



The Oxford Dictionary of Allusions

Andrew Delahunty, Sheila Dignan, Penny Stock

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Allusions give us a marvelous literary shorthand, drawing on our collective knowledge of literature, mythology, and the Bible to help us describe people, places, feelings, and events. A miser is a Scrooge, a strong man is a Samson or a Hercules, a beautiful woman is a Venus or a modern-day Helen of Troy. We can suffer like Sisyphus or linger like the smile of the Cheshire Cat.

Ranging from classical mythology to modern movies and TV shows, this new reference work explains the meanings of the allusions in use in modern English, from Abaddon to Zorro, Tartarus to Tarzan, and Rubens to Rambo. Based on an extensive reading program that has identified the most commonly used allusions, this fascinating volume includes numerous quotations to illustrate usage, from a range of authors and sources, from Thomas Hardy and Charles Dickens to *Bridget Jones's Diary*. Moreover, the dictionary is thematically structured, so that readers not only can look up Medea to find out who she was and how her name is used as an allusion, but also can look up the theme of "Revenge" and find, alongside Medea, entries for other figures used to allude to revenge, such as The Furies or The Count of Monte Cristo.

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