

Lowering the tone

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 10 Feb 2003

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3842>

Exported from an unofficial mirror of a public mailing list. Copyright in each message remains with the person who wrote it. Email addresses are obscured as `user at host`, the form the original archive published. This file was rebuilt from parsed fields rather than retained headers, so it is faithful in content but not byte-exact.

Nigel Price — 10 Feb 2003, 12:19

Resolutely sticking to the TAD trail, like a bloodhound on a scent, the tireless Mantis asks:

Brings us back to the "William" puzzle piece.
Why William?

Is it simply too gross to point to the phallic associations of the name, or at least its diminutive? Wolfe is not above the occasional low pun and might well have chuckled at the thought that Lara, the goddess of erotic love, loves "Willies"?

Crude, I know, but possible.

For a long time, I was unsure whether this particular nursery usage of the name "Willie" was known in the States, but they showed the recent Austin Powers film on TV last night, and the two minutes of it that I watched made exactly this pun, playing on the singer Willie Nelson's name in the context of the shape of Dr Evil's phallic rocket ship.

Sorry to lower the tone of the discussion.

Nigel

Michael Andre-Driussi — 10 Feb 2003, 16:25 · follows Nigel Price

Nigel wrote:
Is it simply too gross to point to the phallic associations of the name, or
at least its diminutive?

No, not at all. Thanks for raising the point -- bringing it up -- drawing it to our attention.

For all I know "Attis" might have a similar etymology (aside from association).

Speaking of Attis, the FUNK & WAGNALLS STANDARD DICTIONARY OF FOLKLORE, MYTHOLOGY, AND LEGEND has some nice notes: mention of the pine connection, which we've noted before; a calendar of events, which goes like this

===

March 22 -- pine tree is cut and brought into the sanctuary of Cybele where it is "swathed with woolen bands, decked with violets" and has an effigy of a young man tied to it.

March 23 -- no comments given.

March 24 -- Day of Blood, with bloodletting and probably the self-emasculation rites.

March 25 -- the resurrection celebration in a "licentious carnival." (I've always thought that this must be among the non-castrated, but this just shows my own ridiculous biases.)

March 26 -- day of repose.

March 27 -- festival closes with a procession of the goddess image to the Almo River where wagon and image were bathed.

===

Beware the ides of March, indeed!

Intriguing, but Green left Earth on March 14, came back April 15.

Arthur Cotterell's A DICTIONARY OF WORLD MYTHOLOGY has this tidbit:

"Union was achieved through either self-mutilation or a sacred marriage: to all devotees was open what had once been the prerogative of West Asian kingship" (under ATTIS).

I find this interesting as a case where there is mention of an option to self-castration: a "sacred marriage."

=mantis=