

"We have really everything in common with America nowadays except, of course, language" - Oscar Wilde, *The Canterville Ghost*, 1887

The idea for this dictionary began during a survey/scout of a theater/theatre in Brussels prior to an Anglo-American television production. The director selected camera locations. Two were to be located towards the rear of the lowest level of audience.

I wandered off to discuss technical issues with the stage crew. My French is poor and my Flemish essentially non-existent, but I had little difficulty communicating with the Belgians. I returned to find the American female producer and the British male producer screaming at each other. They were saying exactly the same thing and didn't realize it.

He: So we're having two cameras in the stalls.

She: No, we agreed not to put cameras in the boxes; they're going in the orchestra.

He: We agreed not to put cameras with the musicians!

She: Of course we're not having cameras in the pit!

He: Yes, we are!

It helps to know that the lowest level of theatrical audience in English is called the *stalls*, which seems suspiciously like *boxes* to an American. The same level is called the *orchestra* by an American, which means the *musicians* in English. To the American, those musicians play in the *pit*. But the *pit* is an old English theatrical term for the lowest level of audience.

Professions often have their own jargons, never mind American/English language variations. How many people not employed in theatrical work know that *tormentors* hide the view of off-stage areas from the audience or that *vomitories* are entrances piercing the seating? Abbreviate those terms as *torms* and *voms*, and people can't even look them up in dictionaries. *Front porch*, *back porch*, *breezeway*, *flag*, and *pedestal* might have certain meanings in architecture; they're also used differently to describe components of a U.S.-standard composite-color video signal.

Then there are those American/English variations. Americans in northern England giggle when they hear someone say he's *knocked up* the vicar's wife; the English in America find *Don't Honk* street signs equally amusing. It helps to know that *to knock up*, a perfectly respectable northern English term for *to pay a visit* means *to impregnate* in American slang. Similarly, *to honk*, perfectly normal American for *to toot* an automobile horn, is British slang for *to vomit* or *to stink*.

Times are changing. A *billion* used to be a *thousand million* in American but a *million million* in English, where a *thousand million* was a *milliard*. Since the 1970s, however, the thousand-million connotation has been used in Britain, though *milliard* is still used in non-UK English. Similarly, *CSO* is now usually called *chroma key* on both sides of the Atlantic. So take what follows with a grain of salt.

Enjoy!

Mark Schubin

## American

A1  
A2  
analog  
antenna  
audio (department)  
Belden 8281  
bird  
black (power hot wire)  
black/red/blue (three phase)  
black (video level)  
board (control or mixing)  
booth (trade show)  
broadcast-quality monitor  
Bruce (regional)  
bug (logo)  
cable puller  
Chyron  
color  
color correction  
colorist  
console (control or mixing)  
control room  
dissolve  
DTV (digital television)  
effects (sound)  
EIC  
Elvis  
equalize, equalizing  
ESU, equipment set-up  
file (footage)  
hot (in power wires)  
gaffer  
ground, grounded, grounding  
IRE  
lighting instrument  
machine room  
MMDS  
monitor wall  
MOS  
Nielsen  
painting  
pedestal (black signal level)  
PL  
power

## English

sound mixer  
sound assistant  
analogue  
aerial (domestic receiving)  
sound  
BBC PSF1/2  
satellite  
brown (mains live wire)  
brown/black/grey (three phase)  
lowest luma level ~50 mv above blanking  
desk  
stand  
Grade 1 monitor  
Gordie, locked-off camera, lock-off  
ident, DOG, DINGO  
basher  
Aston  
colour  
grading  
grader  
desk  
gallery  
mix  
DTT (sometimes)  
gramms  
EM, engineering manager, TM, SRM  
EVS disk recorder/server  
equalise, equalising  
rigging (approximate)  
archival, library  
live, phase  
lighting assistant, electrician  
earth, earthed, earthing  
(Institute of Radio Engineers) 7.14-mv units  
luminaire  
CAR (central apparatus room)  
MVDS  
production stack  
no sound  
BARB (approximate)  
racking  
sit  
talkback  
mains

