**Cliches—ENG 210**

Cliches show lazy usage, and often are written as they are pronounced. There are several ways they can be misused, but the most revealing and embarrassing has to be what I call the re-invented cliche. In some of these cases, the original has been lost, resulting in a new hybrid that is nonsensical because it is devoid of context. Some of the later examples are more to do with homonyms than cliches. All share origins in spoken English — the common tendency to write as we speak. The problem goes beyond word choice to spelling (“Febuary,” “paraphenalia,” “idealogical” etc.), agreement (“There’s three things to do”) and so on.

**Re-invented Original Context**

1. Pedal to the medal pedal to the metal driving

2. No holes barred no holds barred wrestling

3. Tough road to hoe tough row to hoe farming

4. All intensive purposes all intents and purposes legal(?)

5. A shoe-in a shoo-in scaring birds?

6. Pom-poms pompom Pom-pom is weaponry

7. Takes a lot of flack takes a lot of flak military (anti-aircraft)

8. Card shark card sharp (now OK)

9. I could care less could not care less

10. Boyed by the results buoyed by the results sailing

11. Funds were dispersed funds were disbursed bourse=purse

12. Putting sandbags on the levy sandbags on the levee rivers

13. This doesn’t gibe this doesn’t jibe sailing

14. Trucks pealed off into the desert trucks peeled off fruit

15. Recession-wracked economies recession-racked torture

16. A responsive cord a responsive chord music

17. That doesn’t auger well that doesn’t augur well fortune telling

18. Radio antennae radio antennas electronics

19. That doesn’t phase me that doesn’t faze me from “freeze”?

20. Worldwind whirlwind weather term?

21. Taking a clue from the audience cue theater

22. The dye was cast die tool-making

23. self-depreciation self-deprecation finance

23. dollars and sense dollars and cents (this was not a pun)

25. daring-do derring-do “Ivanhoe”

26. idealogical ideological ideology

27. raising cane raising Cain Bible

27. towing the line toeing the line army?

29. come down the pipe come down the pike turnpike

30. free reign free rein horse riding

31. scull and crossbones skull and crossbones pirates

32. cold slaw cole slaw cabbage (Dutch)

33. Detroit has the most per capital per capita Latin

34. meterologist meteorologist meteor

35. trying to diffuse a bad situation defuse bombs

36. put the breaks on spending brakes cars

37. the entomology of the word etymology truth

38. all-night virgil all-night vigil vigilant

39. Who would of thought? who would have thought?

40. I’ve had to make due before I’ve had to make do before

41. one in the same one and the same

42. counter culture counterculture

43. never stepped foot in it set foot could be reginalisms

44. if worse comes to worse if worse comes to worst

45. Music hath charms to soothe the savage beast breast Shakespeare

46. It’s a mute point moot law

47. She was making deflamatory remarks inflammatory

48. The events occurred by happen-chance happenstance

49. Volcanos, tornadoes and other catalytic events cataclysmic

50. Fragrant disregard for the law flagrant

51. That’s my story on the nutshell in a not seafood

52. I have a sick sense about these things sixth

53. Let’s try taking a different tact tack sailing

54. I was given short shift shrift religious absolution

55. We grew up in track housing tract

56. Chomping at the bit champing horses

57. Drips and drabs dribs dribble

58. Nip it in the butt in the bud gardening

59. We’ll do will do ?

60. Put on a pedal stool a pedestal sculpture

61. They banned together banded together band

62. Helps sphere head spearhead fishing/war

63. divide and concur divide and conquer Greek history

64. chalk full chock-full choke?

65. parted waves ways roads