

United States, Insult, Joke

Eric McComas, 26, Male
Caucasian, American
English
Bowling Green, KY
11/01/09

Collected By: Eric McComas

Yo Momma:

Yo Momma so nasty her crabs use her tampon string as a bungee chord

I remember first hearing this joke between 9th and 11th grade. It was told to me by my friend, Travis Hutchinson whom told the joke to me during lunch. I recall chuckling slyly while my mind visualized the situation portrayed in the joke. I also recall that while this joke was being told to me I was eating the typical Thursday tray lunch of a hoagie made on white bread with ham bologna, American cheese and ketchup, I washed this down with a one pint carton of 2% milk.

Oddly enough, this joke insults the mother of the person it is told to while taunting them. These types of jokes at one time were mostly told by the African American culture, but have in the past few years been adopted by various other ethnicities. Along with this adaption to other cultures, these jokes have developed into something more reminiscent of a game. In these game-like situations, these types of jokes are told back and forth between two peers in what is known as Yo Momma battles. The objective behind this is to retort back a Yo Momma joke without hesitation. Substantial hesitation leads to the person being labeled as burnt, which signals that they are the loser of the battle. But they can return later to try again.

An example of such ritualistic and cultural gatherings can be seen here

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MBM7iqzR4Mk>

Posted on 08/06/2006

Accessed on 12/02/2009

Author: N/A, "Your momma is so nasty", *Ephestione*, Date published: N/A

<http://www.ephestione.it/funymommajokes.php#nasty>

Accessed 11/23/2009 Line 9 of the so nasty section of the page.

Eric McComas

Bowling Green, KY 42101

Sandra Loveall, 44, Female
Caucasian, American
English
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11/05/09

United States, Folk Song

Collected By: Eric McComas

Hush Little Baby:

**Hush little baby don't say a word
Momma's gonna buy you a mockin bird
And if the mockin bird don't sing
Momma's gonna buy you a diamond ring
And if that diamond ring turns brass
Momma's gonna buy you a lookin glass
And if that lookin' glass gets broke
Momma's gonna buy you a Billy goat
If that Billy goat won't pull
Momma's gonna buy you a cart and bull
And if that cart and bull turn over
Momma's gonna buy you a dog named rover
And if that dog named rover don't bark
Momma's gonna buy you a horse and cart
And if that horse and cart fall down
You'll still be the sweetest little baby in town**

Sandy recalls her dad singing this to her when she was around 8 or 9 years old. She remembers feeling safe like her father would always be there to protect her.

Sandy believes this is a sweet lullaby, which represents either parent in an attempt to get the baby to fall asleep. Sandy also believes it is Americanized which can be shown in the parent always buying the child new items.

Attached to the back of this item is a photocopy of the music score for the song containing a note for note exact tonal recreation of the tune her father sang this song to when she was a child. The language contained in this photocopy is however a variation and must be replaced with the text above to retain traditionality.

Eric McComas

Bowling Green, Ky 42101

Lullabies are typically used to sooth a babies crying, this specific lullaby seems to hold a secondary somewhat hidden purpose. This hidden purpose to me seems to be an unrealistic reassurance for the parent, that his or her baby is the most important human in the world. Purpose aside the text seems to state, if only subconsciously, that it is ok to spoil your child. No one line states this outright, but there is an underlying pattern of thinking (“If you break it I’ll replace it”).Another interesting key point in this text is the line “If that diamond ring turns brass”, which is relatively gender specific. To me this shows that at the terminus post quim this text was specifically written by a parent for their baby daughter.

A slight variation of this text can be found in the following text.

Commins, Dorothy Berlin. *Lullabies of the World*, Vol I: New York: Random House, 1967 (p.19)

Eric McComas

United States, Folk Metaphor

Bowling Green, KY 42101

Sandra Loveall, 44, Female
Caucasian, American
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Franklin, KY 42134
11/05/09

Collected By: Eric McComas

Hole in the Ground:

You don't know your ass from a hole in the ground.

Sandy recalls hearing her mother Lola Glass saying this to her father Herschel Glass during spats when she was around seven to eight years old.

She recalls finding this being humorous and secretly giggled so her parents didn't see her.

