

WEEKLY ENGLISH PRACTICE

Misogynist murder ballad banned in Wales

The Welsh Rugby Union recently announced that choirs performing at international rugby matches at the Principality Stadium have been banned from singing the Tom Jones classic, Delilah. Coach John **wades into** the debate



Delilah, the misogynist murder ballad, was a hit in 1968. The song is a crowd favourite at Welsh rugby matches. It contains the lines:

"I saw the light on the night that I passed by her window,

I saw the flickering shadows of love on her blind,

She was my woman,

As she deceived me, I watched and went out of my mind,

She stood there laughing

I felt the knife in my hand and she laughed no more!"

Inevitably, the right have **cried foul** and accused the WRU of being **snowflakes** and indulging in cancel culture.

However, a closer look at the issue shows there is more to the story than just another example of **woke PC** culture.

The decision follows a week in which the chief executive of the Welsh Rugby Union was forced to resign, following allegations of sexism, misogyny and racism within the organisation. Maybe the WRU is trying to put right some long overdue wrongs?

Domestic violence kills two women a week in the UK. All the charities that work in this field—and the police—say there's a noticeable spike in the number of domestic violence incidents on international match weekends.

Perhaps the actions of WRU will draw attention to the pandemic of domestic violence? It's no fun for women who are victims of violence by men to have to listen to thousands of people sing the song.

Feminists have pointed out that for men who kill their partners, such as the fictional husband of Delilah, the defence of provocation, which reduces murder to **manslaughter** if successful, is **tailor-made**. It can be enough for the defendant to show that they were "provoked", usually, it is claimed, by her "**nagging**" or alleged infidelity.

As Julie Bindel pointed out in the Guardian:

"The lyrics in Delilah perfectly evoke the excuse made by many men who kill their wives. I have sat in murder trials, hearing almost exactly: '*She was my woman. As she deceived me I watched and went out of my mind*'."

Lots of people are indignant about the 'banning' of Delilah. Let's hope they get equally indignant about domestic violence.



by ECP coach

John Hird

Word list

wade into sth: to begin sth energetically

cry foul: to complain that someone has done something that is not fair

snowflakes: someone who is overly sensitive

'woke': aware of and actively attentive to important societal facts and issues (especially issues of racial and social justice)

PC: politically correct

manslaughter: the unlawful killing of a human being in which there is no prior intent to kill

tailor-made: fashioned to a particular taste, purpose, demand, etc.

nagging: continually faultfinding, complaining, or petulant

Let's chat about that!

1. Give a summary of the text to your coach and/or classmates.
2. What has the Welsh Rugby Union actually announced?
3. How has the political right reacted to the news?.
4. Explain the words and phrases, 'snowflakes' and 'woke' 'PC.'
5. What are the positive and negative aspects of the WRU announcement?
6. Who is Julie Bindel and what is her point?
7. Are you surprised by the song lyrics and the artists who sang them on page 2.

Misogyny & Sexism in Song Lyrics

Click on the titles to hear the songs - Some surprising bands and artists

RUN FOR YOUR LIFE

Well, I'd rather see you dead, little girl

Than to be with another man

You better keep your head, little girl

Or I won't know where I am

STUPID GIRL

Shut up, shut up, shut up, shut up, shut up

Shut up, shut up, shut up, shut up, shut up

Shut up, shut up, shut up

HEY JOE

Hey Joe, where you goin' with that gun of your hand?

Hey Joe, I said, where you goin' with that gun in your hand? Oh

I'm goin' down to shoot my old lady

You know I caught her messin' 'round with another man, yeah

YOUNG GIRL

You led me to believe you're old enough

To give me love / And now it hurts to know the truth

HE HIT ME (AND IT FELT LIKE A KISS)

He hit me and it felt like a kiss

He hit me and I knew he loved me

If he didn't care for me

I could have never made him mad

But he hit me and I was glad

TO REDRESS THE BALANCE...

YOU DON'T OWN ME by Lesley Gore

You don't own me

I'm not just one of your many toys

You don't own me

Don't say I can't go with other boys

And don't tell me what to do

Don't tell me what to say

And please, when I go out with you

Don't put me on display 'cause

You don't own me...

Don't try to change me in any way

You don't own me

Don't tie me down 'cause I'd never stay