

# My very first L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X document: The Dictionary of Shame

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## □ *proliferation*

I Proliferation \Pro\*li\*fer\*a"tion\, n.

[1913 Webster]

1. (Biol.) The continuous development of cells in tissue formation; cell formation. —Virchow.

[1913 Webster]

2. (Zo[o]l.) The production of numerous zooids by budding, especially when buds arise from other buds in succession.

[1913 Webster]

## □ *conjecture*

I Conjecture \Con\*jec"ture\, v. t. [imp. & p. p. {Conjectured}; p. pr. & vb. n. {Conjecturing}.] [Cf. F. conjecturer. Cf. {Conject}.]

To arrive at by conjecture; to infer on slight evidence; to surmise; to guess; to form, at random, opinions concerning.

[1913 Webster]

Human reason can then, at the best, but conjecture what will be. —South.

[1913 Webster]

Conjecture \Con\*jec"ture\, v. i.

To make conjectures; to surmise; to guess; to infer; to form an opinion; to imagine.

[1913 Webster]

Conjecture \Con\*jec"ture\ (; 135?), n. [L. conjectura, fr. conjicere, conjectum, to throw together, infer, conjecture; con- + jacere to throw: cf. F. conjecturer. See {Jet} a shooting forth.]

An opinion, or judgment, formed on defective or presumptive evidence; probable inference; surmise; guess; suspicion.

[1913 Webster]

He [Herodotus] would thus have corrected his first

loose conjecture by a real study of nature. —Whewell.

[1913 Webster]

Conjectures, fancies, built on nothing firm. —Milton.

[1913 Webster]

## □ *sardonic*

I Sardonic \Sar\*don"ic\, a.

Of, pertaining to, or resembling, a kind of linen made at Colchis.

[1913 Webster]

Sardonic \Sar\*don"ic\, a. [F. sardonique, L. sardonius, Gr. ?, ?, perhaps fr. ? to grin like a dog, or from a certain plant of Sardinia, Gr. ?, which was said to screw up the face of the eater.]

Forced; unnatural; insincere; hence, derisive, mocking, malignant, or bitterly sarcastic; — applied only to a laugh, smile, or some facial semblance of gayety.

[1913 Webster]

Where strained, sardonic smiles are glozing still,  
And grief is forced to laugh against her will. —Sir H.  
Wotton.

[1913 Webster]

The scornful, ferocious, sardonic grin of a bloody  
ruffian. —Burke.

[1913 Webster]

{Sardonic grin} or {Sardonic laugh}, an old medical term for  
a spasmodic affection of the muscles of the face, giving  
it an appearance of laughter.

[1913 Webster]

□ *interstice*

I Interstice \In\*ter"stice\ (?; 277), n.; pl. {Interstices}. [L.

interstitium a pause, interval; inter between + sistere to  
set, fr. stare to stand: cf. F. interstice. See {Stand}.]

[1913 Webster]

1. That which intervenes between one thing and another;  
especially, a space between things closely set, or between  
the parts which compose a body; a narrow chink; a crack; a  
crevice; a hole; an interval; as, the interstices of a  
wall.

[1913 Webster]

2. An interval of time; specifically (R. C. Ch.), in the  
plural, the intervals which the canon law requires between  
the reception of the various degrees of orders.

[1913 Webster]

Nonobservance of the interstices . . . is a sin.  
—Addis &  
Arnold.

[1913 Webster]

□ *effervesce*

I Effervesce \Ef'fer\*vesce"\, v. i. [imp. & p. p. {Effervesced};

p. pr. & vb. n. {Effervescing}.] [L. effervescere; ex +  
fervescere to begin boiling, incho., fr. fervere to boil. See  
{Fervent}.]

1. To be in a state of natural ebullition; to bubble and  
hiss, as fermenting liquors, or any fluid, when some part  
escapes in a gaseous form.

[1913 Webster]

2. To exhibit, in lively natural expression, feelings that  
can not be repressed or concealed; as, to effervesce with  
joy or merriment.

□ *ebullition*

I Ebullition \Eb'ul\*li"tion\", n. [F. [e]bullition, L. ebullitio,  
fr. ebullire. See {Ebullient}.]

1. A boiling or bubbling up of a liquid; the motion produced  
in a liquid by its rapid conversion into vapor.

[1913 Webster]

2. Effervescence occasioned by fermentation or by any other  
process which causes the liberation of a gas or an  
a["e]riform fluid, as in the mixture of an acid with a  
carbonated alkali. [Formerly written {bullition}.]

