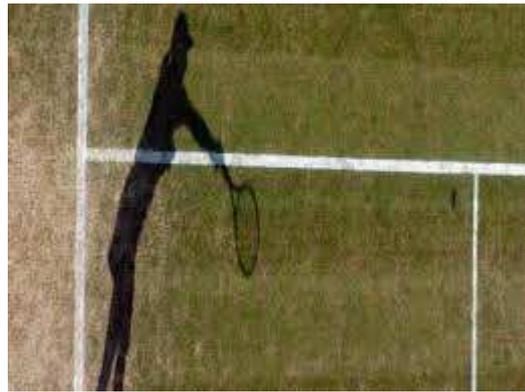


WIMBLEDON: lawn tennis, strawberries and cream...

Anyone who is anyone and who knows anything will tell you that Wimbledon takes place in June, that the sun blazes down upon players and spectators alike (rain is out of the question) and that boaters, strawberries and cream are an absolute must.



"Anyone for Tennis?"

This has to be one of the most famous phrases associated with the game. It is thought to have originated from Misalliance, written by GB Shaw (see below), but also appears in the Bugs Bunny cartoon Rabbit Fire where the actual phrase is pronounced by Daffy Duck ,

(<http://www.220.ro/desene-animat/Rabbit-Fire/2vabOVfL9P/>)

as the title of a song by Cream (ah, Eric Clapton)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZZ29IKiKHDs>

Last, but not least, it is the name of a very famous sketch by Monty Python. About 25 seconds of the actual sketch could be quite useable in class to obtain an idea of language of the 1920s, intonation and phonology, but it rapidly becomes gory and silly shortly thereafter (it IS Monty Python after all) !

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zmcrrreUVBeo>

Misalliance is a play written in 1909-1910 by George Bernard Shaw and is thought to be the at the origin of the now world famous expression about tennis which typifies the upper class nature and activities of the characters portrayed in drawing room comedy. Set in Edwardian era England, Shaw uses the play to express some of his ideas on marriage, and women imprisoned in still-existing Victorian standards of helplessness, passivity, and ignorance of all things worldly. He also pursues his theories that women, in order to escape the afore-mentioned horrors, are ruthless hunters when in pursuit of the perfect spouse. Hypatia, the heroine is fed up with the stuffy conventions that surround her, has had many marriage proposals, is engaged when the play starts, but longing for excitement. At the end of Act I, we learn from her father that, "She's not satisfied. Restless. Wants things to happen. Wants adventures to drop out of the sky." Indeed, shortly thereafter, an airplane crashes through the roof of the conservatory, bringing with it two unexpected guests, one of whom is a handsome young man. Hypatia's hunting instincts are immediately aroused ! There are, all in all, EIGHT marriage proposals during the 'afternoon' onstage - will Hypatia find an auspicious alliance, or a misalliance ?

The play exists online : http://emotionalliteracyeducation.com/classic_books_online/msali10.htm

Strawberries and cream...
 Approximately 23 tons of fruit (over 2 million berries) and 1,820 gallons of cream are served at Wimbledon during the fortnight of the championships. Legend would have it that George V introduced strawberries and cream to crowds gathered outside, however, according to experts at the Wimbledon Lawn Tennis museum, the tradition is as old as the championship, dating back to 1877. Back then, strawberries were only available at that time of year, and became a fashionable thing to eat since both the berries and the game signaled the arrival of summer.

Dress Code

The 'All England Club' accepted the colours of green and purple as the club official colours in 1909 and until 2006, every single official, including umpires, linesmen and ball boys and girls, were dressed in green. After this, the dress code changed for the first time, when the club approached American designer Ralph Lauren for designing all the official outfits in navy blue and cream. However, the rule of all white uniform still exists for the players, and has not changed since 1877.



The essential vocabulary, (and pertinent background information) :

'LET' - after a serve, when the ball grazes the net, the umpire shouts "LET" and not "net" as many believe. Let comes from ye olde English verb, letten, meaning to stop, or prevent.
'DEUCE' - this is a score of 40-40 and is very closely related to the French 'deux' since the original phrase was 'à deux du jeu', shortened to 'a deus' (the latter meaning 'two' in ye olde French) and thoroughly mispronounced as "Deuce!"
'LOVE' - many people claim that the origin of this word (meaning zero) comes from the French (again) word 'l'oeuf' since a zero resembles an egg. However, experts are almost certain that in actual fact, the origin is Dutch. At the time when tennis was becoming fashionable, there was a wave of immigration from the low countries due to Protestantism and the trauma it caused there... In those days, most games were played for money and the words "omme lof spielen" was applied to a player who scored no points - he "played for the honour"!

And what, pray tell, do people drink at Wimbledon? PIMM'S of course!

Pimm's is often regarded as the number two drink in Britain (tea, obviously, is the first). Pimm's first went on sale at the tournament in 1971, since then an average of 80,000 pints are sold to spectators.

The original Pimm's No 1 was made using gin, quinine and a secret mixture of herbs as an aid to digestion.

RECIPE:

Take a jug or glass and fill it with ice, mix one part Pimm's No. 1 with 3 parts chilled lemonade, add some mint, cucumber, orange and a strawberry.

