

# Word Worth®

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## Front Page

Fall 2016 issue of *Word Worth® Magazine*

### Editorial — *20/20 Hindsight*

There has been a glut of Monday morning quarter-backing the 2016 election. The worst thing is that Clinton won indisputably. One clear mistake that we see, however, is celebrating the first woman president—even if she came to occupy that office. If all we need is a woman president, Sarah Palin and Carly Fiorina—two of the most intellectually challenged people in the country—will be glad to step up.

### Column — *Whatever Happened to “Thank You”?*

The substitutes for the term “Thank You” that are taking over, just won’t do.

### Arts —

*Alexander Pope (1688-1744)*: Ezra Pound is said to have advised that if a poet is going to rhyme, they have to rhyme better than Pope, and since no one can do that, they mustn't rhyme.

In fact, poets can rhyme if they follow the instructions of Pope in *Essay on Criticism* from which the selection below is taken. Rhymes must never be expected, obvious, labored, strained, boring, or simplistic. If someone is not going to bother doing the work to make a rhyme perfect, they are a versifier, not a poet.

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If we cannot discuss rationally and respectfully the issues concerning our governance, this democracy will not last.

—M H Perry

There is no redemption in being one of the “good Nazis.”

—Chris Ladd

Don't look for validation and approbation from others for the work you do. Do the work you must do as required by the light that shines into you and from you and through you..

—M H Perry

Word Worth's mission is to publish Editorials and Columns on subjects as diverse as xeriscaping, travel, archaeology, and many others, and to present fine poetry, stories, novels, and photography in the Arts section. The opinions presented are those of the individual writers, and not necessarily those of *Word Worth*. We do not shy away from

controversial subjects, but we believe in dealing with them respectfully and rationally. In one of his relatively more recent concerts, Arlo Guthrie said that over the years he had made friends that he might not have expected to make initially. He concluded that there are two kinds of people: those who care and those who don't. He came to realize that you can find both of those kinds on every side of every issue. We concur with that sentiment, and hope to present ideas in the spirit of enlightened searching.

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## Editorials

### 20/20 Hindsight

There has been a glut of Monday morning quarter-backing the 2016 election. The worst thing is that Clinton won indisputably. One clear mistake that we see, however, is celebrating the first woman president—even if she came to occupy that office. If all we need is a woman president, Sarah Palin and Carly Fiorina—two of the most intellectually challenged people in the country—will be glad to step up. We should never be looking for a woman candidate. We should always be looking for the most qualified person. What we want to guarantee is that women will no longer be excluded from consideration on the basis of gender. In 2008, when Obama's campaign focused on race, talking about his name being different from the other presidents and so on, his numbers went down, and came up when race was less an issue. The hope that there will soon be a woman president is severely misguided. Clinton was better qualified than any other candidate, and that should have been all that mattered. So much as mentioning gender was nothing but a distraction. As it turns out, we've ended up with a bullying troglodyte who has not only normalized misogyny but sexual assault as well.

We used to be a beacon of Democracy for the world. Now, the candidate who won the election by two and a half million votes is not the president-elect. Instead, our president-elect is a compulsive liar.

It was predicted for nearly two years that Trump would destroy the Republican party. Contrarily, Bernie Sanders obliterated the Democratic party. Sanders, the most opportunist candidate in history, became a Democrat only to exploit the party and its resources, demanded the replacement of the Chair, and deserted the party after decimating it. Throughout the primary, he spouted Utopian ideas as though once President, he could wave a magic wand and make it all happen. He never made the effort to explain how he would do this and criticized Clinton for not engaging in his fairyland musings. If he had ever believed in any of the things he kept shouting about, he would not have done so much to destroy the possibility of moving toward them.

Or as Max Weiss said,

Sanders, who fortified the recurring narrative that Hillary was a corrupt neoliberal and part of a rigged system, did more damage than anyone else. He turned millions of young people against Hillary — and countless independents, no doubt, too.

Yes, he ultimately campaigned for Hillary, but did so half-heartedly, through pursed lips and slumped body language, bashing Trump but rarely praising Hillary. One could almost see the thought bubble over his head: "This should've been me."

Journalists did more damage to Democracy in this campaign than imaginable. The most foolish things

Trump said were reported in a shark-like feeding frenzy. Clinton's non e-mail problems were constantly brought up as though there was any substance to them.

