

QUOTIDIAN

FEBRUARY 28, 2005 VOL. 1 NO. 6



QUOTES OF THE WEEK

“Misogynist: A man who hates women as much as women hate one another.”
—H.L. Mencken

“When the candles are out all women are fair.”
—Plutarch

“Heaven has no rage like love to hatred turned,
Nor hell a fury like a woman scorned.”
—William Congreve
from *The Mourning Bride*, III.viii

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

FEBRUARY 28, 1861: Congress creates Colorado territory. Prior to 1851, Colorado was home to the Ute, Arapaho, and Cheyenne tribes, and was nearly unpopulated by Anglo settlers. Then, in July of 1858, a group of prospectors found gold in some streambeds near modern Denver, and before long, the Pike's Peak gold rush was on. Thousands of settlers descended on the region and pushed further and further west, throwing up mining towns like Central City, Idaho Springs, and Blackhawk whenever a prospect was found. The city of Denver grew up on the edge of the mountains and served as a supply center for the miners, and before long, the region's population grew sufficiently large that it qualified for territorial status. Congressional designation of new western states had been stalled for several years as the nation fought over the issue of allowing slavery into new territories; however, by 1861 the south had seceded, and Congress was free to begin creating free-labor states in the west.

MARCH 4, 1861: President Abraham Lincoln inaugurated into his first term. He entered into the presidency at a dark hour, for seven states had seceded since his election in November of 1860, and numerous federal forts and armories had thence been seized. The new president of the Confederacy, Jefferson Davis, had been sworn in two weeks earlier, and the dark cloud of war hung heavy over the nation.

In his inaugural address, Lincoln thought it prudent to avoid any mention of his Republican party platform, which advocated an end to the African slave trade and any further legalization of slavery in the western territories. Instead, Lincoln said he had “no purpose...to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists.”

Continued on page 3, column 2

3 WORDS

Memorize these by week's end and you shall quickly develop an enviable lexicon.

This week's theme: women and femininity.

sororal (suh-ROR-ul) *adjective*

1. of, relating to, or characteristic of a sister; sisterly (*fraternal* is the male equivalent)

Ex: Tennis has attracted a whole new following: avid fans of the intense, sororal showdowns between Venus and Serena Williams.

misandry *noun*

1. hatred or oppression of men (*misogyny* is the female counterpart)

Ex. Some women are so scarred by turbulent breakups that a deep misandry afflicts them for the rest of their lives.

muliebrity (myoo-lee-EB-ri-tee) *noun*

1. womanly qualities
2. femininity (*virility* is the male equivalent)

Ex. John found the muliebrity of the club quite overwhelming, so he promptly turned about and made for the doors.



ETYMOLOGY 101

As promised, this week's "3 Words" are all somehow related. I must give due credit to a fantastic online site dedicated to the English language (and others as well), www.wordsmith.org, which dedicates each new week to words of a certain theme. This week's etymology lesson, and all hence, will explain the origins of one of the 3 Words listed on the front page. This week's spotlight word is *misandry*, since it provides such ample opportunity to examine our language.

Misandry is a combination of two Greek words: *misos* (hatred) + *andros* (man).^{*} The latter part shows up in two popular names: Alexander (from the Greek Alexandros, a combination of *alexein* "to ward off, defend" + *andros* "man") and Andrew (from the French André, which was ultimately derived from the Latin and Greek *andreios*). The names mean "defender of men" and "manly," respectively.

The word **misogynist** is also a Greek combination: *misos* (hatred) + *gyne* (woman). A woman goes to a **gynecologist**, and one who has many wives is engaged in **polygyny** (not to be confused with **polygamy**, which is a combination of *poly* "many" + *gamos* "marriage").

Yet another related word is **androgynous**, a combination of *andros* (man) and *gyne* (woman). It should come as no surprise that the word means "having both masculine and feminine characteristics."

^{*}The Greek word for man is actually *aner*, which "originates" from the word *andros*.

WELL I'LL BE!

THE ANSWERS TO TWO QUESTIONS YOU NEVER ASKED

Where do we get the term "peeping Tom"?

