



American Expression E1880 All and sundry

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"All and sundry" is an idiomatic expression in the English language that refers to every person or thing, without exception. It is often used to emphasize the inclusivity of a group or to describe a situation where everyone or everything is involved or considered.

The phrase "all and sundry" has its origins in Middle English, where "sundry" meant various or miscellaneous. Over time, the phrase evolved to encompass the broader sense of "everyone and everything." When people use this expression, they are essentially saying that no one or nothing is excluded from the situation or discussion.

For example, if someone were to say, "I invited all and sundry to the party," it means that they extended invitations to every person they could think of, leaving no one out. It emphasizes the comprehensive nature of the invitation list and the desire to include a wide range of people.

In a business or organizational context, you might hear someone say, "We need to consider the input of all and sundry before making a decision." Here, the phrase underscores the importance of gathering input and feedback from every relevant party, ensuring that no perspective is left out of the decision-making process.

The use of "all and sundry" can also convey a sense of openness and transparency. When someone says, "We will make our financial records available to all and sundry," it means that they are willing to share these records with anyone who is interested, leaving no room for secrecy or exclusivity.

However, it's important to note that while "all and sundry" implies inclusivity, it is still an idiomatic expression, and in some cases, it may not be meant to be taken literally. For instance, if someone says, "I told all and sundry about my plans," they might not have actually informed every single person but rather a wide and diverse group of individuals.

In literature and storytelling, this phrase can be used for dramatic effect. For example, a character in a novel might declare, "I will search for my lost treasure high and low, and I will tell all and sundry of my adventures." In this context, it emphasizes the character's determination to share their story far and wide.

In summary, "all and sundry" is an idiomatic expression that means every person or thing, with no exceptions. It is used to stress inclusivity, comprehensiveness, and openness in various situations, whether in invitations, decision-making processes, or storytelling. While it implies a broad scope, it is important to consider the context in which it is used to fully understand its intended meaning.

Questions for Discussion

1. How does the idiomatic expression "all and sundry" contribute to inclusivity and openness in communication and decision-making processes?
2. Can you provide examples from your personal or professional life where the phrase "all and sundry" would accurately describe a situation or action taken?
3. In what contexts or situations might the use of "all and sundry" be particularly effective in conveying a message or emphasizing inclusivity?
4. Are there any cultural or regional variations in idiomatic expressions similar to "all and sundry" in other languages? How do these expressions reflect inclusivity in those cultures?
5. Have you ever encountered situations where the use of "all and sundry" may have been misunderstood or misinterpreted due to its idiomatic nature? How can one ensure effective communication when using such expressions?