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## **A LAUREL BOOK**

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accepts the use of both *of* and *to* with *oblivious*: *The party appeared oblivious to (or of) the mounting pressures for political reform.*

**ob•long** (ŏb'long', -lŏng') *adj.* 1. *a.* Deviating from a square, circular, or spherical form by being elongated in one direction. *b.* Rectangular or elliptical. 2. *Bot.* Elongated. [*< Lat. oblongus.*] — **ob'long' n.**

**ob•lo•quy** (ŏb'lŏ-kwē) *n., pl. -quies.* 1. Abusively detractive language. 2. Disgrace; ill repute. [*< Lat. obloqui, speak against.*]

**ob•nox•ious** (ŏb-nŏk'shəs, ŏb-) *adj.* Very objectionable; odious. [*< Lat. obnoxius, punishable.*] — **ob•nox'ious•ly adv.** — **ob•nox'ious•ness n.**

**ob•boe** (ŏb'bō) *n.* A woodwind instrument with a conical bore and a double reed mouthpiece. [*< Fr. hautbois.*] — **ob'bo•ist n.**

**ob•scene** (ŏb-sēn', ŏb-) *adj.* 1. Offensive to accepted standards of decency. See *Syns* at *coarse*. 2. Inciting lust; lewd. 3. Offensive to the senses. [*< Lat. obscēnus.*] — **ob•scene'ly adv.** — **ob•scen'i•ty** (-sēn'i-tē) *n.*

**ob•scur•ant•ism** (ŏb-skyŏd'r'ən-tīz'əm, ŏb-, ŏb'skyŏd-rān'-) *n.* 1. The practice of deliberate abstruseness. 2. A policy of withholding information from the public. — **ob•scur'ant•ist n.**

**ob•scure** (ŏb-skyŏd'r', ŏb-) *adj.* -*scur•er*, -*scur•est*. 1. Dim; dark. 2. Indistinctly heard or perceived. 3. Out of sight; hidden. 4. Of undistinguished station or reputation. 5. Ambiguous or vague; unclear. — *v.* -*scur•ed*, -*scur•ing*. 1. To make dim or unclear. See *Syns* at *block*. 2. To conceal or cover. [*< Lat. obscurus.*] — **ob•scure'ly adv.** — **ob•scure'ness**, **ob•scu'ri•ty n.**

**ob•se•qui•ous** (ŏb-sē'kwē-əs, ŏb-) *adj.* Full of or exhibiting servile compliance. [*< Lat. obsequi, comply.*] — **ob•se'qui•ous•ly adv.** — **ob•se'qui•ous•ness n.**

**ob•se•quy** (ŏb'si-kwē) *n., pl. -quies.* A funeral rite or ceremony. [*< Lat. obsequium, compliance.*]

**ob•ser•vance** (ŏb-zŭr'vəns) *n.* 1. The act or practice of complying with a law, custom, command, or rule. 2. The custom of celebrating a holiday or other ritual occasion. 3. A customary rite or ceremony.

**ob•ser•vant** (ŏb-zŭr'vənt) *adj.* 1. Quick to perceive or apprehend; alert. See *Syns* at *careful*. 2. Diligent in observing a law, custom, or principle. — **ob•ser'vant•ly adv.**

**ob•ser•va•tion** (ŏb'zər-vā'shən) *n.* 1. The act of observing or the fact of being observed. 2. The act of noting and recording something with instruments. 3. A comment or remark. See *Syns* at *comment*. — **ob•ser•va'tion•al adj.** — **ob•ser•va'tion•al•ly adv.**

**ob•ser•va•to•ry** (ŏb-zŭr'vā-tŏr'ē, -tŏr'ē) *n., pl. -ries.* A place designed for making observations of astronomical, meteorological, or other natural phenomena.