As we all know, a "peeping Tom" is one who peeps through his window at night, often in the hope of seeing another woman undressed. The term comes from an old 11th-century legend, of Lady Godiva of Coventry. In this legend, Leofric, Saxon Earl of Mercia and Lord of Coventry, imposed burdensome tolls on his subjects. His wife, Lady Godiva, was sympathetic to the town's plight, and appealed to her husband time and again to repeal the taxes. After much aggravation, Leofric agreed to grant her request and repeal the taxes if she would ride naked through the town. Lady Godiva took her lord at his word and issued a proclamation to all the townspeople, requesting that they remain indoors and close their shutters while she rode through town clothed in nothing but her long hair and her chastity. Everyone complied, with the exception of Tom the tailor, who bored a hole through his shutter that he might see Lady Godiva pass. It is said he was stricken blind for his impudence; however, he has been preserved in history and known as Peeping Tom ever since. Leofric kept his promise, and the oppressive tolls were abolished.

The incident was commemorated by a stained glass window in St. Michael's Church in Coventry, and for centuries there was an effigy of "Peeping Tom of Coventry" in a corner of one of the public buildings of the town. At one time, Lady Godiva's ride was the theme of an annual pageant in Coventry.

An alternate version of the legend, which has some basis in historical fact, holds that Lady Godiva made no effort to notify the townspeople. At the time, the human body was viewed as one of the highest expressions of nature's perfection (a view borrowed from the ancient Greeks), and there was no shame in showing it publicly. The bit about Tom was supposedly not added until the mid-17th century, likely by Christians who viewed the tale as blasphemous.

Why are "monkey wrenches" so named?

It is presumed that the "monkey" in "monkey wrench" is a corruption of the proper name Moncke (pronounced *mun-ke*). Wrenches with moving jaws adjustable by a screw were first made by London blacksmith Charles Moncke in the mid-19th century, and were originally called Moncke wrenches. Since most people were ignorant as to the origin of the word, they assumed it was "monkey," and the corrupted name stuck.

Source: George Stimpson, *A Book About A Thousand Things*, pgs. 296, 287.

LITERARY GENIUS

In keeping with this week's pseudo-theme of femininity, I have chosen a selection from *Anna Karenina*, which is widely regarded as one of Leo Tolstoy's finest achievements. It is similar to *Age of Innocence* in that it takes an uncompromising look at one nation's high society. Here, it is 19th-century Russia's. The main character, Anna, becomes infatuated with dashing military hero Vronsky, and struggles to conceal and live with the ensuing affair.

FROM *ANNA KARENINA*

Leo Tolstoy

Chapter XXII

BEFORE VRONSKY LEFT for the elections, Anna, having reflected that the scenes that repeatedly took place between them whenever he went away could only alienate him and not bind him to her more closely, made up her mind to exert every effort possible to endure their separation calmly. But the chilly, stern look he gave her when he came to tell her he was going away hurt her, and even before he left, her composure was destroyed.

Later on, as she meditated in solitude on that look, which expressed his right to freedom, she came to only one conclusion, as she always did: an awareness of her own degradation.

He has the right to leave wherever and whenever he wants to, she thought. Not only to go away, but to leave me. He has every right, and I have none at all. But since he knows that he oughtn't to do it...But what did he do? He looked at me with a chilly, severe expression. Of course it's indefinite, and intangible, but it was not there before, and that look means a great deal. That look proves that he has begun to grow cold.

And though she was sure that he had begun to grow cold there was still nothing she could do; it was impossible for her to change her relations with him. It was just as it had been before—it was by love alone, by her charms, that she could hold him. And just as before, it was only by busying herself during the day and taking morphia at night that she could stifle the terrifying thoughts of what would happen if he fell out of love with her. There was, to be sure, one other means left: not to hold him, for which she wanted nothing beyond his love, but to unite herself with him by putting herself in such a position that he could not abandon her. This means was divorce and marriage. And she began to desire that; she made up her mind to agree to it the very first time either he or Stiva brought it up.

With thoughts like these she spent five days without him—the five days he was supposed to be away.



THIS WEEK...

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Lincoln's address initially closed with a question for the south: "Shall it be peace or sword?" After a suggestion from his secretary of state William H. Seward, he moderated his tone and ended on these now famous words:

I am loath to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield, and patriot grave, to every living heart and hearthstone, all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.

Four years later, Lincoln ended his second inaugural address with similar loquacity:

Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away.



*Photo by Alexander Gardner
November 8, 1863*