

# World views: ways of thinking

## A People in relation to their beliefs

person	definition	related words
<b>adherent (of)</b>	a person who supports a particular idea or party	adherence, to adhere to
<b>convert (to)</b>	someone who has taken on a new set of beliefs	conversion, to convert
<b>fanatic</b>	(disapproving) someone with a very strong belief	fanaticism, fanatical
<b>radical</b>	someone who believes there should be extreme political change, either of a left- or right-wing nature	radicalism
<b>reactionary</b>	(disapproving) someone opposed to change or new ideas	reaction
<b>bigot</b>	(disapproving) someone with strong unreasonable beliefs who thinks that anyone with other beliefs is wrong	bigotry, bigoted

## B A definition of one world view

**Feminism:** The modern feminist movement stems from the middle of the 1960s in North America. Basically the movement seeks equal political and social rights for women. The main theoretical **assumption**<sup>1</sup> shared by all branches of the movement **derives from**<sup>2</sup> the belief that there has been a historical tradition of male exploitation of women. Feminists are anxious to **eradicate**<sup>3</sup> this exploitation. Feminism is a fairly general label attached not to a set of universally accepted **postulates**<sup>4</sup> but to a range of beliefs with little in common, save a desire to raise **consciousness**<sup>5</sup> and to **usher in**<sup>6</sup> a more equal society.

- <sup>1</sup> unquestioning acceptance that something is true
- <sup>2</sup> has its origins in
- <sup>3</sup> abolish or get rid of
- <sup>4</sup> basic principles (verb to postulate)
- <sup>5</sup> awareness
- <sup>6</sup> introduce

## C Other words and expressions relating to believing

**credible:** believable      The schoolboy produced a barely **credible** excuse for arriving late.

**credulous:** too willing to believe what you're told

He's a **credulous** fool to believe what the management says.

**incredulous:** not wanting or able to believe something

I was **incredulous** when he told me he was quitting his job to go to New Zealand.

**credence:** (formal) acceptance that something is true

This document **gives/lends/adds credence** to Professor Ray's hypothesis.

**gullible:** easily tricked into believing things that may not be true      a **gullible** person

**ingenuous:** trusting, sincere, often in a way that seems foolish

It was rather **ingenuous** of Anna to ask a complete stranger to share a taxi with her.

(im)**plausible:** (un)convincing      a **plausible** argument      an **implausible** excuse

If you (formal) **ascribe** or **attribute** something to someone or something, you consider something to be caused, created or possessed by that person or thing.

Many scholars **ascribe/attribute** this anonymous poem to Dante.

a **tenet:** one of the principles on which a belief is based      the main **tenets** of liberalism

**give someone the benefit of the doubt:** to accept that someone is telling the truth even though it is not certain      We should **give her the benefit of the doubt**.

If you **take something with a pinch of salt**, you do not totally believe what you are told.

You should **take** what he says **with a pinch of salt** – he's inclined to exaggerate.

If you don't believe what someone is saying you can say informally:

I don't buy that!

What d'you take me for?

Pull the other one!

A likely story!

I wasn't born yesterday!

I'll believe it when I see it!

## Exercises

**41.1** Write the name of one person you know who could be described by each of the words in A.

EXAMPLE an adherent of the Liberal Party - my Uncle Jim.

**41.2** Find words and expressions in the text in B meaning:

- |  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| 1 has its origin in (find two expressions) | 4 totally          |
| 2 wants to achieve                         | 5 variety          |
| 3 very much want to                        | 6 not sharing much |

**41.3** Look at C and circle the correct word in the sentences below.

- 1 A gullible person believes everything even if it is plausible/implausible.
- 2 I don't find his story at all credible/credulous.
- 3 When marking exams, try to give candidates the advantage/benefit of the doubt.
- 4 A likely/probable story! I don't believe one word you said.
- 5 That may be your view, but I don't buy/sell it.
- 6 It is better to take his promises with a pinch of salt/pepper.
- 7 The discovery of some ancient pieces of pottery lends consciousness/credence to the theory that there was once a Roman settlement there.
- 8 The play has been assumed/attributed to Shakespeare.

**41.4** Choose the best words from the box to fill the gaps in the sentences below.

adherents	ascribe	converts	credence	eradicate
ingenuous	pinch	postulate	tenets	

- 1 The party claims that its primary aim is to ..... poverty.
- 2 It has been said that ..... to a religion can often be much more active supporters of the religion than people who were born into it.
- 3 It was rather ..... of him to suggest that many criminals would hand in their illegal weapons if they were promised an amnesty.
- 4 One of the basic ..... of Marxism is that economic relationships determine the nature of society.
- 5 Many of the self-professed ..... of this philosophy have never even read its basic texts.
- 6 Historians ..... the origins of this philosophy to Ancient Greece.
- 7 These findings lend ..... to the case put forward by the government.
- 8 Advances in modern technology have enabled contemporary physicists to ..... new theories about the origins of the universe.
- 9 I take anything said by an election candidate with a ..... of salt.

**41.5** Write six of the words and phrases in C in a sentence that is personally meaningful for you.

EXAMPLE You shouldn't be so gullible and believe everything sales people tell you.

FOLLOW UP

Use an Internet search engine such as Google [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) to look up a world view that interests you, e.g. feminism, Marxism, humanism, Buddhism or any -ism that you want to research. Make notes about (a) the origins of the -ism, (b) what its basic tenets are, and (c) what differences there are between its different branches (if it has them).