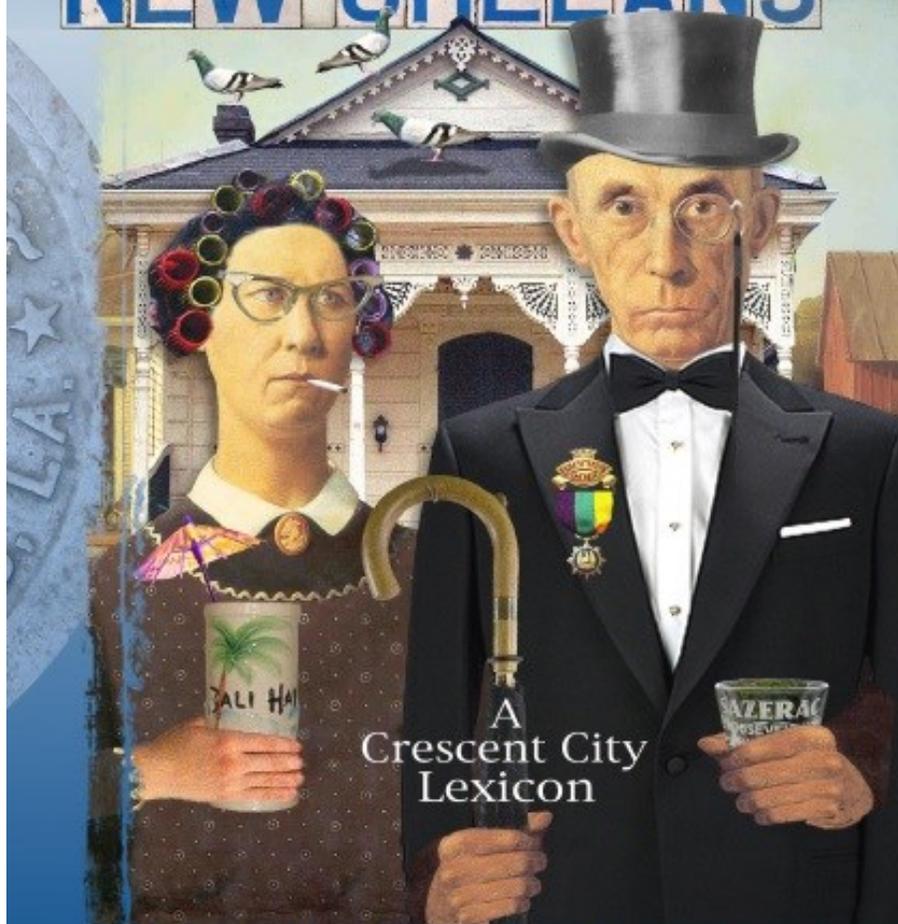


Quaint
ESSENTIAL
NEW ORLEANS



A
Crescent City
Lexicon

K e v i n J . B o z a n t

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Kevin J. Bozant



Po-Boy Press - New Orleans



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INTRODUCTION

If you write about New Orleans, get it right about New Orleans. In *Quaint Essential New Orleans*, Kevin J. Bozant takes you on an entertaining and personal journey through the Crescent City's culture of unique iconography, creative geography and mystifying terminology. He offers readers a generous serving from the colloquial melting pot with ingredients borrowed from the French, Spanish, Creoles, African Americans, Cajuns, West Indians, Irish, Italians, Germans, Native Americans, Canadians, Vietnamese and a smattering of Yat mixed in just to make your mom-n-em happy. The resulting *mélange* of creative and colorful references for streets, food, Mardi Gras, jazz, local characters, geography, history and culture, blends into a delicious gumbo of grammar which is often mispronounced, misinterpreted, misunderstood and misspelled.

Do you know the difference between, Mardi Gras and Carnival, Storyland and Storyville, roux and rue? Can you give directions to Dead Man's Curve, Monkey Wrench Corner or Pigeon Town? Can you name the Emperor of the World, the Voodoo Queen or the Chicken King? Do you know what it means to mispronounce New Orleans, *banquette*, *Tchefuncte*, *flambeaux*, *Tchoupitoulas* or *lagniappe*?

Do You Know What It Means To Mispronounce New Orleans?

