



American Expression E2014 Born yesterday

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The phrase "born yesterday" is an idiom in the English language that is often used to describe someone who is naive, gullible, or lacking in experience or knowledge. It is a figurative expression that implies that the person in question is so inexperienced that they might as well have been born only recently, as if they have no awareness of the world's complexities or the potential for deception.

When someone refers to another person as "born yesterday," they are usually making a commentary on that individual's perceived lack of sophistication, insight, or street-smarts. It suggests that the person is easily fooled or manipulated due to their innocence or inexperience. This idiom is typically used in a slightly derogatory or condescending manner, as it implies that the individual should have known better or should be more aware of the realities of life.

The origin of the phrase can be traced back to the idea that someone who was born just the day before would have no knowledge of the world or its ways. It's a way of highlighting the contrast between someone who is inexperienced and someone who is more worldly-wise. The phrase has been used in literature, film, and everyday conversation to describe characters or individuals who display a lack of awareness or savvy in various situations.

In literature and storytelling, characters who are portrayed as "born yesterday" often serve as foils to other characters who are more astute or cunning. This literary device allows authors to explore themes of innocence, deception, and personal growth. The character who is "born yesterday" may undergo a transformation or gain wisdom as the story progresses, highlighting the contrast between their initial naivety and their eventual understanding of the world.

In everyday conversation, the phrase is commonly used to criticize or mock someone's lack of knowledge or awareness in a particular situation. For example, if someone falls for an obvious scam or believes a far-fetched story, they might be told that they must have been "born yesterday" to have been so easily fooled.

It's important to note that while "born yesterday" is often used in a negative context to suggest gullibility or ignorance, it is not always meant to be harsh or hurtful. It can also be used humorously or affectionately among friends or in lighthearted situations to playfully tease someone about a momentary lapse in judgment or awareness.

In conclusion, the idiom "born yesterday" is a figurative expression used to describe someone who is perceived as naive, inexperienced, or lacking in knowledge. It conveys the idea that the person is so innocent or gullible that they might as well have been born only recently, with no awareness of the complexities of the world. This phrase is often used in literature, film, and everyday conversation to explore themes of innocence, deception, and personal growth or to humorously highlight someone's lack of awareness in a particular situation.

#### Questions for Discussion

1. Can you think of examples from literature or film where a character is initially portrayed as "born yesterday" but undergoes personal growth or gains wisdom throughout the story? How does this transformation contribute to the narrative?
  2. In what situations have you encountered or used the expression "born yesterday" in everyday conversation, and what were the underlying circumstances that led to its use?
  3. How can the idea of someone being "born yesterday" be seen as a commentary on the balance between innocence and experience in human development, and what are the potential consequences of being overly trusting or naive?
  4. Are there instances in which being "born yesterday" in a specific context or field of knowledge can be advantageous? Can a lack of preconceived notions or biases lead to innovative thinking or fresh perspectives?
  5. How do cultural, generational, or regional differences influence the perception of someone as "born yesterday"? Are there situations where individuals from certain backgrounds are more likely to be labeled as naive or inexperienced?
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