**ob•serve** (ŏb-zŭrv') *v.* -*served*, -*serv•ing*. 1. To be or become aware of, esp. through careful attention; notice. 2. To watch attentively. 3. To make a systematic or scientific observation of. 4. To say casually; remark. 5. To adhere to or abide by. 6. To keep or celebrate (e.g., a holiday). [*< Lat. observare, abide by.*] — **ob•serv'a•ble adj.** — **ob•serv'a•bly adv.** — **ob•serv'er n.**

**ob•sess** (ŏb-sēs', ŏb-) *v.* To preoccupy the mind of excessively. [*Lat. obsidere, obsess-; ob-, on + sedere, sit; see sed-.*]

**ob•ses•sion** (ŏb-sēs'h'ən, ŏb-) *n.* 1. Compulsive preoccupation with a fixed idea or unwanted emotion. 2. A compulsive, often unreasonable idea or emotion. — **ob•ses'sion•al adj.** — **ob•ses'sive adj.** — **ob•ses'sive•ly adv.** — **ob•ses'sive•ness n.**

**ob•sid•i•an** (ŏb-sīd'ē-ən) *n.* A hard, usu. black or banded volcanic glass. [*Lat. obsidiānus.*]

**ob•so•les•cent** (ŏb'sŏ-lēs'ənt) *adj.* Becoming obsolete. [*< Lat. obsolēscere, go out of use.*] — **ob'so•les'cence n.** — **ob'so•les'cent•ly adv.**

**ob•so•lete** (ŏb'sŏ-lēt', ŏb'sŏ-lēt') *adj.* 1. No longer in use or in effect. 2. Outmoded in style or construction. [*Lat. obsolētus, p.part. of obsolēscere, fall into disuse.*] — **ob'so•lete'ly adv.** — **ob'so•lete'ness n.** — **ob'so•let'ism n.**

**ob•sta•cle** (ŏb'stŏ-kəl) *n.* One that opposes, stands in the way of, or holds up progress. [*< Lat. obstaculum < obstāre, impede; ob-, against + stāre, stand; see stā-.*]

**ob•ste•tri•cian** (ŏb'stī-trīsh'ən) *n.* A physician who specializes in obstetrics.

**ob•stet•rics** (ŏb-stēt'rīks, ŏb-) *n.* (*takes sing. or pl. v.*) The branch of medicine that deals with the care of women during and after pregnancy and childbirth. [*< Lat. obstetrix, midwife; ob-, opposite + stāre, stand; see stā-.*] — **ob•stet'ric**, **ob•stet'ri•cal adj.**

**ob•sti•nate** (ŏb'stŏ-nīt) *adj.* 1. Stubbornly adhering to an attitude, opinion, or course of action. 2. Difficult to manage, control, or subdue. [*< Lat. obstināre, persist. See stā-.*] — **ob'sti•na•cy** (-nŏ-sē) *n.* — **ob'sti•nate•ly adv.**

**ob•strep•er•ous** (ŏb-strēp'ər-əs, ŏb-) *adj.* Noisily and stubbornly defiant. [*< Lat. obstrepere, make a noise against.*] — **ob•strep'er•ous•ly adv.** — **ob•strep'er•ous•ness n.**

**ob•struct** (ŏb-strŭkt', ŏb-) *v.* 1. To block (a passage) with obstacles. See *Syns* at *block*. 2. To impede; retard. 3. To get in the way of; hide from sight. [*Lat. obstruere, obstruct-, pile up against.*] — **ob•struc'ter**, **ob•struc'tor n.** — **ob•struc'tive adj.** — **ob•struc'tive•ly adv.** — **ob•struc'tive•ness n.**

**ob•struc•tion** (ŏb-strŭk'shən, ŏb-) *n.* 1. An obstacle. 2. The act or an instance of obstructing. 3. The causing of a delay.

**ob•struc•tion•ist** (ŏb-strŭk'shŏ-nīst, ŏb-) *n.* One who systematically blocks or delays a process. — **ob•struc'tion•ism n.** — **ob•struc'tion•is'tic adj.**

**ob•tain** (ŏb-tān', ŏb-) *v.* 1. To succeed in gaining possession of; acquire. 2. To be accepted or customary. [*< Lat. obtinere.*] — **ob•tain'a•ble adj.** — **ob•tain'er n.**

**ob•trude** (ŏb-trŭd', ŏb-) *v.* -*trud•ed*, -*trud•ing*. 1. To impose (oneself or one's ideas) on others. 2. To thrust out; push forward. [*Lat. obtrudere.*] — **ob•trud'er n.** — **ob•tru'sion** (-trŭd'zhən) *n.* — **ob•tru'sive** (-trŭd'siv, -zīv) *adj.* — **ob•tru'sive•ly adv.**

**ob•tuse** (ŏb-tŭs', -tyŭs', ŏb-) *adj.* -*tus•er*, -*tus•est*. 1. Lacking quickness of perception or intellect. 2. Not sharp, pointed, or acute in form; blunt. [*< Lat. obtusus,*