NEW ORLEANS (new OR luns)

We never pronounce New Orleans (or LEENS) as you hear it in song. It is only sung that way because it rhymes with red beans and Creole queens. The common pronunciation is (new OR luns). The original French is *Nouvelle Orleans* (noo VELL or lee YAHN). Some of our Uptown neighbors will say (nyu OR lee uns), and we still agree to be seen with them. One notable exception is Irma Thomas - the Soul Queen of New (or LEENS)!

AIN'T DERE NO MORE is a lament made popular by Benny Grunch and the Bunch. The lyrics mourn the loss of the traditional landmarks that have vanished from the New Orleans landscape such as K&B, Schwegmann's, Krauss, Holmes, Pontchartrain Beach, Maison Blanche and many others. For a complete list, buy the CD. **See: Holmes, K&B Purple, Schwegmann's**

ANDOUILLE (ahn DOO wee) is a spicy smoked sausage made of pork, fat, salt, cracked black pepper and garlic; smoked over pecan wood and sugar cane. It is used in a variety of Louisiana dishes such as red beans and rice, jambalaya and gumbo. Not to be confused with andouillette sausage. LaPlace is the Andouille Capital of the World where a new Miss Andouille is chosen every year. Applications are being taken. **See: Gumbo, Jambalaya, LaPlace, Red Beans & Rice**

ASH WEDNESDAY takes on a special meaning in New Orleans; in addition to its religious significance. At 12:01 am, Carnival comes to an abrupt end as mounted police parade down Bourbon Street to officially disperse the revelers, followed by an phalanx of garbage trucks. **See: Mardi Gras**

BAG HEADS referred to disappointed Saints fans who were embarrassed to be seen in public at the Superdome. They wore Schwegmann's bags over their heads during home games in 1980 when the team went 1-15. Bag Heads are now extinct. **See: 'Aints, Bountygate, Schwegmann's Bag**

BANQUETTE (BANK it) is the traditional New Orleans word for the sidewalk. In early New Orleans there were raised wooden platforms or embankments built so pedestrians could avoid the water and filth surrounding each city square or islet, especially in the original French Quarter. It is a reference one still hears today in many neighborhoods. **See: Neutral Ground**

BIG EASY is a tourism moniker for the slow, easy-going quality of life in New Orleans. Locals never use the term. However, try explaining that to the good folks who sponsor the annual Big Easy Awards. **See: Chocolate City, Crescent City, New Orleans**



BOUDIN (BOO dan) Boudin Blanc is a highly seasoned sausage traditionally made with pork, rice, onions and spices encased in cooked pig intestines. Yum! Boudin Rouge has pig blood for added flavor. Double yum! It is available at the finest restaurants in Acadiana as well as every gas station. **See: Acadiana, Andouille**



BROAD is a main city thoroughfare and part of Highway 90 that runs along the Gentilly Ridge. There is a sign on Gentilly Boulevard directing traffic to Broad Street, however the street signs actually say Broad Avenue.



Locals simply refer to it as Broad. Broad or Broadview once referred to the neighborhood which is now officially called Fairgrounds. **See: Fair Grounds, Fairgrounds, Tulane and Broad**



BURGUNDY STREET (ber GUN dee) This is the way locals have pronounced this street name since the beginning of time. However, it will only confuse the waiter if you order your wine this way. It was originally called Craps Street. **See: Cadiz, Clio, Milan**

CAFÉ DU MONDE (KA fay du MAHN) is a coffee shop located on Decatur Street in the French Quarter since 1862. It is famous for its café au lait and beignets. You can tell who the tourists are - they're the ones who wait for a table to be cleaned before sitting down. **See: Beignet, Café au Lait, Chicory**

CAT ISLAND is a barrier island off the Gulf Coast of Mississippi named Isle-aux-Chats by early French explorers who thought the raccoons were cats - until they tried to pet one. It is easy to confuse this with the Cat Island National Wildlife Reserve in Louisiana.

CEMETERIES is a reference to the intersection of Canal Street, Canal Boulevard and City Park Avenue. The term actually appears on the destination panels of streetcars even if no one is in any hurry to get there. In the play, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Blanche says, "They told me to take a streetcar named Desire, and then transfer to one called Cemeteries ..."

