

英 语 文 化 系 列 读 物

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A Reader of Culture in English

丛书主编 / 杨敏 李敏

休闲广场

Leisure Square



石油大学出版社

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图书在版编目(CIP)数据

英语文化读物/杨敏主编.-东营:石油大学出版社,
1999.11

ISBN 7-5636-1285-8

I. 英… II. 杨… III. 英语-语言读物 IV. H319.4

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(1999)第 68150 号

英语文化系列读物(VII)

休闲广场

吴 红 李英春 张百迪 主编

出版者:石油大学出版社(山东 东营,邮编 257062)

网 址:<http://sunctr.hdpu.edu.cn/~upcpress>

印刷者:山东省东营新华印刷厂

发行者:石油大学出版社(电话 0546—8392563)

开 本:850×1168 1/32 印张:3.75 字数:84 千字

版 次:1999 年 11 月第 1 版 1999 年 11 月第 1 次印刷

印 数:1—3000 册

定 价:5.00 元 (全九册) 45.00 元

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**New Outlooks
on Entertainment
and Leisure**

娱乐休闲新观念

Be Playful

【导读:随着年龄的增长,人们承受来自社会和家庭的压力也越来越大,为此,他们终日疲于奔命,从而忽略了很多生活的乐趣。其实,只要你放慢脚步,你将找回那份久违的感觉。】

I still recall a scene from an otherwise totally forgettable movie I saw many years ago. A business executive in a suit and tie, carrying a briefcase, is walking home after a typically stressful day at the office. He passes a neighbour's lawn where a group of small children are playing with a garden hose that someone has left running on the grass.

The man watches the laughing, screaming children with a wistful smile on his face. Then, after looking furtively around to make sure no-one is looking, he throws off his business suit, drops the briefcase, and rushes to join the fun.

The man's face is filled with joyful abandon as, clad only in shorts and vest, he turns his body to meet the full impact of the gushing hose. The next scene shows him back in his suit, continuing his trudge home and looking a little sheepish, as he adjusts his features to assume, once more, the appearance of sedate respectability.

How often do we look back with nostalgia at the pure,

spontaneous joys of childhood—to a time when joy was pure and full, unchecked by the feelings of guilt or concern for propriety? The thrill of a forbidden expedition to a pond or **monsoon** drain with its promised yield of fish, **tadpoles** and other exciting creatures. The tremulous delight of watching that **clandestine** matchstick flare up between one's fingers.

I remember the time when, as a small child, my eager little fingers closed upon the *hong bao* that I had been given by a visitor on the first day of the Chinese New Year, and felt—joy of joys! —the welcome flatness of paper money instead of the hardness of **paltry** coins.

I shouted for joy and called attention to my new wealth, unaware of my mother's embarrassment as she cast a quick glance at the visitor. Later, after the guest had left, she told me in a severe voice never to do such a "shameful" thing again. What would people think?

Oh for the return of lost innocence and the capacity for pure joy. Yet the truth is that, no matter how endearing a child's **spontaneity** of feelings and actions, it would be unrealistic to allow these emotions to carry over to adult life. The business of living is a serious one, necessarily regulated by an array of customs, codes and norms to ensure the smooth function of day-to-day life; in the home or at work, in the private or public domain.

There are myriad "does and don't" related to polite, socially acceptable behaviour, that ensure we act in the correct

Be Playful

way, use the proper forms of address, and express our feelings in ways that do not slight or offend others.

Yet the need for playfulness seems to be a permanent feature of the human condition. It is inseparable, even in the most serious adult. Sometimes, during parties and games, this force is allowed to break through the smooth surface of social respectability; for a few brief moments it is all right for adults to engage in horseplay.

Witness the wild abandon with which party revelers throw each other into the swimming pool, do crazy masks and play silly games; mark the total **exuberance** of footballers **pummelling** each other after a goal. The rest of the time we are required to be mature, disciplined adults carrying on the serious business of living.

But oh, once again, for the return of lost innocence! The greatest loss of all, even greater than the loss of pure enjoyment, is the loss of a sense of wonder. This is the special gift of childhood; the ability to see the world with fresh eyes, treating the most ordinary objects and happenings with the keen curiosity and fascination.

