the secret lives of words

/ˌetəˈmælədʒ/ n
1. The study of the origin of words and the way in which their meanings have changed throughout history.
2. The origin of a word and the historical development of its meaning.
3. LNGT 130, spring 2014

In this course students will learn to use the Oxford English Dictionary to trace the origins of English words from their Proto-Indo-European roots to their modern English meanings, examining, in the process, how cultural demands, conflict, gender, and the historical movements of peoples affect, and are affected by, words. In addition we will explore the politics of lexicography. Students will learn to identify the Greek and Latin roots, prefixes, and suffixes of English words, and will be introduced to common shifts in word formation as words are absorbed into English from other languages.

texts

*English Etymology* by Bailly, Ambrose, Schlunk, and Gilleland in two volumes:
- EEL = *English Etymology: Latin*
- EEG = *English Etymology: Greek*

In most countries, neighboring, or near is *adjacent* to.*

**evaluate** /iˈvɔːljuː/ v [mainly Brit.]
Form an idea of the amount, number, or state of, assess 1. That a numerical expression or equivalent for (an equation, formula, or function).
Procedure:
Prepare the exercises for each day and be ready to be called on for answers. Do the reading for the week if there is any.

Quizzes: Weekly on Tuesdays. Quizzes will include only material covered in class up to that point, not material due that day. Unless otherwise noted, quizzes are on the material in the tables before the exercises in each lesson.

Thursday Etymology: This is your opportunity to research a word that interests you. Hand in every day of class when there is NOT a quiz or project due a piece of paper with an etymology you find interesting. You may not simply copy and paste the etymology of the word from the OED. You must explain in complete sentences how the word comes into English. To get full credit, simply do this in the right spirit. Only one per person per class session, and no one may turn in someone else's. Comments from students who are absent will not be accepted. I will post one or two of the most interesting finds on the course website each week. You may miss on comment.

Group Project Presentations: March 20. This will be your opportunity to apply what you've learned to words/sets of words that interest you.

Paper: Your final assessment for this course will be a paper.

Course website: All readings for this class will be posted on the course website: go/etymology

Computers: Bring them if you have them. We will be using an online version of the OED. I will let you know when you can use them.

Bad
Etymology: Origin uncertain. Perhaps related to Old English bæddel hermaphrodite, effeminate or homosexual man (quantity of stem vowel uncertain: see badling n.¹); it has been suggested that bad adj. could perhaps show the reflex of bæddel, with loss of -l as also in much adj. and wench n., although the phonetic environment differs significantly; with the semantic development perhaps compare more general use of badling n.¹ (a derivative of bæddel) as a term of abuse or contempt, although this is poorly attested; with the assumed development of adjectival use compare wretch adj., arming n.¹

Hysteric
Etymology: < Latin hystericus, < Greek ύστερικός belonging to the womb, suffering in the womb, hysterical (< ύστερα womb), especially in ύστερικὴ πνίξ, ύστερικὰ πάθη, hysterica passio (see infra, 1). For the application of the word, see note to hysteria n. 1. Compare French hystérique (recorded 1568).

Final grades will be determined in the following way:

- Tuesday Quizzes 30%
- Project 30%
- Paper 30%
- Thursday Etymology 10%