

Atheneum Society Paper
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Members of the Atheneum Society:

If you find yourself in a cluster of important people at a ritzy cocktail party and you need something to break the ice, try this:

"I was surprised to learn recently that human beings have three times more body hair than chimpanzees."

Wait for the admiring murmurs to subside, then boggle minds with this follow-up:

"On the other hand, we humans have less body hair than gibbons and gorillas."

I think that it's obvious to all that you've just become someone whom everybody wants to know.

Or maybe you're the keynote speaker at a Methodist Lawyer's Convention and want to display the range of your intellectual engagement, so you subtly steer your presentation to the late Hellenic period and wow them with this:

"Alexander the Great was a brilliant military strategist, of course, but what fascinates me was his eye for the crucial detail. As you probably know, for example, he demanded that his soldiers be clean-shaven because he didn't want the enemy to be able to grab their beards with one hand while stabbing them with the other. As a Methodist lawyer, I find this fascinating."

About now you're asking: Where does a person discover such helpful information? The obvious answer is by choosing not to walk out of this Atheneum paper entitled The Beard in History or Not By The Hair Of my Chiny Chin Chin.

Many interesting facts will be presented to you this very evening.
Facts such as:

Men's whiskers grow 5 to 6 inches a year.

The average man devotes 2,965 hours over his lifetime to standing in front of a mirror and shaving — the equivalent of four months.

In the matter of total facial-hair follicles, "people from Europe and the Middle East are hairiest, Asians the least hairy and Africans fall somewhere in between."

And — This is very important — the really *good* shaving brushes are made from a badger's stomach hair.

While none of this stuff is redemptive or inspiring, viewing the human comedy from such a cheeky perspective can be amusing, sometimes startling and occasionally humbling. I grew up in a time when hair assumed importance beyond all logic. During that time, America's dividing line was drawn by threads of hair. On one side were the longhairs. Everyone else was on the other side. Afro hair, long hair and beards defined many things: rebellion, drugs, the sexual revolution, amplified music. But let's not

forget, long hair and beards defined idealism too. In the year 1976 - our nation's bicentennial - I grew my first real beard. "Real" defined as an actual beard you could see from more than five feet away. I've been beardless twice since then, and then only for money and only for the time it took to grow back.

In the golden days of history no public figure in his right mind would venture out into the world without a beard at least the size and shape of a beer barrel and that made up at least a quarter of his total body weight. A beard was a status symbol, something to be cherished by all the family. Not only that but a really enviable face-bush was also an indication of intelligence and respectability, even heroism and genius. In Victorian London there were clubs for which to gain entry a member was expected to sport a beard of length reaching at least to mid-chest level. During some periods of history it was popularly said that a man was not truly a gentleman if his beard was not of a size capable of concealing at least a medium sized turkey.

The 3rd Earl of Dorchester, Sir Edward Mowby is remembered as boasting of having a beard of such awe-inspiring enormosity that once, after a week of hectic hunting in Glostershire, his manservant uncovered from within the depths of his beard 2 owls, 5 rabbits, a badger, a brace of partridges, 3 foxes, a 6 muntjak deers, numerous squirrels, field mice and wood pigeons, several sheep, the missing pack of hounds of the west Chummley hunt and the rare white stag they had been chasing when it chose to seek sanctuary in the pride of Sir Mowby's chin.

This past summer saw the fashion furor over Al Gore's beard, which he had grown during a trip to Europe, reach its peak. Political consultants usually advise candidates to shave, and given the reaction to Gore's whiskers, it's not hard to see why. Time magazine wrote: Gore "looks more like an accountant on the lam from the IRS than a White House-compatible action figure". The New York Post called it "scrawny and grey-patched". The Boston Herald remarked that it "might cover up some of the added chin heft" of his rumored post-election weight gain. The only compliment came from USA Today, which suggested that the beard "helps Gore appear more relaxed and less wooden." Would that this were true - for poor old Al's sake.