Sandy believes this saying is a derogatory way of telling someone that he or she is stupid. She presumes that this text would mostly be used by a person who is angry, disgusted or disappointed with another person.

This text insults the intelligence of the intended target, but also has some hidden gems as well. For starters there is an interesting section of the text "ass from a hole" in which if you remove "from a" you're left with the word "asshole", which may very well be what the insulted person is to cause this fixed phrase to be spoken in the first place. Given the word asshole being hidden in the text, one could argue that the purpose of the text is also to secretly call the person an asshole, as well as point out the undeniable fact that every ass has a hole in it.

An exact duplicate as well as a variation can be found in the following journal excerpt.

Charles Clay Doyle, "The Proverbial Hole in the Ground," *Questia*, 1995

<http://www.questia.com/googleScholar.qst;jsessionid=LMYNHG8m1fm5MydD5y7lZ1cRJtZVY2STxGg0tlJxGGrNtvPJ3nJ!-1269011426!1930931551?docId=96431293>

Accessed 11/24/09

Eric McComas, 26

Bowling Green, KY 42101

United States, Joke, Folk Speech

Eric McComas, 26, Male
Caucasian, American
English
Bowling Green, KY 42101
11/01/09

Collected By: Eric McComas

Confucius Say:

Confucius say, man who stands on toilet is high on pot.

I remember hearing this while I was in 4th grade.
Thinking back on it this kind of joke was popular in my elementary school around that time.
I remember the boys telling these jokes at recess, but I do not remember them being told by girls.

The above text is a prime example of a parody, although using Confucius' name, not many, if any are based on his actual sayings. The text has two key topics (standing on toilet, and high on pot) which when arranged in this way create a clever little play on words. Like conundrums this joke relies on this word play in a similar manner. On terms of this jokes purpose I reason that it is an albeit subconscious, but nonetheless real release of tension that inherently occurs from the three to four years the average human loses while sitting on the toilet.

A variation can be found in the following article.

Author: N/A, "Confucius Jokes," *Hub Pages*, Date Published: N/A
<http://hubpages.com/hub/Confucius-Jokes>
Accessed 11/25/09

Eric McComas
Bowling Green, KY 42101

United States, Folk Song

Sandra Loveall, 44, Female
Caucasian, American
English
Franklin, KY 42134
11/05/09

Collected By: Eric McComas

Old Dan Tucker:

[Verse]

**Old Dan Tucker was a fine old man
Washed his face in a frying pan
Combed his hair with a wagon wheel
Died with a toothache in his heel**

[Chorus]

**Get out the way for Old Dan Tucker
It's to late to get his supper
Suppers over and dinners cookin
Old Dan Tucker just stands there lookin**

Sandy recalls hearing this song back in the 1980's. She felt at the time this was such a catchy tune that it was permanently imprinted on her mind. Sandy remembers initially thinking the song lyrics were "Old Man Tucker" but later was told it was "Old Dan Tucker."

At the time Sandy didn't take the song seriously, instead she saw it as a whimsical song. Attached to the back of this item is a music score photocopied from the book listed in the below annotation, in this photocopy is shown the music score which is note for note the same as sandy remembers in her retelling, the words however are variation and when using this music score for any purpose should be replaced with the above text to retain authenticity and traditionality of this wonderful little ballad.

Sandy feels this ballad reflex sadness and projects sympathy for Old Dan Tucker. The words in the song make him out to be a very lonely person. Sandy believes the rhyming lyrics are catchy in an attempt to get the listener to think about the man's life.

Eric McComas
Bowling Green, KY 42101

This classic folk song shows its tradition in its many memorates, and the manner by which it has been passed down over the years. The actual notation in the context of this piece is so elusive that the only example I could find during my research was from a folklorismus variation performed by a pop culture musician in the late 1990's. There doesn't seem to be many, if any written guides to playing this song on an instrument. The song itself dates back to around 1843 and is from an old cowboy genre known as porch music, named so solely because it was played and sung on the porch. The meaning of the song to me is about a man's untimely demise, and his wondering spirit. Based on this piece and some of the variations of it, the song starts at the death of this man and moves backwards through his last days, retelling his many misfortunate encounters.

A slight variation can be found in the following text.

