



Name Dropping: Darwinian Struggles, Oedipal Feelings, and Kafkaesque Ordeals---An A to Z Guide to the Use of Names in Everyday Language

Philip Gooden

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Have you ever had a Hitchcockian experience (in the shower, perhaps?) or met someone with a distinctly Ortonian outlook on life? What exactly do we mean when we describe a scene as Dickensian, or when we call a politician's style Churchillian or Thatcherite? What would you call a romantic, brooding, dangerous, and untamed person? Heathcliffian? Byronic? How about a situation that is nightmarish, torturously bureaucratic, and impossible to escape from? Kafkaesque, maybe? Is Nixonian or Gandalf-like part of your vocabulary? There are hundreds of words derived from real people who are famous---or infamous---enough to give their stamp to a movement, a way of thinking or acting, a style or even a mood.

Name Dropping is the essential guide to the better known or more intriguing of these terms from figures in politics, sports, and the arts, as well as history and the classics. It is both for those readers looking for definitions or simply browsing for pleasure. Entries are alphabetically listed with full explanations, examples from the press, guidance on usage, and a Pretentiousness Index that ranks items on the spectrum from familiarity to obscurity.

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