production switcher  
production truck  
program (a broadcast)  
prompter  
racking  
remote, remote site  
roll (tape)  
router, routing switcher  
senior video  
set-up (black signal level)  
shading  
shake, shaker  
spool  
SVO  
switcher  
synchronize, synchronizing  
TD  
technical director  
teleprompter  
translator (RF)  
truck (production)  
tube (electronic component)  
tube (euphemism)  
TV  
ute, utility  
V1  
V2  
video (department)  
video (person)  
vertical interval  
VITS (vertical interval test signal)  
VO  
white (power neutral wire)  
zee (pronunciation of z)  
zero

vision mixer  
OB van, scanner  
programme  
autocue  
changing focus  
OB  
run (VT)  
matrix, switcher  
VS, vision supervisor  
sit  
racking  
frame synchronise, frame synchroniser  
reel  
vision supervisor  
vision mixer  
synchronise, synchronising  
vision mixer  
vision mixer  
autocue  
transposer  
OB van, scanner  
valve  
telly  
telly  
rigger, basher  
VS, vision supervisor  
assistant vision controller  
vision, racks  
vision controller  
field blanking  
ITS  
vision controller, racks  
blue (mains neutral wire)  
zed  
cipher, nought

## English

advert  
aerial (domestic)  
analogue  
Aston  
autocue  
BARB (British Audience Research Board)  
bash (cable)  
basher  
BBC PSF1/2  
beamer (non-UK)  
black (video level)  
blue (mains neutral wire)  
brown (mains wire)  
brown/black/grey (three phase)  
cinema (place)  
cipher (rare in UK)  
colour  
CSO (colour separation overlay)  
desk (control or mixing)  
DINGO  
DOG  
DTT, dTTb  
earth, earthed, earthing  
EM  
EOP  
equalise, equalising  
field blanking  
gaffer  
gallery  
general view  
Gordie  
grade (verb)  
Grade 1 monitor  
grader  
grading  
gramms (sound)  
GV (general view)  
ident (logo)  
inlay  
ITS (insertion test signal)  
kit  
live (in mains wiring)  
luminaire  
mains

## American

commercial, spot  
antenna  
analog  
Chyron  
prompter  
Nielsen (approximate)  
pull, dress  
cable puller, ute, utility  
Belden 8281  
projector  
0 IRE, same as blanking level  
white (power neutral wire)  
black (power wire)  
black/red/blue (three phase)  
movie theater  
zero  
color  
chroma key  
board, console  
bug (visual identification)  
bug (visual identification)  
digital terrestrial television broadcasting  
ground, grounded, grounding  
technical manager, EIC, sometimes LD  
end of part (end of segment)  
equalise, equalizing  
vertical interval  
foreman, head, chief  
control room  
exterior establishing shot  
Bruce, locked-off camera  
color correct  
broadcast-quality monitor  
colorist  
color correction  
phono, music & sound effects  
exterior establishing shot  
bug  
key (effect)  
VITS  
equipment, equip  
hot  
lighting instrument, light  
power

matrix  
milliard (rare in UK)  
mix (video)  
MVDS  
nought  
OB (outside broadcast)  
OB van  
overlay  
phase (in mains wiring, rare in UK)  
Pres  
production stack  
programme (broadcast content)  
queue  
racks  
racking  
rigger  
rigging  
run (VT)  
scanner (vehicle)  
SCART  
sit (black signal level)  
SOP  
sound (department)  
sparkies, sparks  
stand (exhibition)  
synchronise, synchronising  
tape  
TARIF  
transposer (RF)  
turn it over  
valve  
video (object)  
vision  
vision controller  
vision mixer (equipment)  
vision mixer (person)  
vision supervisor  
VS  
VT  
wobulator (RF)  
zed (pronunciation of z)

router, routing switcher  
billion  
dissolve  
MMDS  
nothing, zero  
remote site, remote  
remote truck  
key (effect)  
hot  
network control, master control  
monitor wall  
program  
waiting line  
video operator  
adjusting video, painting, shading  
utility, ute (approximate)  
ESU, equipment set-up (approximate)  
roll (tape)  
production truck  
consumer component audio/video connector  
pedestal, set-up  
start of part (start of segment)  
audio  
electrician, gaffer  
booth  
synchronize, synchronizing  
audio tape  
color correction, to color correct  
translator  
roll to record  
tube  
VCR, prerecorded videocassette  
video  
video operator, VO, V2  
production switcher, switcher  
TD, technical director  
V1, senior video, SVO  
V1, senior video, SVO  
tape (video)  
sweep generator  
zee