Ewen, David, *Songs of America*. Chicago: Ziff-Davis Pub. Company, 1947 (p.95)

Eric McComas
Bowling Green, KY 42101

United States, Contemporary Legend

Betty McComas, 53, Female
Caucasian, American
English
Bowling Green, KY 42101
10/01/09

Collected By: Eric McComas

Chain of events:

We moved into the house on my fourteenth birthday. My mom talked me into postponing my birthday party for a week or so, until we got everything unpacked so we could invite people to the party. A few weeks after my birthday party me and my sister Linda were upstairs trying to straighten our room up and we heard chains rattling in the attic above our bedroom and a baby crying in the chimney. I ran down stairs to my mom scared to tell her and she didn't believe us until she heard it herself. We learned later on the house was built on an Indian burial ground.

Betty experienced this first hand in October of 1970 shortly after celebrating her birthday.

Betty distinctly remembers being scared when this event happened to her, she recalls her sister being frightened as well.

Betty believes this text means she had a ghost in her house. Betty also says this text to her means she was scared to death, and was unable to comment further on this item.

Apart from being a widespread contemporary legends in the guise of a personal legend to earn itself credential it also has a key purpose. Which I believe is to provide an explanation for something that otherwise would be left unexplained. The motifs for this text just happen to be the thing in need of an explanation in this case. Another explanation on the purpose of this text could be that the person telling this legend is seeking attention and hopes that through telling a mysterious event, they can obtain it. Purpose and reasons aside the text is a good example of the underlying desire humanity has, to believe that ultimately there is some kind of an existence after death.

Author: N/A, "Indian Burial Ground House", *Your Ghost Stories*, 08/31/2009

<http://www.yourghoststories.com/real-ghost-story.php?story=7027>

Accessed 11/30/2009

Eric McComas
Bowling Green, KY 42101

United States, Handclapping Game

Betty McComas, 53, Female
Caucasian, American
English
Bowling Green, KY 42101
10/01/09

Collected By: Eric McComas

Playmate:

**Oh playmate,
come out and play with me
and bring your dollies three
climb up my apple tree
slide down my rain barrel
into my sailor door
and we'll be jolly friends
forever more, more, more!**

On every line clap hands normally in unison then clap your right hand to your partners right hand then clap hands in unison then clap your left hand to your partners left hand then clap hands in unison.

Between each line there is a 1-2 second break in which you clap the back of your hands to the back of your partner's hands then clap your palms with partners.

Betty learned this handclap game from her friend Nancy when she was about 8 years old. She played the game with her female friends in second grade.

Reminiscent of an only child situation, in which the child becomes so lonely and desperate for approximate age companionship they create ritualistic rhymes. These rhymes seem to be an example of sympathetic magic, the belief there in is by chanting this rhyme one could create a friend to play with, the result being a figment of the child's imagination. Through this type of practice the child is reassured that they are not alone in the world, resulting in a sense of happiness and well-being.

A word for word duplication can be found in the following book
Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, Children's handclaps: informal learning in play. (Austin, Texas: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, © 1978), p.3

Eric McComas
Bowling Green, KY 42101

United States, Superstition

Sandra Loveall, 44, Female
Caucasian, American
English
Franklin, KY 42134
11/05/09

Collected By: Eric McComas

If your nose itches on the right side it means a man is coming to visit you, but if your nose itches on the left side a woman is coming to visit, if both sides itch it means you have a houseful of company coming to visit you.

Sandy heard this from her mom when she was about 10 years old. She recalls her mom telling her, “My mom told me, so I’m going to tell you.” She also acknowledged that her mom was a firm believer in these kinds of traditions and was always trying to pass these types of things on to her.

Sandy believes the purpose of this and similar superstitions is to give people a sense of control in and being prepared over future events in which you may or may not have any control.

This sign superstition stems from the belief that an itch has a different symbolic meaning based on which part of the body it is located. An example of this similarity can be seen by examining other superstitions, for example If your right hand itches you’re going to come into some money. This association with itching probably arises from a less scientific culture or time period, and most likely originated as an attempt to explain itching and its purpose. The association between company visiting and the nose is likely related to the baseline use of the nose which is to help one identify an object, or alert them to non-visible dangers (such as the smell of smoke).

