



An Analytic Dictionary of English Etymology: An Introduction

Anatoly Liberman

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This work introduces renowned linguistics scholar Anatoly Liberman's comprehensive dictionary and bibliography of the etymology of English words. The English etymological dictionaries published in the past claim to have solved the mysteries of word origins even when those origins have been widely disputed. An Analytic Dictionary of English Etymology by contrast, discusses all of the existing derivations of English words and proposes the best one.

In the inaugural volume, Liberman addresses fifty-five words traditionally dismissed as being of unknown etymology. Some of the entries are among the most commonly used words in English, including man, boy, girl, bird, brain, understand, key, ever, and yet. Others are slang: mooch, nudge, pimp, filch, gawk, and skedaddle. Many, such as beacon, oat, hemlock, ivy, and toad, have existed for centuries, whereas some have appeared more recently, for example, slang, kitty-corner, and Jeep. They are all united by their etymological obscurity.

This unique resource book discusses the main problems in the methodology of etymological research and contains indexes of subjects, names, and all of the root words. Each entry is a full-fledged article, shedding light for the first time on the source of some of the most widely disputed word origins in the English language.

“Anatoly Liberman is one of the leading scholars in the field of English etymology. Undoubtedly his work will be an indispensable tool for the ongoing revision of the etymological component of the entries in the Oxford English Dictionary.” —Bernhard Diensberg, OED consultant, French etymologies

Anatoly Liberman is professor of Germanic philology at the University of Minnesota. He has published many works, including 16 books, most recently *Word Origins . . . and How We Know Them: Etymology for Everyone*.

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