

Awesome!

by Con Chapman

I've really had it up to here
with people who say "awesome"
of things that don't inspire awe.
I don't find this sort of thing winsome.
I wish periodically they'd round these folks up—
there ought to be a law.



As bad as it is with the kids
who practice this verbal tic,
even worse are the moms and dads—
I'm gender-neutral, take your pick—
who, in an effort to seem more youthful,
throw the term around by the scads.



And I can't say that I like to parley
with overripe surfer dudes who say "gnarly!"
Once they're corralled
with all of their pals
of the "awesome" persuasion
I don't think internment camps are out of the equation.
To calibrate the thing precisely: "awe" describes a feeling
of profound respect or wonder inspired by greatness,
superiority, grandeur, et cetera—
not your Straw-banana Smoothie,
even though it may be a doothie,
or your tube-tops, of which you may have a plethora.



As for “gnarly”—I don't know,
even though I heard it a quarter of a century ago or more,
there are still some people who use it,
and not just down by the shore,
to show that they're hip.
Even though it's a meaningless term,
it's harmful and insidious, like a tapeworm.
Don't get me started on “snarky” or “skeevy;”
they refer to things we already had words for;
you'd read them in books or hear them on TV.
It's not like we needed to create more words by the score.
I'll leave you with this thought—I've plenty of space

but I'm running out of time;
If you want to do a favor for the whole human race
keep words in their proper place,
and don't misuse them,
because when you're bobbling them back and forth,
you'll more than likely lose them.