A variation with the text of “If your nose itches company is coming.” Can be found in the following citation
Puckett, Newbell Niles, Wayland Debs Hand, Anna Casetta, and Sondra B Thiederman, Popular beliefs and superstitions : a compendium of American folklore (Boston, Massachusetts: GK Hall, 1981), P.953.

Eric McComas
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Another variation can be found with the alternate text “If your nose itches, someone is coming to see you.” In the following text:
Duke University, *North Carolina Folklore Vol VI*.Durnham, NC: Duke University Press, 1961
(p.521)

Eric McComas
Bowling Green, KY 42101

United States, Joke

Jerry McComas, 61, Male
Caucasian, American
English
Bowling Green, KY 42101
10/01/09

Collected By: Eric McComas

Two boys:

These two little boys, one was 7 years old one was 8, they were out hunting hickory nuts, they hunted all day long, it started getting dusk dark on them and they went into a cemetery and got down in a grave and a man walking by the cemetery heard the two boys down in the grave counting out there hickory nuts and thought it was god and the devil sorting out the dead.

Jerry remembers this joke being told to him by his grandma when he was about Twelve years old. He doesn't remember exactly who he heard it from, but recalls it being a friend from school.

Jerry was unable to comment on the meaning of this text but felt its purpose was to bring happiness into the lives of others.

This joke employs the fear of the unknown, from taking place at dark when everything is just out of eye shot to the classic god VS. The devil scenario that is unseen to the eyes of the living. Add to that the scenic cemetery and open grave and you have a situation that would make most people shake in their boots. This is where the purpose of this joke comes in, to make light of the unknown in an attempt to deal with the fear of it.

A lengthened variation of this text can be found below. This variation goes into greater detail and spends more time describing the scene of events.

Author: N/A, "Heres a joke/Nuts in the cemetery", *Ramblings of lista*, 06/17/09

<http://www.ramblingsoflista.blogspot.com/2009/06/heres-jokenuts-in-cemetery.html>

Accessed on: 12/06/09

Eric McComas
Bowling Green, KY 42101

United States, Joke

Mark Cambron, late 30's, Male
Caucasian, American
English
Bowling Green, KY 42101
09/30/09

Collected By: Eric McComas

A lawyer, a doctor and an Engineer:

A doctor, a lawyer and an engineer were discussing whether it was better have a wife or a mistress. The Doctor said, "It's better to have a wife so you can build a solid foundation for an enduring relationship. The Lawyer said, "It's better to have a mistress, if you have a wife and want to divorce her it causes all sorts of legal problems. After a pause the doctor and lawyer look at the engineer, I like both, said the engineer. Both?, asked the doctor and lawyer in unison. The engineer replied, "yeah, If you have a wife and a mistress, The wife will assume that your with the mistress, and the mistress will assume your with the wife, That way you can go to the office and get some work done."

Dr. Cambron remembers this joke, told to him in English, during his days in graduate studies at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN somewhere between the years of 1991 and 2001.

He remembers the joke being told to him by a fellow student in the engineering department.

Dr. Cambron seemed to be happy reliving the memory of this moment in his graduate studies, his face depicting a joyful smile throughout the retelling.

He had no comment for the meaning or purpose of this text.

This joke uses a tripartite structure and plays heavily on the stereotype that engineers work too much, and in my opinion displays instances of blason populaire targeted toward engineers. It also makes the association from Doctor to kind hearts and associates lawyers with greed and disloyalty, this resulting in an underlying insult to lawyers while seemingly complimenting doctors, leading me to believe the joke originally was designed by a doctor to insult people in other occupations, whom he foresaw as rivals. This joke also contains the structure of three which is the common ritual number in the American culture. The joke's current mainstream used is probably to relieve work related stress or poke fun at an opposing occupation.

Loafer, "Engineer jokes: Wife or mistress", *Office Diversions*, Date Published: N/A

<http://officediversions.com/discover/modules/wfsection/article.php?articleid=61>

Accessed on 11/24/09

Eric McComas
Bowling Green, KY 42101

United States, Folk simile

Sandra Loveall, 44, Female
Caucasian, American
English
Franklin, KY 42134
11/05/09

Collected By: Eric McComas

He's as ugly as homemade sin.