Ego-centric columnists took pleasure in snide attacks on Clinton because... well, because they could. Maureen Dowd, presenting herself as liberal compared with the rest of her family, sprinkled her columns with catty comments attacking Clinton, the only basis being just that she doesn't like her. Dowd has proven herself unworthy of the journalistic respect she's been accorded. What these low level high-school-gang-like gossips accomplished was only to prove to Clinton what they, themselves, believed all along: that Clinton is better than they are.

But then, read Max Weiss's column. He sums it up succinctly.

## [Things I Blame For Hillary Clinton's Loss, Ranked](#)

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## Columns

### Whatever Happened to “Thank You”?

In the movie *Julie & Julia*, whenever the character Julie has a problem she can't deal with, her husband helps her out, and she responds, “You’re a saint.” After an argument, he reveals that he hates it when she says that. The next time he steps in when he keeps lobsters from escaping boiling water, she says, “You’re a...[and then remembers that he hates her typical response and says]... a terrible person.”

What?!!!!!!

He’s either a saint or a terrible person? She never learned the term, “Thank you”?

“Thank you” is a very reply, but it covers gratitude quite well. If it seems insufficient, adding “so much” or “very much” will cover it.

The responses that are creeping into the language as substitutes are just not sufficient, and not even nice.

One substitute is, “You shouldn’t have.” Really? This is a rebuke. No matter what the tone of voice used, it’s still a rebuke and certainly does not convey sincere appreciation.

Another substitute is, “You didn’t need to do that.” Of course, you didn’t need to do that. If you had needed to do that, it would be extortion, not a gift. That statement made to someone simply belittles whatever was their gift or deed.

So what do you do when you don’t like the sweater your mother-in-law gave you. The proper response is still to say, “Thank you.” In those cases, you're thanking the person for the effort. There is no dishonesty in that. Anyone who posits that courtesy is dishonest is simply making excuses for their desire to be rude.

Substitutes that can work, if you feel "thank you" is overused, are, “How kind of you,” “How thoughtful of you”...

If there is a gift that one can't accept for some reason, then there is no avoiding a sincere discussion. A phrase won't work.

A simple "Thank you," however, covers most occasions and should not be eschewed.

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## Arts

### *Rediscovering Alexander Pope*

#### *Alexander Pope (1688-1744)*

Ezra Pound is said to have advised that if a poet is going to rhyme, they have to rhyme better than Pope, and since no one can do that, they mustn't rhyme.

In fact, poets can rhyme if they follow the instructions of Pope in *Essay on Criticism* from which the selection below is taken. Rhymes must never be expected, obvious, labored, strained, boring, or simplistic. If someone is not going to bother doing the work to make a rhyme perfect, they are a versifier, not a poet.

#### *Alexander Pope*

(1688-1744)

#### Sound and Sense

But most by Numbers judge a Poet's song,  
And smooth or rough, with them, is right or wrong;  
In the bright Muse tho' thousand charms conspire,  
Her Voice is all these tuneful fools admire;  
Who haunt *Parnassus* but to please their ear,  
Not mend their minds; as some to Church repair,  
Not for the doctrine, but the music there.  
These equal syllables alone require,  
Tho' oft' the ear the open vowels tire;  
While expletives their feeble aid do join;  
And ten low words oft' creep in one dull line;  
While they ring round the same unvary'd chimes,  
With sure returns of still-expected rhymes.  
Where-e'er you find *the cooling western breeze*,  
In the next line it *whispers thro' the trees*;  
If crystal streams *with pleasing murmurs creep*,

The reader's threaten'd (not in vain) with *sleep*.  
Then, at the last, an only couplet fraught  
With some unmeaning thing they call a Thought,  
A needless *Alexandrine* ends the song,  
That like a wounded snake drags its slow length along.  
Leave such to tune their own dull rhymes, and know  
What's roundly smooth, or languishingly slow;  
And praise the easy vigor of a line,  
Where *Denham's* strength, and *Waller's* sweetness join.  
True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,  
As those move easiest who have learn'd to dance.  
'Tis not enough no harshness gives offence,  
The sound must seem an echo to the sense.  
Soft is the strain when *Zephyr* gently blows,  
And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows;  
But when loud surges lash the sounding shore,  
The hoarse, rough verse should like the torrent roar.  
When *Ajax* strives, some rock's vast weight to throw,  
The line too labours, and the words move slow;  
Not so, when swift *Camilla* scours the plain,  
Flies o'er th' unbending corn, and skims along the main.  
Hear how *Timotheus'* varied lays surprise,  
And bid alternate passions fall and rise!

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