discover they’re paying more than $300 a night for a closet. 2002 Jan 5 Kate Muir Times (London) np (Lexis-Nexis) You can’t forget the seasonal pleasures of Room Roulette either: which ceiling will go this time?

Title Town  n Place inhabited by winners 1981 Jan 3 Washington Post final ed E1 (Lexis-Nexis) In Philadelphia, where losing teams once were as fashionable as lobsters at Bookbinder’s, there is talk of attaching a nickname to the place, such as “Title Town, U.S.A.” But first the Eagles have to do their part by winning the Super Bowl three months after the Phis captured the World Series. 1994 June 23 John Williams The Houston Chronicle 3 Star ed A1 (Lexis-Nexis) Heck, Houston has even played second fiddle in its own state to Dallas and the four Super Bowl wins by the Cowboys. [¶] “Title Town USA, this is not,” NBC broadcaster Bob Costas told a worldwide audience during the network’s introduction of the game. 2002 Oct 3 Milwaukee Journal Sentinel X ed 07Z (Lexis-Nexis) When the regular season [sic], it typically means one thing for most Green Bay Packers: time to get out of town. [¶] Whether it’s warmer weather or a bigger city, most Packers have always left Title Town during the frigid winter months.

unilateral negative optioning  n Offer of a contract considered valid even if the customer does not respond 2001 Aug 15 Tamara Audi The Detroit Free Press np (Lexis-Nexis) On Tuesday, [Michigan Attorney General Jennifer] Granholm said her office is investigating the two corporations and expressed concern about the growing practice of companies offering free trial offers that force consumers to cancel or be charged. It’s called unilateral negative optioning. The practice increasingly is being used to sell magazine subscriptions, music, books and other products through credit card companies and other unrelated businesses, Granholm said. 2002 Sep 18 Lansing State Journal (http://www.lansingcitypulse.com/020918/020918journal.html) The Journal’s offer: “The Lansing State Journal [sic] will publish a special edition on Sept. 12 to cover the anniversary of the 9-11 attacks. Subscribers will be charged 15 cents for this special edition. Proceeds will be donated to the City of Lansing’s Remembrance Fund. If you do not wish to be billed for this newspaper, please call the circulation department at 377-1020.” [¶] Schneider wrote a column on Sept. 13 that reported: ‘It was the last line of the note that fogged the glasses of some sharp-eyed readers. That sounded, to some, like what the folks in the Attorney General’s Office call ‘negative optioning.’ [¶] ‘That’s how it sounded, in fact, to Stanley Pruss, head of the AG’s Consumer Protection Division. [¶] ‘Pruss was unequivocal in his opinion: ‘I think that’s unilateral,
unlawful negative optioning. . . . [ellipsis in text] Silence cannot be interpreted as acceptance of a contract.”

**viral marketing; viral advertising** n  
Spreading of product information through word of mouth or e-mail  
1995 Dec 15 Anthony Faiola *Washington Post* final ed A01 (Lexis-Nexis) To reach hard-sell consumers such as Gary, advertisers are shooting for higher velocity and more interaction with teenagers. One direct response recently came in Sony Computer Entertainment’s “viral” marketing campaign for its Playstation, an advanced home video game machine launched in September.  
1998 Nov 3 Michael Brick *New York Times* C7 (Lexis-Nexis) Then came Playstation. While Sega swaggered across late-night television with pitches for bone-crunching hits in its football games and all manner of savagery in its fighting games, Sony pinpointed technology aficionados with a campaign one former executive described as “viral marketing.”  
2001 Jan 6 Philippa Walsh *Daily Telegraph* (Sydney) 89 (Lexis-Nexis) **VIRAL** [sic] marketing is on the rise as advertisers use charm and humour to persuade consumers to do the selling for them through e-mail.  
A John West bear ad last month crossed the globe from its market of origin—the UK—to a worldwide audience showing how, even accidentally, e-mail can be a powerful branding tool.  
The video clip of a bear kickboxing a fisherman in a competition to keep a choice salmon was e-mailed around the world by amused consumers and garnered serious media attention. While there was no marketing plan driving distribution of the clip, designing ads to have a similar reach on the ’Net [sic] has become big business.  
The Executive Director of the Advertising Federation of Australia Lesley Brydon said, [sic] viral marketing was a growing trend.  
“At least anecdotally it seems to be on the rise—we haven’t done any research on it—but people are talking about it and we wouldn’t rule out a lecture on it in our online advertising course,” she said.  
“The John West ad is an example of an ad that received exponential value over the cost of the advertising itself.  
“The Internet and e-mail gives advertisers a way to use more creative ways to get a message out.”  
Viral advertising takes a variety of forms, from e-mail messages and forwarded video clips but, ultimately, with personal recommendations—the element that separates viral marketing from spam.  
2002 Oct 9 Matthew Kauffman *Hartford Courant* statewide ed E1 (Lexis-Nexis) And the Word has spread by transplanted Southerners who proselytize in adopted communities, telling superlative-faced tales to the wide-eyed uninitiated. By the time Krispy Kreme plants the neon light in a new market, well, no wonder the TV lights are there, too. And with that sort of viral marketing, it’s no wonder the company shrugs off paid advertising.