Sandy recalls hearing this folk simile from fellow peers in school, while she was in elementary school between her 4th and 5th grade years.

She also recalls that the children would say this secretly in a gossiping manner about fellow peers.

Sandy believes this text is a reference to an offensive form of ugliness which is the result of parents who bears a child from an incestuous relationship. Sandy also feels this text would mostly be used to taunt, insult or degrade a person to other people.

This folk simile reflects the cultural standing that ugly is taboo, this is shown in the comparison to sin which is by definition a taboo act. The reference to this sin being homemade seems to insinuate a possible situation of domestic violence or incest. All this leads to this folk simile placing judgment on the receiving person, this judgment being that the person is horrible and/or awful. One might say this to another person when they do not like them, when they are angry, or when another person does something they do not like.

Texas Folk Simile (1960), *Xanga*, 4/18/2007

<http://linggradstudent.xanga.com/584883751/texas-folk-similes-1960/>

In the following comment by Stacina made on 4/25/2007 a slight variation to this folk simile is shown.

Ooh these are great! I should start compiling a list of these from my family.... I've heard #s 14,15, & 19 from the "...as..." list, and #7 from the "so..." list :)

Some of my favs from my neck of Appalachia:

"hot as a sinner at prayer meeting in July"

"naked as a jaybird"

"full as a tick on a bloodhound"

"rich as possum gravy"

"ugly as homemade sin"

Accessed on 11/24/09

Eric McComas
Bowling Green, KY 42101

United States, Limerick

Sandra Loveall, 44, Female
Caucasian, American
English
Franklin, KY 42134
11/15/09

Collected By: Eric McComas

**There once were two cats of Killkenny
Each thought there were one cat too many
So they fought and they fit
And they scratched and they bit
Till except for their nails
And the tips of their tails
Instead of two cats there weren't any**

Sandy does not remember where she learned this limerick, but she recalls retailing it to her children. She remembers her and her children would recite this text to one another in an attempt to see who could be the most zealous in the recitation. Sandy recalled hearing this limerick in 1993.

Sandy believes this text represents a monarchy in which two potential leaders fighting over control, she feels this is reflective of the text "There's too many cooks in the kitchen." She also believes this text would mainly be used for fun based on its humorous nature and competitive flair.

This limerick displays a highly gory tale in a subtle candy coated shell. Describing the actions of two cats who for some reason rip each other to shreds. This is probably a child's way of dealing with domestic at home. Another aspect to point out, being the desire of each cat to be the one and only, this can be compared to children who wish they were an only child because they feel that their sibling gets more attention or love than them. The next point to make aware would be that the cats scratched and bit, which sounds very similar to a child's temper tantrum which in addition to the previous leads me to believe the purpose of this limerick is simply to help a child deal with their inner anger and jealousy without being physically violent or aggressive.

Author: N/A, "There once were two cats of Killkenny", *Land of nursery rhymes*, Date

Published: N/A

http://www.landofnurseryrhymes.co.uk/html_pages/There%20Once%20Were%20Two%20Cats%20Of%20Killkenny.htm Accessed on: 12/06/09

Eric McComas
Bowling Green, KY 42101

United States, Superstition

Eric McComas, 25, Male
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English
Bowling Green, KY 42101
11/22/09

Collected By: Eric McComas

Every time a bell rings an angel gets its wings.

I recall hearing this Sign Superstition from my music teacher Mrs. Conley while I was in the 8th grade. This rhyme was told to the class at the end of a pretty lengthy lecture about how good deeds lead to good results using the example of angels which lead to this saying being orally and traditionally shared. The lecture itself was a result of a week-long bacchanalia of pranks on the teacher led by myself and fellow students Grant and Sean.

This text uses a simple rhyming scheme in an attempt to make this saying catchy and memorable. The text itself however reflects the common American cultural belief that, all angels, if any have wings, this may or may not be the same in other cultures. The association to the bell ringing is significant in this particular superstition; this is where it is evident that the text is sign superstition. This can be proven with the analogy of bells signaling events which perfectly fits the “If A then B” identity of sign superstition. One could also argue that the bell ringing is not a sign of an event but an announcement of one. In this situation this text would no longer fit the profile of sign superstition, instead it could be argued in this situation the text would be a proverb. A way of showing this would be to chart out the topic comment of this text. The topic would be bells ringing and the comment would be an angel gets its wings, this shares the underlying wisdom of what type of announcement is given hence forever attributing a bells ring to a heavenly achievement in which an angel has earned or been given its wings.

