

Re: proof that most etymologies are only fairy-tales

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- *From:* Harlan Messinger <[hmessinger.removethis@xxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:hmessinger.removethis@xxxxxxxxxxx)>
  - *Date:* Sun, 03 Aug 2008 18:32:06 -0400
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Duaan Vukoti wrote:

On Aug 3, 6:42 pm, Harlan Messinger  
<[hmessinger.removethis@xxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:hmessinger.removethis@xxxxxxxxxxx)> wrote:

Duaan Vukoti wrote:

Is there anyone who is able to explain the homonymy of  
English bear  
(carry, cause to be born) and bear (omnivorous  
animal/mammal)? Why and  
how has it happened?

Because there isn't any reason why it \*wouldn't\* happen, and both words  
evolved in unsurprising ways to become, as it happens, homonyms.

And how that "unsurprising way" looked like? Could you be more  
specific? What bear (carry, cause to be born, bring forth) and bear  
(animal) have in common?

Why don't you LOOK THEM UP and find out for yourself if you want to know what they are? If you haven't  
bothered to look up the details, then you have no basis for disputing them.

Maybe you believe it happened by chance?

Yes.

But  
what if there is no accidental word-developing within the IE  
vocabulary?

Who said anything about "accidental word-developing"? What does that even mean?

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In French, the words "ou" ("or"), "où" ("where"), "houx" ("holly"), "houe" ("hoe"), and "août" ("August") are all homonyms, derived, respectively, from the non-homonymic words Latin "aut", Latin "ubi", Old High German "hulis", Old High German "houwâ", and Latin "Augustus".

In some English dialects the word "thin" is homophonic with the word "fin", the word "three" is homophonic with the word "free", and the word "threat" is homophonic with the word "fret". This is because in those dialects, initial [T] > [f], not because there is any common origin between "thin" and "fin", "three" and "free", or "threat" and "fret".

So kindly dispense with your presumption that words from separate origins don't evolve, coincidentally, into homonyms. There is nothing cosmic about it. It happens all the time, and it would be extremely strange if it \*didn't\*, since each language has a limited inventory of sounds, and since there is no force preventing such homonymy from occurring.

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