[1913 Webster]

3. A sudden burst or violent display; an outburst; as, an  
ebullition of anger or ill temper.

[1913 Webster]

□ *serendipity*

□ *impetus*

- I Impetus \Im"pe'tus\ ([i^]m"p[-e]\*t[u^]s), n. [L., fr. impetere to rush upon, attack; pref. im- in + petere to fall upon, seek. See {Petition}.]
1. A property possessed by a moving body in virtue of its weight and its motion; the force with which any body is driven or impelled; momentum.  
[1913 Webster]
- Note: Momentum is the technical term, impetus its popular equivalent, yet differing from it as applied commonly to bodies moving or moved suddenly or violently, and indicating the origin and intensity of the motion, rather than its quantity or effectiveness.  
[1913 Webster]
2. Fig.: Impulse; incentive; stimulus; vigor; force; as, the President's strong recommendation provided the impetus needed to pass the campaign reform bill. --Buckle.  
[1913 Webster +PJC]
  3. (Gun.) The altitude through which a heavy body must fall to acquire a velocity equal to that with which a ball is discharged from a piece.  
[1913 Webster]

□ *phthisis*

- I Phthisis \Phthi"sis\, n. [L., fr. Gr. ?, fr. ? to pass or waste away: cf. F. phthisie.] (Med.)
- A wasting or consumption of the tissues. The term was formerly applied to many wasting diseases, but is now usually restricted to pulmonary phthisis, or consumption. See {Consumption}.  
[1913 Webster]
- {Fibroid phthisis}. See under {Fibroid}.  
[1913 Webster]

□ *mendacious*

- I Mendacious \Men\*da"ci-ous\, a. [L. mendax, -acis, lying, cf. mentiri to lie.]
1. Given to deception or falsehood; lying; as, a mendacious person.  
[1913 Webster]
  2. False; counterfeit; containing falsehood; as, a mendacious statement.  
[1913 Webster] -- {Men\*da"ci-ous\*ly}, adv. -- {Men\*da"ci-ous\*ness}, n.  
[1913 Webster]

□ *ravine*

- I Raven \Rav"en\ (r{a^}v"n), n. [OF. ravine impetuosity, violence, F. ravine ravine. See {Ravine}, {Rapine}.] [Written also {ravin}, and {ravine}.]
1. Rapine; rapacity. --Ray.  
[1913 Webster]
  2. Prey; plunder; food obtained by violence.  
[1913 Webster]
- Raven \Rav"en\, v. i.

To prey with rapacity; to be greedy; to show rapacity.  
 [Written also {ravin}, and {ravine}.]  
 [1913 Webster]

Benjamin shall raven as a wolf. —Gen. xlix.  
 27.

[1913 Webster]

## □ *rapacity*

I Rapacity \Ra\*pac"i\*ty\ (r[a]\*p[a^s][i^]\*t[y^]), n. [L.  
 rapacitas: cf. F. rapacit[e]. See {Rapacious}.]

1. The quality of being rapacious; rapaciousness; ravenousness; as, the rapacity of pirates; the rapacity of wolves.  
 [1913 Webster]
2. The act or practice of extorting or exacting by oppressive injustice; exorbitant greediness of gain. "The rapacity of some ages." —Sprat.  
 [1913 Webster]

## □ *contingent*

I Contingent \Con\*tin"gent\, n.

1. An event which may or may not happen; that which is unforeseen, undetermined, or dependent on something future; a contingency.  
 [1913 Webster]  
 His understanding could almost pierce into future contingents. —South.  
 [1913 Webster]
2. That which falls to one in a division or apportionment among a number; a suitable share; proportion; esp., a quota of troops.  
 [1913 Webster]  
 From the Alps to the border of Flanders, contingents were required . . . 200,000 men were in arms.  
 —Milman.

[1913 Webster]

Contingent \Con\*tin"gent\, a. [L. contingens, —entis, p. pr. of contingere to touch on all sides, to happen; con- + tangere to touch; cf. F. contingent. See {Tangent}, {Tact}.]

1. Possible, or liable, but not certain, to occur; incidental; casual.  
 [1913 Webster]  
 Weighing so much actual crime against so much contingent advantage. —Burke.  
 [1913 Webster]
2. Dependent on that which is undetermined or unknown; as, the success of his undertaking is contingent upon events which he can not control. "Uncertain and contingent causes." —Tillotson.  
 [1913 Webster]
3. (Law) Dependent for effect on something that may or may not occur; as, a contingent estate.  
 [1913 Webster]  
 If a contingent legacy be left to any one when he attains, or if he attains, the age of twenty-one.  
 —Blackstone.  
 [1913 Webster]