A version of this superstition can be found on:

It's a wonderful life. DVD. Directed by Frank Capra (01/07/1947; United States: Republic Entertainment, Distributed by Artisan Entertainment, 1998.

Eric McComas
Bowling Green, KY 42101

United States, Joke, Folk Speech

Eric McComas, 26, Male
Caucasian, American
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Bowling Green, KY 42101
11/05/09

Collected By: Eric McComas

Confucius Say:

Confucius say, Wiseman never play leap frog with Unicorn.

I remember hearing this while I was in 4th grade at Burlington Elementary School in Burlington, Ohio.

Thinking back on it this kind of joke was popular in my elementary school around that time. I remember the boys telling these jokes at recess, but I do not remember them being told by girls. While these types of jokes were for the most part relatively acceptable in my elementary school the teachers did not allow them in the classroom even during free time.

The above text is a parody of a popular proverbial wise-man's sayings. Falling also into the genre of joke it has an underlying sexual nature, this can be shown with the unasked question, "What happens if you play leap frog with a unicorn?" Well most likely you would leap short and be poked in the backside by the horn, this seems to be what the joke is implying, which leads me to believe that the underlying sexual nature of this joke is the fear or dislike of sodomy. The purpose there in is to lighten the mood on this subject.

Confucius Say Jokes, *humorsphere*, Publish Date: N/A
http://www.humorsphere.com/confucius/confucious_says_jokes.htm
Accessed 11/24/09

Eric McComas
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United States, Riddle

Sandra Loveall, 44, Female
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English
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11/22/09

Collected By: Eric McComas

**Thirty white horses on a red hill
Now they stamp
Now they champ
Now they stand still
(Answer is teeth and gums)**

Sandy does not recall from whom or where she first heard this riddle. She remembers thinking this riddle was very strange and admits that she never would have guessed the answer correctly had she not been given it at the time of hearing it. Sandy, at the time, felt this riddle made her think bad of teeth because of the comparison to horses.

Sandy believes this riddle's purpose is to confuse people and leave them wondering what the answer could be. She also feels that after racking your brain for a long time when you finally find out the answer to the riddle it just reveals another question. In this case this secondary question is why would someone create a riddle about teeth and gums?

This riddle has metaphorical overlays which are apparent in the comparisons of white horses to teeth, and a red hill to the gums in the mouth of an unmentioned being, leaving unanswered questions, such as is the mouth in question animal or human? If this riddle is about the human mouth then why is there only thirty teeth when it is common knowledge that the human mouth consists of 32 teeth. The absence of these two teeth suggests the targeted audience would be the adolescent group between ages 13 and 19 who have not yet had their wisdom teeth grow into place yet. The text could also insinuate the end of life referenced in the last line "Now they stand still" which in most people never happens. Even when one is not eating or talking, they are still slightly moving their jaw out of either nervous habit or an attempt to remove a particle of food. The underlying purpose of this text is possibly to teach children the importance of caring for their teeth.

Johnson, Edna, Evelyn R Sickels, and Frances Clarke Sayers. *Anthology of Children's Literature*, 3rd revised edition. Houghton Mifflin Co: Boston, The Riverside Press, 1959 (p.28).

Eric McComas
Bowling Green, KY 42101

United States, Joke

Sandra Loveall, 44, Female
Caucasian, American
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11/23/2009

Collected By: Eric McComas

A man is walking along on a hot day thirsty, and he stops at a spring to drink some water.. there is a gourd hanging there to use. Nearby an old woman comes out of an old house and tells the man he can get a drink if he wants. But he noticed her mouth was all deformed and gross, so he started to think that he did not want to drink after her with her mouth like that. So he tips the gourd upside down and drinks from the handle. Suddenly he hears a shriek, then hears the old lady say, you won't believe this but you drink from that gourd just like I do.