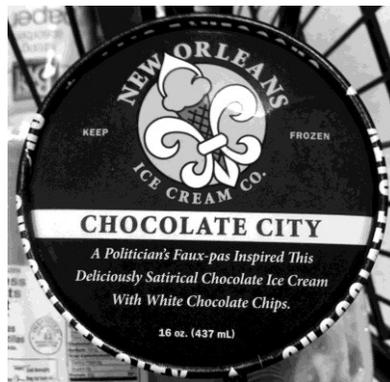
The intersection is at the convergence of no less than eight historic cemeteries. They are an important part of the culture of New Orleans due to their unique above-ground architecture. They are often called cities of the dead. Common misspellings "cemetary" and "cemeteries" should be avoided.

See: All Saints Day, Canal Street, NOPSI, Oven



DESTINATION: CEMETERIES
Canal Street & City Park Avenue - Mid-City

CHALMATION is an amusing term used to refer to a resident of Chalmette. Well – at least I *think* it's amusing.
See: Arabian, Chalmette Nikes



CHOCOLATE CITY is the controversial reference to New Orleans made in a post-Katrina speech by Mayor Ray Nagin. It is now a flavor produced by the New Orleans Ice Cream Company. **See: Big Easy, Crescent City, New Orleans**



DECATUR (da KAY ter) Street is named after Commodore Stephen Decatur and runs through the French Quarter. It was formerly known as Levee Street and is often misspelled Decater. **See: Chartres**

DIXIE is a nickname for the Southern United States. Dixie is also a famous local beer once brewed on Tulane Avenue. There is a town called Dixie in Caddo Parish.

See: Confederate Museum



COUSIN'S BEER PARLOR
North Rampart Street - Bywater
August 1985

DON'T EAT THE DEAD ONES is a strangely worded warning to novices while eating boiled crawfish. When a live crawfish hits the boil, its tail curls up. The ones that have straight tails were probably dead before they hit the water and we don't eat those. **See: Crawfish, Suck da heads**

FAMILY GRAS is a family-friendly Carnival celebration that takes place in Metairie the weekend before Mardi Gras. The translation is literally: “Fat Family.” It is my duty to point that out. **See: Mardi Gras**



FLYING HORSES
Carousel Gardens - City Park

FLYING HORSES is a local reference for a carousel, specifically the historic 1906 carousel in City Park. A carousel ‘flyer’ is a horse that goes up and down as opposed to a ‘stander.’ The carousel features the work of famed carvers Loeff, Carmel and Murphy.

GO-CUP New Orleans is the only place I know where you can take your drink from one bar to another or drink as you walk on the streets of the French Quarter - as long as it is in a plastic cup. Just ask for a go-cup. You know you are a New Orleanian when you are between bars when it is raining and you cover your cocktail instead of your head.

HOG HEAD CHEESE is sometimes written “hogs head” cheese. This is a spicy local version of head cheese; basically meat suspended in gelatin. Tradition suggests that “fromage de tete” was made from everything that fell on the floor in the butcher shop. The recipe in the Picayune Creole Cook Book begins: “Remove eyes, ears and teeth from a hog’s head. Place head and foot in boiling water ...” Well, you get the idea. **See: Cracklins**



HUBIG'S PIES (HYOO bigs) are fruit-filled fried pies made by “Savory Simon” Hubig resembling a turnover. Hubig’s bakery opened in 1922 on Dauphine Street in Faubourg Marigny. On July 20, 2012, this New Orleans institution burned to the ground. Fortunately the owners have promised the city that they will restore, rebuild, and Re-Hubig. **See: Marigny**

KING CAKE is inseparable from the Carnival season which begins on Twelfth Night. January 6th is also known as the Epiphany and Le Petit Noel. The oval cake is made of braided dough topped with icing and sprinkled with purple, green and gold sugar granules. It contains a hidden plastic baby. If you eat the piece of cake with the baby, you provide the king cake for the next party unless, of course, you choke to death. Some local bakeries now sell king cakes year round which is an egregious break with tradition. **See: Carnival, Krewe, Phunny Phorthy Phellows, Twelfth Night**



LEAKE AVENUE is a section of River Road that runs from Audubon Park through Riverbend. The Corps of Engineers, the agency responsible for our hurricane protection levees, has its headquarters on Leake Avenue. Does this surprise anyone?