To **reclaim** the child's sense of wonder, to be attentive to the marvels that surround us, whether these be the every day beauties of nature, the intricacies of human contact, or the extraordinary achievements of modern technology, is not only to save ourselves from the **tedium** of living, but to enrich our lives with a special spiritual dimension.

Notes:

1. **hose**[həʊz]: 软管(用以救火、浇花等)。
2. **wistful**['wɪstfʊl]: 愁闷而渴望的,为此种欲望所激动的。
3. **furtively**['fɜ:tɪvli]: 偷偷摸摸地。
4. **gushing**['gʌʃɪŋ]: 涌出,进出水的。
5. **trudge**[trʌdʒ]: 疲累或沉重地走,跋涉。
6. **sedate**[si'deɪt]: 安静的,肃穆的,庄重的。
7. **monsoon**[mən'su:n]: 季风。
8. **tadpole**['tædpəʊl]: 蝌蚪。
9. **clandestine**[klæn'destɪn]: 秘密的,秘密而做的。
10. **paltry**['pɔ:ltɪ]: 不重要的,微不足道的。
11. **spontaneity**[ˌspɒntə'ni:ɪti]: 自然产生,自动行为。
12. **exuberance**[ɪg'zju:bərəns]: 活力充沛。
13. **pummel**['pʌməl]: 以拳连击。
14. **reclaim**[ri'kleɪm]: 改正,纠正。
15. **tedium**['ti:djəm]: 单调,乏味。

Husband-Hunting

【导读：爱情是人类永恒的主题，但很多人，尤其是女性，却常常为找不到理想的伴侣而苦恼。那么，究竟原因何在呢？您将在本文中找到部分答案。】

Why is it so difficult for a woman over 25 to find a husband? This question is a household topic in Guiyang city, capital of the southwestern province of Guizhou. Sociologists have recently conducted a survey **to shed some light on** the problem.

The first popular belief challenged by the survey is that young women **outnumber** young men. The 1982 census indicates that for every four men there are three women in the 20~34 age group.

Some people argue that there are more single women that **bachelors** and that the experience of **match making centres** confirms this. But a survey made in 25 work-units shows 92.9 per cent of the young women have married compared to 82.6 per cent of the girls have not found a **fiance**, while 7.8 per cent of the young men are still looking for someone.

Although the actual number of single women over 28 years old is not big, they do have real difficulties in finding a mate. Most of them are between 28 and 31 and are educated

to college or secondary school level. Typically they have professional jobs and are model workers, who are ambitious, **enterprising** and devoted to their professions, and some are both talented and good-looking.

The survey suggests that these women try to disguise their strong desire to find a **spouse** and expresses concern about the abnormal behaviour patterns and social withdrawal they sometimes show. It urges **superiors** at work to pay attention to this.

Such women enjoy quite good conditions. Why, then, do they find so much trouble in choosing a mate? There are several reasons behind this. These women mostly spent the best years of their life during the "cultural revolution". When it was over, they had a hard time gaining entrance to college or qualifying in their spare time. They also experienced difficulties in finding suitable jobs. And they were encouraged to marry late as well.

About 60 per cent of such women come from the families of intellectuals or officials, and their requirements for husbands are too high. Thus many opportunities are lost.

Also the traditional view that the talented man matches a beauty remains a barrier. As they mature, unmarried women often become **introverted and sedate**, and unwilling to exchange feelings with others. Their work environment also **imposes limitations on** their social activities.

The sociologists concluded that the solution of the problem lies with the women themselves who should change

Husband-Hunting

their attitudes, drop unrealistic requirements and become more positive in social activities.