## □ *respice*

- I Respite \Res"pite\ (r?s"p?t), n. [OF. respit, F. r[e]pit, from L. respectus respect, regard, delay, in LL., the deferring of a day. See {Respect}.]
1. A putting off of that which was appointed; a postponement or delay.  
[1913 Webster]  
I crave but four day's respite. —Shak.  
[1913 Webster]
  2. Temporary intermission of labor, or of any process or operation; interval of rest; pause; delay. "Without more respite." —Chaucer.  
[1913 Webster]  
Some pause and respite only I require. —Denham.  
[1913 Webster]
  3. (Law)
    - (a) Temporary suspension of the execution of a capital offender; reprieve.
    - (b) The delay of appearance at court granted to a jury beyond the proper term.  
[1913 Webster]
- Syn: Pause; interval; stop; cessation; delay; postponement; stay; reprieve.  
[1913 Webster]
- Respite \Res"pite\, v. t. [imp. & p. p. {Respited}; p. pr. & vb. n. {Respiring}.] [OF. respiter, LL. respectare. See {Respite}, n.]
- To give or grant a respite to. Specifically:
- (a) To delay or postpone; to put off.
  - (b) To keep back from execution; to reprieve.  
[1913 Webster]  
Forty days longer we do respite you. —Shak.  
[1913 Webster]
  - (c) To relieve by a pause or interval of rest. "To respite his day labor with repast." —Milton.  
[1913 Webster]

□ *quixotic*

- I Quixotic \Quix\*ot"ic\ (kw[i^]ks\*[o^]t[i^]k), a.
1. Like Don Quixote; romantic to extravagance; prone to pursue unrealizable goals; absurdly chivalric; apt to be deluded. See also {quixotism}. "Feats of quixotic gallantry." —Prescott.  
[1913 Webster]
  2. Like the deeds of Don Quixote; ridiculously impractical; unachievable; extravagantly romantic; doomed to failure; as, a quixotic quest.  
[PJC]  
The word "quixotic" . . . has entered the common language, with the meaning "hopelessly naive and idealistic," "ridiculously impractical," "doomed to fail." That this epithet can be used now in an exclusively pejorative sense not only shows that we have ceased to read Cervantes and to understand his character, but more fundamentally it reveals that our culture has drifted away from its spiritual roots. —Simon Leys

(N. Y. Review  
of Books, June  
11, 1998, p.  
35)

[PJC]

□ *dilettante*

- I Dilettante \Dil'et\*tan"te\, n.; pl. {Dilettanti}. [It., prop. p. pr. of dillettare to take delight in, fr. L. delectare to delight. See {Delight}, v. t.]  
 An admirer or lover of the fine arts; popularly, an amateur; especially, one who follows an art or a branch of knowledge, desultorily, or for amusement only.  
 [1913 Webster]  
 The true poet is not an eccentric creature, not a mere artist living only for art, not a dreamer or a dilettante, sipping the nectar of existence, while he keeps aloof from its deeper interests. —J. C. Shairp.

[1913 Webster]

□ *enamel*

- I Enamel \En\*am"el\, v. t. [imp. & p. p. {Enameled} or {Enamelled}; p. pr. & vb. n. {Enameling} or {Enamelling}.]  
 1. To lay enamel upon; to decorate with enamel whether inlaid or painted.  
 [1913 Webster]  
 2. To variegate with colors as if with enamel.  
 [1913 Webster]  
 Oft he [the serpent] bowed  
 His turret crest and sleek enameled neck. —Milton.  
 [1913 Webster]  
 3. To form a glossy surface like enamel upon; as, to enamel card paper; to enamel leather or cloth.  
 [1913 Webster]  
 4. To disguise with cosmetics, as a woman's complexion.  
 [1913 Webster]  
 Enamel \En\*am"el\, v. i.  
 To practice the art of enameling.  
 [1913 Webster]  
 Enamel \En\*am"el\, a.  
 Relating to the art of enameling; as, enamel painting.  
 —Tomlinson.  
 [1913 Webster]  
 Enamel \En\*am"el\, n. [Pref. en- + amel. See {Amel}, {Smelt}, v. t.]  
 1. A variety of glass, used in ornament, to cover a surface, as of metal or pottery, and admitting of after decoration in color, or used itself for inlaying or application in varied colors.  
 [1913 Webster]  
 2. (Min.) A glassy, opaque bead obtained by the blowpipe.  
 [1913 Webster]  
 3. That which is enameled; also, any smooth, glossy surface, resembling enamel, especially if variegated.  
 [1913 Webster]  
 4. (Anat.) The intensely hard calcified tissue entering into the composition of teeth. It merely covers the exposed parts of the teeth of man, but in many animals is intermixed in various ways with the dentine and cement.  
 [1913 Webster]  
 5. Any one of various preparations for giving a smooth, glossy surface like that of enamel.  
 [Webster 1913 Suppl.]  
 6. A cosmetic intended to give the appearance of a smooth and beautiful complexion.  
 [Webster 1913 Suppl.]

{Enamel painting}, painting with enamel colors upon a ground  
of metal, porcelain, or the like, the colors being  
afterwards fixed by fire.

{Enamel paper}, paper glazed a metallic coating.  
[1913 Webster]