What is it about a beard that so engages the gossip pundits? Beards were *de rigueur* in most ancient civilizations up to the Greek and Roman eras. Since then shaving has been the norm in most Western societies. Anthropologist Desmond Morris thinks that shaving brings three advantages: 1) It makes you look younger (babies are smooth faced); 2) it makes you look friendlier (it's easier to read your expressions and see your smile); and 3) it makes you appear cleaner (although this is of dubious medical value). Because beards are a gender signal and exaggerate the male's jutting chin, "the removal of them on a voluntary and regular basis must indicate a desire on the part of men to damp down their primeval assertiveness."

This desire to appear less assertive may not stem entirely from social pressure. Recent psychological studies suggest that women find male faces most attractive when they are masculine-looking but not hypermasculine; women look for dominant males, but ones who are still friendly enough to invest in their offspring-and they tend to see those traits in clean-shaven faces. Perhaps this is why the wife or girlfriend of a closeted gay man is often called a "beard" - she simultaneously advertises the man's masculinity while promoting his deceit.

It is this uncertainty, more than anything else, that may account for the absence of beards in modern politics. Not surprisingly, democratically elected politicians have tended to follow fashion trends. Our presidents were clean-shaven for the first half of the 19th century. Lincoln famously grew a beard just before taking office in 1860, and even then it did not rise above the lower lip. Except for his successor, Andrew Johnson, who was clean-shaven, and Grover Cleveland, who had only a mustache, beards held

sway for the rest of the century. For the record, Rutherford Hayes (1877-81) had the longest beard, and the last bearded president was Benjamin Harrison (1899-1903) since the public health experts at the turn of the century believed that beards carried germs into the home.) Since then only Teddy Roosevelt and William Howard Taft have sported any kind of whiskers. Mustaches - a compromise between primeval assertiveness and civilized cooperation - became popular in the mid-20th century and beards became popular again in the '60s and '70s but only among the counterculture.

Facial hair doesn't fare much better in politics these days. Congressman Mike Lowry once used beard-growth as a threat: He proclaimed in the 1980s that he would not shave until President Reagan balanced the budget. The press remarked that the beard made him look like Yasser Arafat, and Lowry reneged on his promise by shaving before his unsuccessful 1988 Senate run. There are currently two U.S. senators with beards. One, New Jersey's Jon Corzine, has the luxury of bankrolling his own campaigns; and the other, Minnesota's Paul Wellstone, is a short, sincere, left-wing ex-professor who needed a masculine makeover. (He was initially elected without a beard.) Bill Clinton sported a beard on and off during his Rhodes-scholar and law-school years but shaved it before entering Arkansas politics.

Shaving is something half the human race does every morning of their lives, or at least six mornings out of seven. In ancient times among many peoples the furry chin was considered a sign of strength and manhood; it was highly prized, and removal was regarded as a degrading punishment. Popular wisdom holds that beards evolved as protection from the cold, but beards appear in the tropics, and the Eskimos cannot grow them. Some scientists now speculate that beards evolved as cooling devices, to whisk sweat off the faces of hunters.

The early Egyptians, however, usually shaved their beards, except in time of mourning. Among the Jews an unkempt, neglected beard was a sign of grief. In Greece all men wore beards until the 4th century BC, when the Macedonian conqueror Alexander the Great ordered his soldiers to shave as a precaution against being seized by the beard in battle.

Shaving became popular among the Romans about the same time. The Roman general Scipio Africanus the Elder was the first Roman to shave every day, according to the Roman historian Pliny the Elder. The beard was popular again among Romans during the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD. The ancient Germans considered a clean-shaven face evidence of servitude.

Men have generally employed the proven monkey-see, monkey-do approach to facial grooming, which is to say we do what the large majority of other guys do - who do what the style-setters do - who are men other men admire or fear - and who, long ago, tended to wear crowns. The fashion for beards has waxed and waned throughout history. When kings still counted and beards were in fashion, kings set the style for beards.