Notes:

1. **husband-hunting**['hʌzbənd - 'hʌntɪŋ]: (此处)挑选丈夫。
2. **to shed light on**: 澄清。
3. **outnumber**[ˌaʊt'nʌmbə]: 在数量上超过。
4. **bachelor**['bætʃələ]: 单身汉。
5. **match making centre**: 婚姻介绍所。
6. **fiance**[fi'ansei]: 未婚夫。
7. **enterprising**['entəpraɪzɪŋ]: 有事业心的,有进取心的。
8. **spouse**[spauz]: 配偶。
9. **superior**[sju'piəriə]: 上级,上司。
10. **introverted and sedate**[ɪntrəʊ'veɪtɪd]: 内向而沉静的。
11. **impose limitations on**: 限制。

Name

【导读：男女有别。本文从独特的角度对男女在名字上的微妙差异进行了饶有趣味的介绍。】

Some interesting recent research by a team from the MRC Applied Psychology Unit at Cambridge analysed the sound structure of a large number of first names, and found some interesting differences between men and women. It seems the sexes do not sound the same. The **claims** are of course limited by the size of their sample——1 667 entries taken from a dictionary of English first names——but the claims against our **intuitions**, and they seem very **plausible**:

Female first names tend to be longer than those of males, in terms of the number of syllables they contain. Males are much more likely to have a **monosyllabic** first name (*Bob, Jim, Fred, Frank, John*), and much less likely to have a name of three or more syllables (*Christopher, Nicholas*). By contrast, there are few monosyllabic female names in the list (*Ann, Joan, May*), and many of them are **trisyllabic** or more (*Katherine, Elizabeth, Amanda, Victoria*).

95% of male names have a first syllable which is strongly stressed, whereas only 75% of female names show

this pattern. It is not difficult to think of female names which begin with an unstressed syllable (*Patricia*, *Elizabeth*, *Amanda*, *Rebecca*, *Michelle*), but male names are few and far between (*Jerome*, *Demetrius*). In fact, none of the popular British male names in top-20 lists from the past 75 years has had an unstressed initial syllable—— and only three American names.

The stressed syllables of female names tend to make much more use of the high front vowel /i/, such as *Lisa*, *Tina*, *Celia*, *Maxine*, and the **archetypal** *Fifi* and *Mimi*. Male names in /i/ are far less common (*Steve*, *Keith*, *Peter*).

Female pet names tend to be longer than those of males. A bisyllabic pet name could be either male or female, but a monosyllabic one is much more likely to be male. *Jackie* could be either sex, but *Jack* is male. Several other pairs **share this expectancy**, such as *Bill/Billie* and *Bob/Bollie*.

Female names are much more likely to end in a (spoken) vowel, as with *Linda*, *Tracey*, *Patricia*, *Deborah*, *Mary*, *Barbara*. If not a vowel, the last sound will very likely be a **continuant**, especially a **nasal** (*Jean*, *Kathleen*, *Sharon*, *Ann*). By contrast, **plosives** are much more likely to be found in male endings (*Bob*, *David*, *Dick*, *Jack*).

It is of course difficult, perhaps impossible, to explain these trends. Could the sound-symbolic associations of /i/,

such as smallness and brightness, explain the bias of that vowel? Can we relate the trend towards use of an initial stressed syllable to greater **masculine** aggressiveness? One thing is sure; it is much more difficult to **generalize** safely about female names. Popular male names are used much more **predictably**. There are several male names which have appeared on every list of the top 20 names in recent times (e. g. *John*, *David*), but no one female name appears on all lists. People are much readier to be inventive and different with female names.

Whatever the explanations, it would appear that a name such as *Sabrina* is as **clear-cut** a 'feminine' name as we are likely to find; it has more than two syllables, and unstressed first syllable, and a strong /i/ vowel. Another example is *Christine*, judged by men to be the most sexy female name, in one US survey. The /i/ vowel seems particularly **salient**.

Notes:

1. **claim**[kleim]: (此处)发现。
2. **intuition**[,ɪntju:'ɪʃən]: 直觉。
3. **plausible**['plə:zəbl]: 好像有道理的。
4. **monosyllabic**[,mɒnəsi'læbɪk]: 单音节的。
5. **trisyllabic**[,traɪ'sɪləbɪk]: 三音节的。
6. **archetypal**['ɑ:kɪ'taɪpəl]: 典型的。
7. **share this expectancy**: (此处)具有此特点。
8. **continuant**[kən'tɪnjuənt]: 读音, 较长的辅音。
9. **nasal**['neɪzəl]: 鼻音。