Sandy recalls hearing this joke from her father Hershel Glass when she was around 10 years old. She remembers that her father told her many jokes besides this one, and that he liked to retell them to her over and over. He would laugh during and after every retelling.

Sandy believes this joke reflects the fear of catching a disease or illness from another person, and also believes the purpose is to laugh this fear off by making it humorous in joke form. Sandy feels this joke emphasizes country folk, and reflects their lack of modern medicine in some situations.

This joke reflects the cultural fear of drinking after another person, but exaggerates it by making the woman have some form of illness or disease. There is also evidence that suggests this joke is also about mankind's inability to escape ones fate, this is seen in the way the man tries to avoid drinking after the woman by turning the gourd upside down, only to end up drinking after her anyway. I would also like to point out that the man is making two assumptions one is that the woman is ill solely based on her appearance, and the second is that her illness is contagious. This is an example of fear overwhelming one's ability to think rationally. In conclusion I believe this joke's purpose is an attempt to relieve all of this cultural fear and teach cultures not to judge others on appearance.

A variation of this text can be found below, I believe it is a variant because it uses the premise of a thirsty man with an ending that is both ironic and uncontrollable by him.

Jam j, "Thirsty man?", *Yahoo Answers*, 2007

<http://answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20080131194957AAItPFd>

Accessed on: 12/06/09

Eric McComas
Bowling Green, KY 42101

United States, Game

Betty McComas, 53, Female
Caucasian, American
English
Bowling Green, KY 42101
10/01/09

Collected By: Eric McComas

Duck, Duck, Goose:

One child in some way is selected to be it after that everyone else sits in a circle and the person who is it walks around tapping people on the head saying “Duck” until he/she finds someone they want to try and make “It” in their place. They then tap this person on the head and say goose, the goal is then to be chased around the circle by the goose person in an attempt to make it back to the goose persons spot in the circle before they catch you. If you make it back to the goose’s spot they are now it. If they catch you then you are still it and must resume this process from the beginning.

Betty chose not to comment on the meaning or purpose of this text.

This game mixes an it-game for choosing the first it person with a high power it role during play. The game will also in most cases consist of underlying pre-adolescent curiosity in members of the opposite sex due to instinctual animalistic urges, this meaning most boys who are in the it role will choose a girl of interest to be the goose person while a girl in the it role will choose a boy of interest to be the goose. This ignores the fear of cooties (the belief that someone of the opposite sex has a contagious disease and if you touch them then you will be contaminated), which leads me to believe that children only use cooties as a way to deny interest in the opposite sex while in the presence of a large group of their peers. Most likely this is caused by shame in their interest in the opposite sex. In conclusion I believe the purpose of this game is to help children get out of this pattern of being ashamed to express interest in the opposite sex.

Katrena Wells, “Great Teaching Tool – Duck Duck Goose”, *Primary school suite 101*, 08/30/09
http://primaryschool.suite101.com/article.cfm/great_teaching_tool_duck_duck_goose
Accessed 12/06/09

Eric McComas
Bowling Green, KY 42101

United States, Superstition

Sandra Loveall, 44, Female
Caucasian, American
English
Franklin, KY 42134
11/20/2009

Collected By: Eric McComas

A mother can mark her baby with birthmarks if something scares her while she's pregnant. At the time she's scared wherever she's touching her body is where the birthmark will appear.

Sandy recalls hearing this superstition from her mother Lola Glass when she was about nine years old.

She explicitly remembers her mother telling her that this superstition explains how and why Sandy came to have her birthmarks.

She recalls her mother telling her this did not mean that the mother in the text had to be touching herself with her hands, even crossed ankles or arms would have the same effect.

Sandy believes this superstition helps prevent the mother from worrying about their child being born with imperfections, by creating a way to ease their worry through explaining why their baby has these marks on them. Sandy also believes this text can have a more positive effect by helping mothers realize that they should remain calm during their pregnancy term, because even though it might not prevent birthmarks it will prevent other risks to the mother and the baby.