In France, beards were fashionable until Louis XIII became king of France as a child in 1610; his beardlessness brought the clean-shaven face into vogue. About the beginning of the 18th century a similar attitude developed in Spain on the accession of Philip V, who was unable to grow a beard. In 1705 a law was passed by the Russian emperor Peter the Great making shaving compulsory. The law was not always observed, however, and those who persisted in wearing a beard were taxed in proportion to their rank.

A similar tax was imposed in England for a time during the reign of Henry VIII, but about 1535 Henry restored the beard to fashion by wearing one himself. Beards were immensely popular during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, particularly among those who moved in court circles; the extreme styles in beard trims and the foppish behavior of the wearers frequently evoked criticism from the Puritans. The fantastic

fashions of the Elizabethan age were modified in time, and by the reign of Charles I, in the second quarter of the 17th century, the pointed Vandyke beard, a relatively conservative style of trim, was in favor. After the accession of Charles II to the English throne in 1660, beards became less fashionable in that country.

During the 18th century few Englishmen wore beards, and even a mustache was regarded as the mark of a foreigner. Toward the close of the century, as wigs went out of fashion, beards again began to come into vogue. The dictates of fashion brought a large number of beard styles successively into favor. Most men wore at least a mustache, and a large majority wore beards of the widest possible range of styles and sizes.

Massachusetts farmer Joseph Palmer grew a beard in 1830, when beards were out. Boys threw rocks at him, a preacher preached that his whiskers were "a satanic device," and finally some men jumped him and tried to remove his beard. He fought them off but was fined for assaulting his attackers. He refused to pay and was jailed, but a grass-roots movement was formed on his behalf, and he was released.

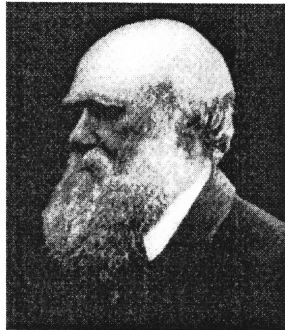
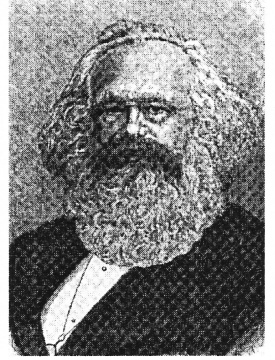
After World War I the custom of wearing beards almost disappeared in the Western world, except among certain Orthodox Jews, who strictly observed the biblical prohibition against cutting the hair, and among those who wore beards to proclaim their freedom from convention. In the 1960s beards again became popular, at first as a mark of unconventional taste and opinions but later simply as a fashion. By the 1980s well-trimmed beards had gained in popularity among a considerable number Americans.

The extent of beard culture does not end here, it would be scandalous to give an Atheneum paper on the beard in history without exploring its nose-lurking counterpart, the mustache. While mustaches never made the impact on history that the beard did, it can not be ignored when examining the symbolic usages of facial hair and its impact on the subconscious mind. The expert in this field was, of course, Freud, although his revolutionary work on facial hair was largely ignored by his ignorant contemporaries who thought his superficial nonsense about dreams and Oedipus complexes somehow more important. Freud's theory was that while a vast beard symbolized a vast intellect, a sharp mustache denoted a sharp mind, both practical and more able to apply knowledge, as well as a strong personality. Freud himself, after years of research, pulled off the near impossible and achieved the best of both worlds, both an admirable beard and a beautifully shaped yet delicately defined mustache on the same face, one seemingly placed on top of the other so as to reap the benefits of both. But, proving that smart guys can be idiots, Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860), the German philosopher whose theories on the primacy of the will influenced Freud and Nietzsche, wanted beards outlawed because he believed they shielded the inherently sinister features of a criminal's face. However, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad are usually portrayed with beards. On the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel: God has a beard, and Adam doesn't. Lenin wore a beard. So did Lincoln. Washington and Jefferson were clean-shaven. Benito Mussolini, the Italian dictator, was rabid for razors. Noting that Julius Caesar was clean-shaven, he inveighed: "I am anti-whiskers. Fascism is anti-whiskers. Whiskers are a sign of decadence."

