

(D)coding

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The answer to the meta is an ironic adjective

ACROSS

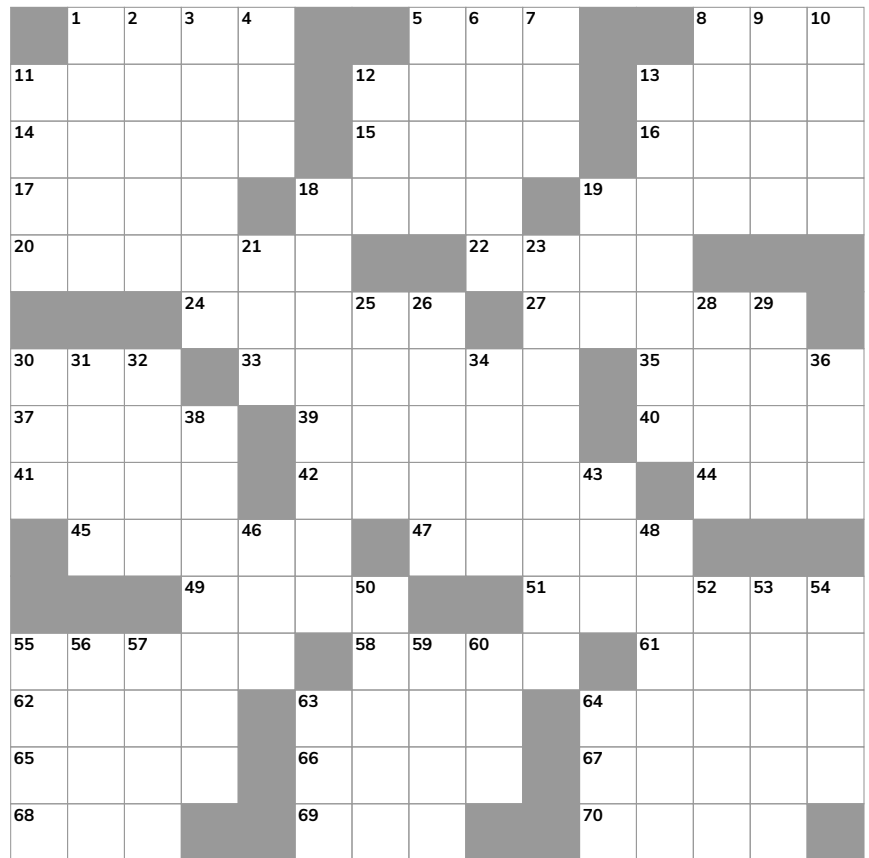
- 1 *By way of, for short
5 Event hosts (abbr.)
8 Music media that I still prefer
11 Renoir's "Girl With ___"
12 Embedded spy
13 Political party member responsible for discipline
14 *Religious (but with a hint of moral superiority)
15 46 down, e.g.
16 "___ a care!"
17 Reaches an agreement (with "a deal")
18 Drew Barrymore movie, ___ After
19 Like a highway
20 Mansplain
22 Bowline, e.g.
24 *Neutral phonetic sound
27 Get your own back (with "revenge")
30 BFFs 4 ___!
33 "I Say A Little Prayer" writer, Warwick
35 Grammatical feature of verbs that allow speakers to show some attitude
37 "The end is ___!"
39 Cause of the current pandemic, and a hint for how to (d)code the starred entries
40 "O Lord, ___ to you..." (Ps. 141:1)
41 Nothing
42 Emphatic confirmation
44 Undivided
45 Internet slang for pirated software
47 *Jumps
49 Requirement of the Iditarod
51 American lizard
55 Given name of the star, creator, writer, director, and executive producer of Chad
58 Expression of great appreciation (and, yes, physical attraction)
61 Nickname for a Ford Zephyr or a Ford Zodiac, perhaps?
62 "Understood." (response to 7 down)
63 Digital assistant on some phones
64 *List with an order
65 Affixes (with "to")
66 Bread baker
67 People group of the Wissel Lakes area of West Papua, Indonesia
68 15 across fluid
69 "___, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death..." (Ps. 23:4)
70 *Mon ___!

DOWN

- 1 Waters down
2 Catchy pop songs are full of them
3 Awakens
4 Opposite of downs
5 What Oliver asked for
6 Office worker
7 "Understand?" (question before 62 across)
8 Actor who does his own amazing stunts, Jackie ___
9 Seedy bar
10 Got a ticket
11 Capital of Samoa
12 Music video populariser (abbr.)
13 "I know you are, but ___!"
18 Make something more upstanding (but in America)
19 Bagel topping
21 Trip switch (abbr.)
23 "This flat tire ___."
25 What a 15 across is made of
26 Common name for the incus bone
28 Pixar movie that deals with mortality (actually, this is true of a lot of them!)

- 29 Rip ___ ("Men In Black" actor)
30 Tim & Neil Finn's band, Split ___
31 E. M. Forster novel, "A Room with a ___"
32 Site of the Taj Mahal
34 Brood of pheasants
36 Colouring substance
38 Game played with children that is murder on parents' knees
43 Dental X-ray of the upper and lower jaw (abbr.)
46 Stately shade provider
48 Music teaching method
50 First shot off a tee

- 52 A suffix in the names of plant families
53 South Pacific nation
54 Japanese name that means "bright" and "clever" (and possibly also "sky" and "tinkling sound")
55 Lice eggs on scalps
56 Land east of the Urals
57 Penetrate slowly
59 Length squared, for a square
60 Come out on top
63 Protein derived from beans
64 ...And that's my mathematical proof completed successfully (abbr.)



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