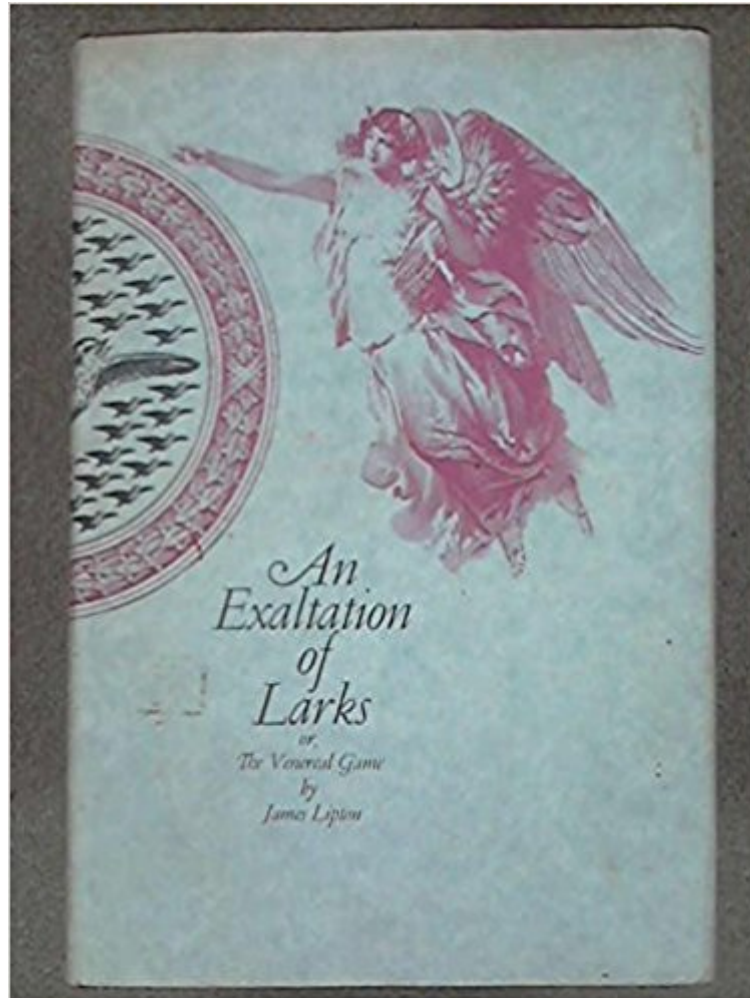


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An Exaltation Of Larks: The Ultimate Edition, More Than 1,000 Terms



Synopsis

An "exaltation of larks"? Yes! And a "leap of leopards," a "parliament of owls," an "ostentation of peacocks," a "smack of jellyfish," and a "murder of crows"! For those who have ever wondered if the familiar "pride of lions" and "gaggle of geese" were only the tip of a linguistic iceberg, James Lipton has provided the definitive answer: here are hundreds of equally pithy, and often poetic, terms unearthed by Mr. Lipton in the Books of Venery that were the constant study of anyone who aspired to the title of gentleman in the fifteenth century. When Mr. Lipton's painstaking research revealed that five hundred years ago the terms of venery had already been turned into the Game of Venery, he embarked on an odyssey that has given us a "slouch of models," a "shrivel of critics," an "unction of undertakers," a "blur of Impressionists," a "score of bachelors," and a "pocket of quarterbacks." This ultimate edition of *An Exaltation of Larks* is Mr. Lipton's brilliant answer to the assault on language and literacy in the last decades of the twentieth century. In it you will find more than 1,100 resurrected or newly minted contributions to that most endangered of all species, our language, in a setting of 250 witty, beautiful, and remarkably apt engravings. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Here's a real gem! AN EXALTATION OF LARKS (Ultimate Edition) is the culmination of more than two decades of Lipton's research of "nouns of multitude," which he prefers to call "terms of venery." Many of these terms are commonplace: plague of locusts, pride of lions, litter of pups.

Imagine, though, hearing these expressions for the first time. Lipton invites us to "sharpen our senses by restoring the magic to the mundane." Lipton traced a number of these terms back to the 1400s, specifically to THE BOOK OF ST. ALBANS, printed in 1486. In addition to today's ordinary terms, he discovered some that had a fresh sound, precisely because they had not made the 500-year journey to our modern era. Lipton identifies six sources of inspiration for the terms. He lists these "Families" with the following examples: 1. Onomatopoeia: a murmuration of starlings, a gaggle of geese. 2. Characteristic (by far the largest Family): a leap of leopards, a skulk of foxes. 3. Appearance: a knot of toads, a parliament of owls. 4. Habitat: a shoal of bass, a nest of rabbits. 5. Comment (pro or con depending on viewpoint): a richness of martens, a cowardice of curs. 6. Error (in transcription or printing; sometimes preserved for centuries): "school" of fish was originally intended to be "shoal." Lipton enthusiastically joined the "game" of coining terms, which had been in progress for more than 500 years. In 1968 he published his first EXALTATION OF LARKS, which contained 175 terms -- some from Middle English, some original. Neither the hardbound nor the paperback edition went out of print before the Ultimate Edition (with more than 1,000 terms) was published in 1991.

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