Here now is what my research has found to be the Top Three Beards from history.

In at number one, who else but Karl Marx. His illustrious career as radical writer and socialist icon was accented by what could be called THE defining beard from the 19th Century, if not the whole of history. To say that Marx's beard was 'large' would be almost as much of an understatement as saying Marx thought the Capitalist system was 'a bit iffy'. Enormously bushy, at the apex of its glory his bristling frontal mane waxed full-bodied yet almost wedge-shaped at the bottom like a tome of righteous knowledge. As the real focus and inspiration for a hundred years of socialists and other working class radicals, Marx's beard has retained its title as number one beard. In his masterwork The Communist Manifesto Marx provided an outline for a society working in harmony with no repression or inequality. In his masterful beard he provided an example of this society of harmony and equality between the fleas, bugs and nesting pigeons. While

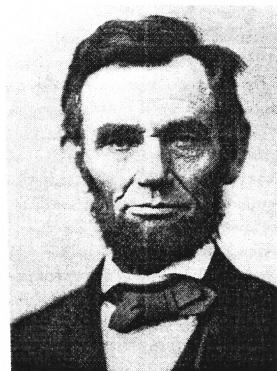
Marx knew that Capitalism was doomed he knew his beard would live on.



The second position is held by Charles Darwin.

Darwin's beard truly put the V in venerable. In his earlier years it could startle the ears off a Golapolean native at forty paces and in his later years he was pleased to see it had evolved into what became known as the 'Moses look', no doubt pissing off the clergy admirably. Darwin deserves recognition for special dedication to the big beard cause for persevering with his beard despite the inconvenience of it scaring away both animals and small children on sight. However, his perseverance may also be attributed to his beards usefulness when it came to smuggling rare species through customs to avoid quarantine.

The number three beard is America's own Abraham Lincoln.



While Europe has undoubtedly been the home of the beard in recent centuries the new world also provided some valiant attempts. The new style developed in America was a snappy little number, modeled most famously upon the noble chin of Abraham Lincoln. This variation in the beard theme is the 'understated beard', a growth which made up for what it lacked in the sheer enormity it made up for in cheek-bone defining pointiness. This beard is also a modest beard because, while Marx's enormous bush points directly to his equally enormous intellect, Lincoln's beards subtly hints at it, as if to say "aah! I could grow a bigger beard if I chose to but I do not wish to vulgarly boast about my colossal brain." So while Lincoln's is not strictly a "big beard" in the classical sense, it has nevertheless won its place in the heart of beard-lovers everywhere.

There are several basic types of beards. For those of you now considering growing your own Atheneum Centennial Beard and enhancing your masculinity as well as your looks and I have several suggestions.

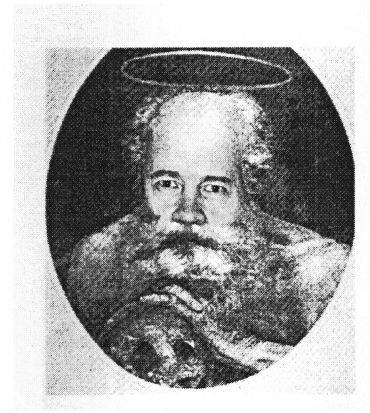
The Royal Beard

The Royal Beard, as made famous by Sir Walter Raleigh and modeled here by Dan Kemp, has, as you can clearly see, many royal qualities. Note it's pointiness, which is accented with the ruffled collar of the day. At the time this beard would let others know of the owner's power at court - something Dan, as an attorney, would find very useful. The owner is confident of his beard and grooms it well. Unfortunately this type of beard was limited to the upper classes and soon became quite rare. But this should not deter you from making that all important "kingly" decision.