This sign superstition is reflective of a parent's desire to explain away the imperfections in their child so that they can maintain the belief that their child is perfect. Originally this text probably originated as a primitive explanation for something the people of the culture did not understand, but it has most likely morphed over the years into the text we see here. Another purpose for texts similar to this one is the ability for parents to place the blame for their child's condition somewhere besides on themselves. Though this is not the case for all parents, there are undoubtedly some out there who use these types of texts solely for this purpose. The belief that the birthmark would show up wherever the mother had one part of her body touching another suggests that the mother could subconsciously send her fear through her flesh and into the baby marking it in the process.

A variation of this text can be found in the following location

Puckett, Newbell Niles, Wayland Debs Hand, Anna Casetta, and Sondra B Thiederman, Popular beliefs and superstitions : a compendium of American folklore. Boston, Massachusetts: GK Hall, 1981, (p.38)

Eric McComas
Bowling Green, KY 42101

United States, Proverb

Betty McComas, 44, Female
Caucasian, American
English
Bowling Green, KY 42101
12/06/09

Collected By: Eric McComas

Treat others the way you want to be treated.

Betty recalls hearing this text from her mother, and being told to follow this rule like it was made of gold.

She says she was about 4 to 5 years old when her mother first told her this item.

Betty was unsure how to comment on the meaning or purpose of this text.

This text makes the age old attempt to convince adolescent children to treat each other fairly and respectfully. Though in some cases the text would not work, an example of this being a situation where a child is sadistic or narcissistic and enjoys being treated badly or treating others badly to the point of not caring how they themselves are treated. This reflects the question does every child want to be treated the same as their peers would want to be treated?

Author: N/A, "Treat Others the Way You Want to Be Treated", *My daily meditations*, 06/30/09
<http://www.mydailymeditations.com/2009/06/treat-others-the-way-you-want-to-be-treated.html>

Accessed on: 12/06/09

Eric McComas
Bowling Green, KY 42101

United States, Metaphorical Putdown

Sandra Loveall, 45, Female
Caucasian, American
English
Franklin, KY 42134
12/06/09

Collected By: Eric McComas

He has a mind like a steel trap, it's always closed

Sandy vaguely recalls hearing this from girls in her neighborhood. The girls would say this about boys they knew, or while complaining about their boyfriends when they were not around. She recalls this occurred during her college days at Tennessee Temple University in Chattanooga Tennessee between 1984 and 1986.

Sandy believes this text is emphasizing the narrow mindedness or stupidity of a person. Sandy believes the girls would say this out of frustration or anger against their boyfriend or boy they knew.

This metaphorical putdown insults a person inability to think, or function properly as far as intelligence is concerned. The line comparing a one's mind to a steel trap sounds like it is leaving the assumption that the person's head, like steel, is hard and cold. The last line referring to the trap being closed at all times supports the theory of this text referring to the person's inability to think. This putdown is most likely used in situation of high stress or frustration as a means of obtaining some form of closure on the person who caused the stress or frustration in the first place.

A slight variation can be found at #.18 on the following page.

Author: N/A, "Really mean insults", *Tension Not*, Date Published: N/A
http://www.tensionnot.com/jokes/one_liner_jokes/really_mean_insults
Accessed on 12/06/09

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Informants

Cambron, Mark, Male, late 30's early 40's, Associate Professor in Electrical Engineering, Unknown, Unkown, Caucasian, English.

Loveall, Sandra, Female, 45, Customer Service Representative, Protestant, 1625 Parkside Dr Apt B12 Franklin, KY 42134, Caucasian, English.

McComas, Betty, Female, 53, Disabled, Baptist, 1625 Parkside Dr Apt B4 Bowling Green, Ky 42101, Caucasian, English.

McComas, Eric, Male, 26, Student, Baptist, 1625 Parkside Dr Apt B12 Bowling Green, KY 42101, Caucasian, English.

McComas, Jerry, Male, 61, Disabled, Unknown, 1625 parkside Dr Apt B4 Bowling Green, KY 42101, Caucasian, English.

Eric McComas
Bowling Green, KY 42101

Materials

- 1 Contemporary Legend
- 1 Folk Metaphor
- 1 Folk Simile
- 2 Folk Songs
- 1 Handclapping Game
- 1 Insult
- 1 Game
- 5 Jokes
- 1 Metaphorical Putdown
- 1 Limerick
- 1 Proverb
- 1 Riddle
- 3 Superstitions

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