LUCKY DOGS are hot dogs that are sold from seven-foot-long wiener-shaped carts. They have operated on the street corners of New Orleans since 1947. **See: Roman Candy Man**

MILE HIGH PIE The Pontchartrain Hotel's signature dessert includes layers of various ice cream flavors, meringue and chocolate syrup. **See: Bananas Foster, Beignet**

MIRLITON (MEL a tahn) There is only one way to pronounce this vegetable in New Orleans, so start practicing. It is known in other parts as a chayote or vegetable pear. This member of the gourd family is often cooked and stuffed with shrimp. The annual Mirliton Festival is in Bywater's Markey Park where you can find mirlitons stuffed, fried and even pickled. **See: Alligator Pear, Bywater**

MR. BINGLE

“Jingle, jangle, jingle, here comes Mr. Bingle.”

Mr. Bingle is a pop-culture icon of New Orleans; mascot of the former Maison Blanche Department Store on Canal Street. The Christmas display once included a live marionette show starring this little snowman assistant to Santa Claus. The large papier-mâché version can still be seen in the City Park Botanical Garden during the annual Celebration in the Oaks. **See: Celebration in the Oaks, Morgus**



MR. BINGLE

**Celebration in the Oaks – City Park
December 2006**



MUFFULETTA (muf a LET ta) This famous New Orleans Italian sandwich was invented at the Central Grocery in the French Quarter. It consists of a variety of Italian meats and cheeses topped with Italian salad and served on an Italian bun. It's an offer you can't refuse. **See: Little Palermo**

NOTTOWAY (NOT away) Plantation is the largest of the antebellum plantations remaining in Louisiana. It is located on River Road in White Castle, Louisiana, just south of Baton Rouge. Nottoway is Algonquin for rattlesnake. It is routinely misspelled Nottaway, or worse:



The streets in the Lake Bullard subdivision are named for plantations and this one is officially misspelled: Notaway. **See: Antebellum**

OZONE BELT refers to the Covington/Abita Springs region of the North Shore where the air is fresh and the water pure as ... wait a minute. The dictionary says that ground-level ozone is a faint blue irritating air pollutant with a characteristic pungent odor having harmful effects on the respiratory system of humans ... Gulp! **See: Abita Springs, North Shore, Tangipahoa**



ZATARAIN'S (ZAT uh rans) Originally a Gretna company producing root beer, Zatarain's is now a major local producer of spices and assorted Cajun and Creole food products. It has become a synonym for boiling spices as in, "add some more Zatarain's to the crab boil." **See: Crawfish, Creole Mustard, Tony's**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kevin J. Bozant was born in the Upper 9th Ward of New Orleans – as luck would have it – just a few blocks from Huerstel’s Bar and Little Pete’s Seafood Restaurant. He is a local author, photographer and digital graphic designer for his publishing company, Po-Boy Press – New Orleans. His professional experience includes Warner Brothers, CW and ABC television affiliates. Kevin specialized in sales, marketing, promotional graphics and special events coordination. He eventually became senior graphic designer for the news, sports and weather departments. He was font operator for fifteen seasons of *Friday Night Football* as well as *Saints Sideline* with Ed Daniels. Kevin provided technical assistance on location shoots for *Real New Orleans* with Ronnie Virgets, *Crescent City Country* with Kim Carson, co-produced *New Orleans after Midnight* with Bernie Cyrus and developed and co-produced *The Southern Garden* for Vitascope Television. He also served as studio graphics manager and question writer for Brandon Tartikoff’s popular New Orleans trivia game show *N.O. It Alls*.

Kevin showcased his warped opinion of local politics and culture as writer and editor of the “Crescent City Crier” a political cartoon published by Gambit Weekly. He is author and editor of *Port & Burgundy 1840-1990: A Pictorial History* covering 150 years of St. Paul German Lutheran Church and Faubourg Marigny; *Quaint Essential New Orleans: A Crescent City Lexicon*; *African American New Orleans: a Guide to 100 Civil Rights, Culture and Jazz Sites*; *Crescent City Soldiers: Military Monuments of New Orleans* as well as *Music Street New Orleans: A Guide to 200 Jazz, Rock and Rhythm & Blues Sites*.

Kevin’s favorite cultural experience was serving as personal assistant to Dr. Momus Alexander Morgus for his Halloween appearances at the Audubon Zoo.

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