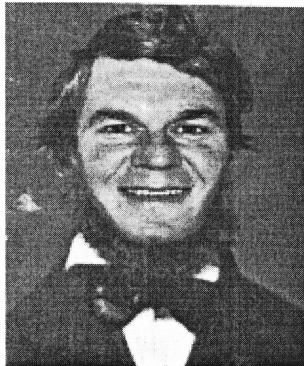
The Holy Hermit

The Holy Hermit, wonderfully modeled by David Cavanah and also worn proudly by Lewis Spencer, shows exactly what can happen when you leave an old person by themselves for too long. Note it's scruffiness - the uneven length shows an uncaring for the beard, there is no understanding between beard and owner. Possible dangers may occur at this point - the wearer may suddenly discard all his clothing and choose to live in the bus station - lice and other small insects may form colonies inside the beard leading to yet another Wendell Rorie Wildlife documentary. Beware of this beard. If you see it, call the nearest Emergency Beard Groomer.



The Kentucky Colonel

The beard made famous by Buffalo Bill and later, Colonel Harlan Sanders (and modeled by Logan Askew) is the true southerner's answer to facial hair. It is technically a true "goatee", denoting a small tuft of hair dangling from the chin in the true billygoat fashion. Discreet, yet forceful, it requires a bit more maintenance so as not to get out of control. Always better in white or a mixture of white and gray, it is a fine choice for the older, more distinguished gentleman.

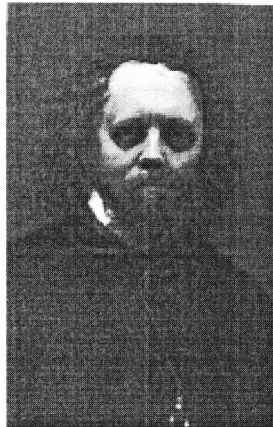


The Bubba

The Bubba Beard, proudly worn here by Ken Dougherty, although not a beard in the strictest sense as the whiskers never actually make it up north of the jaw line, nevertheless isn't afraid to make the statement "I aint ashamed to eat no possum." This beard is special in that it has been known to be made up of various color hairs, ranging from black to brown, even ginger. Seen often around Crofton, this trick beard can sometimes be utilized as a duck blind and is often used as a napkin at fancy wedding parties.

The Zeus

Beardliness has always been associated with godliness. The Zeus, modeled by Bob Cope, is found most frequently on the statues of ancient Rome but some men choose to embrace its power and status as their own. You can see - as well as sense the sheer greatness and weightiness of it's well-groomed mass. As most women will attest, this really is some granite worth holding on to.



The Mad Poet

This interesting beard, made popular by Alfred Tenneson, and shown here by top supermodel, Marvin Denison shows a wildness that only a mad poet can possess. Many believe that the wildness is caused by excess static energy caused by greater powers, others believe it is a perm gone wrong. Some say it is the beard alone that enhances the genius of those that choose to wear it. Others say that it's the opium. Whatever the answer, one thing is clear. This is not a beard for the faint of heart.

The Santa Claus

This beard, shown here by Wendell Lynch, is actually a combination between Jolly Old St. Nicholas and the drunk guy down at the library. Unfortunately, society dictates that the wearer of this type of beard will soon find himself selling pencils outside Area Bank and caught reading Left Behind novels out loud to farm animals. Truly a wild and untamed growth, the wearer soon becomes convinced that he can deliver presents to all the world's children in a single night. Although this is not a necessarily a *bad* goal in life, it is one that offers little in actual monetary compensation with the exception of a room at Western State paid for by the taxpayers.



Of course the developments in Beardology understandably provoked indignation among the feminist community. If facial hair is a natural sign of intelligence then where does this leave women? Biologically incapable of being men's intellectual equals due to natural inability to produce facial hair? Feminists have argued that for this reason the 'bearded lady' in the past regarded as sideshow freak was actually the ultimate gesture of girl-power, women not only wearing the trousers but the beards as well and in the near future we suspect that all women will have beards, equal to men in rights and facial hair.

Despite all we have learned, it seems that, sadly, the Age of Beards is passed. No longer do our hero's and role models impress by facial hair alone, in our modern age the credibility that in the past only came with a good full-bodied beard can now be gained though other means. But imagine what a wonderful world it would be if things were not so!