

Would you have bought?

The Digital Watch Hoax

Hundreds of consumers took part in an experiment. What it proved can be a lesson to us all.

The story we are about to tell you is the absolute truth. The persons involved, however, will not be mentioned in order to protect their reputations.

It began about six months ago when an enterprising watch manufacturer in Hong Kong started producing watches that were exact copies of the Seiko chronograph alarm selling in the United States for \$300.

The Hong Kong version was sold to several American watch manufacturers for approximately \$25. These companies in turn contacted several American mail order companies and offered the watch to them for around \$50.

Soon, all you saw in newspapers and magazines were watches that looked like the Seiko but were selling for between \$60 and \$100. Although each watch had a different name, they were all made by the same manufacturer. Even JS&A was selling them.

Many of the other mail order companies had just started in business and were not financially stable. If service would ever be required and the company vanished, the watch would be useless.

A friend of ours, who was also in the mail order business, told us that for a low enough price the American consumer would be willing to buy anything, regardless of the stability of the company.

To prove his point, he made us an offer. If we could supply him with those digital watches, he would prove that the American consumer did not pay attention to who was offering the watch and only cared about price. We accepted his challenge. Prices had been dropping and the cost of our stainless steel model was now \$38.

Our friend ran a small ad in the southwestern edition of a consumer publication offering our watch for \$39.95. The ad cost him only \$72. It had no trial period, no accuracy claims and the name of the company used in the advertisement had never appeared before. His customers had to send in a check with their order and there was a \$3.00 postage and handling charge. Even the name of the watch was not shown.

When the response came in, even our friend was amazed. There were 38 orders, and he made a small profit. He delivered the watches and proved his point.

A smart consumer, however, would have never taken this gamble—at any price. He would have made sure the company was substantial, able to back their claims, and assure himself that the company would be around for awhile to service his purchase.



This ad was a hoax designed to prove the gullibility of the American consumer.

Indeed, not all those who responded were gullible. There were 62 letters from people who did not buy but asked for either more information, the name of the manufacturer, or the right to return the watch if it wasn't any good. There were several inquiries made directly to the publication and a few to the Better Business Bureau.

There were more consumers who investigated the offer than those who took the bait despite the tempting price. That was encouraging for us.

But this story took an interesting twist after the experiment. The American watch companies handling the Hong Kong watch were getting overstocked. Prices were starting to drop and a few of the companies were indeed going out of business.

About this time, Texas Instruments introduced their new Chrono Alarm. It looked almost identical to the Seiko, but its features made it far superior.

The TI watch glows in the dark. A small tritium phosphor capsule, sealed by a laser beam, is located under the display. When the lights dim, the display appears to glow. You avoid the button pushing and component failures that are possible with watches that have miniature light bulbs inside.

And the features of the TI are the same as those of the Seiko plus a few more. The TI watch has a full-function chronograph, 12 or 24-hour time selectability, quartz accuracy to within 15 seconds per month, and a really fine quality case.

We felt that the TI Chrono Alarm had better

quality and more features than anything else on the market, but it was priced at \$125—higher than the Hong Kong watches.

So we tried another experiment. We offered the TI watch in a small advertisement in our catalog opposite an ad we created for the Hong Kong watch selling for \$69.95. The TI watch generated four times the number of orders than the Hong Kong version. It was this test that convinced us to offer the TI watch in a national advertising campaign.

We are not showing you the Texas Instruments watch in this ad. First, it looks identical to the Seiko version and secondly, if we showed it and you just read the headline of this ad, you might think that the TI watch was "The Digital Watch Hoax" which of course it isn't.

The TI watch will be sold in a few select stores shortly. Or you can order now directly from JS&A. We promise you prompt delivery and something even the stores don't offer—the opportunity to wear the TI watch and the right to return it anytime within 30 days for a prompt and courteous refund if you are not absolutely satisfied.

If you are looking for the very finest watch you can buy—even better than the Seiko and backed by two substantial companies, we urge you to consider the TI Chrono Alarm. JS&A is America's largest single source of space-age products—further assurance that your modest investment is well protected.

Send your check or money order for \$125 for the stainless steel model or \$150 for the gold-tone version plus \$2.50 postage and handling (Illinois residents, please add 5% sales tax) to the address shown below. Credit card buyers may call our toll-free number below.

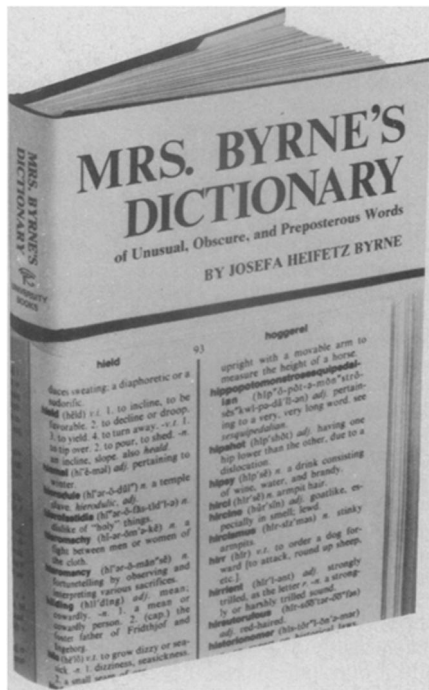
We will promptly ship your watch, one-year limited warranty and complete instructions. Then prove for yourself how outstanding the Texas Instruments Chrono Alarm really is.

There's no gamble when you can own the finest. Order a Texas Instruments Chrono Alarm with complete confidence, at no obligation, today.

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For years I suffered terribly from
LETHOLOGICA
until a nice doctor friend prescribed

**Mrs. Byrne's Dictionary
of Unusual, Obscure, and Preposterous Words**



Yes, for years I couldn't remember the right words. People I considered complete idiots were finishing my sentences for me. I was leaving blanks in my love letters and suicide notes. I found how bleak the future was when I tried a little cephalonamancy (fortunetelling by boiling an ass head), and tyromancy (fortunetelling by watching cheese coagulate).

I went from doctor to doctor looking for help, finally becoming a confirmed iatrapistiac (one having little faith in doctors), especially when one suggested I needed a hepaticocholangiocholecystenterostomy (look it up).

Then I found *Mrs. Byrne's Dictionary*. Now I can be unusual, obscure and preposterous by turns. Now I don't need an unabridged to go along with my collegiate. For entertainment now, I browse instead of groak (watching people silently while they eat, hoping they'll ask you to join them). I don't care anymore that we have a kakistocracy (government or rule by the worst).

Mrs. Byrne's Dictionary by Josefa Heifetz is better than omphaloskepsis!

GARDYLOO!

Herb Caen in the *San Francisco Chronicle*: "Wildly funny!"

Leslie Hanscom in *Newsday*: "You can dip in anywhere and come up with pay dirt . . . hundreds of words to stand your hair on end. Only a clinchpoop could scan these pages without a feeling of awe at the undiscovered boundaries of the English tongue!"

Nels Nelson in the *Philadelphia Daily News*: "A treasure! We should all kiss the publisher's feet!"

Camilla Snyder in the *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner*: "Hilariously useful . . . delicious!"

Donald B. Thackrey of *United Press International*: "A dictionary you can browse through and read like a book . . . a dictionary that will give great pleasure to many. Every page contains at least one nugget."

Sydney J. Harris in the *Chicago Daily News*: "There is no comparable work; I unreservedly recommend it."

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4/14/79