



TOPICS

Betty Friedan and The Feminine Mystique; Taos Pueblos; amidst versus among versus between; stuck in reverse; to keep minutes to lose hours

GLOSSARY

women's rights movement – an organized effort to get women the same opportunities as men; actions that got women the opportunity to be treated the same as men in the workplace and in government

* The women's rights movement in the 1970s helped women get more jobs outside the home because people realized that women were just as able as men.

advocate – a person who publicly talks about the importance of something and supports it; a person who talks a lot about an issue or problem, hoping to get others interested in it

* Martin Luther King, Jr. was an advocate for civil rights. He believed that all people were equal and he traveled around the country giving speeches.

society – a group of people with the same culture or interests; a group of people who all live in the same country or city.

* It is not unusual for people in American society to drive long distances to work. In other societies, people live close to where they work.

mystique – a set of ideas or beliefs about a person or type of person, usually with some mystery or secret about how they are able to do what they can do or achieve what they can achieve

* There is a mystique about this old house, some believing that those who enter it will have bad luck.

feminine – womanly; acting like a woman

* Marilyn Monroe was considered very feminine because she wore dresses, high-heeled shoes, and makeup.

homemaker – someone who stays at home and takes care of the home and children

* More and more men today are deciding to be homemakers and staying at home with their children instead of working outside the home.



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synonymous with – the same as; having the same meaning as something else

* For many people, fast food, such as hamburgers and French fries, is synonymous with unhealthy food

to inhabit – for a person, animal, or group to live in a particular place or a specific location

* New York City is inhabited by many different kinds of people from many different places.

siege – attack; when someone or some group enters a place, prevents those there from getting supplies, such as food and water, and takes over

* During the Revolutionary War, the American colonies were under siege from the British. The colonists fought back and won their independence from England.

sovereign – ruling or governing oneself; being independent from the control of others

* After winning the Revolutionary War, the United States was a sovereign country with its own government and laws.

ritual – actions or behaviors done as part of a religious ceremony, usually done in the same way and/or in the same order each time

* One ritual in our church is for everyone to sing at the end of the service and for our priest to say goodbye to each person as he or she leaves.

designation – a name or title that is officially given; a name, title, or description that something gets as an honor or something important and respected

* Our city was officially given the designation the “healthiest city in the U.S.”

amidst / amid – surrounded by; during

* Grundel is able to continue working, even amidst/amid loud construction noises coming from the neighbor’s house.

among – surrounded by; dividing between two or more people

* It’s easy to forget daily troubles when you’re among good friends.

between – at or across the space between two things; in the period separating

* Let’s plant these flowers between those two trees.

stuck in reverse – only able to move backward and unable to move forward

* The boy rode his bicycle backward down the street, as though he was stuck in reverse.



to keep minutes – to keep a written account or record of what happens during a meeting

* Lionel is keeping minutes of this meeting, making sure that our major decisions are noted.

WHAT INSIDERS KNOW

Ms. Magazine

Ms. magazine was founded by Gloria Steinem. She was a “journalist” (reporter; news writer) and an “activist” (someone who works toward political or social change) who was “known for” (others know her as being) speaking publicly about women’s rights. As a journalist in the 1970’s, Gloria Steinem realized that there were no magazines that focused on women that were controlled by women. She and several other activists decided to start a magazine. One of her friends suggested she call it Ms.

In the 1970’s, there was a lot of “controversy” (difference in opinion) around this term because men used the title “Mr.,” which gave no “indication” (sign; information) if a man was married or not. However, women at the time used either “Miss” or “Mrs.,” indicating whether they were married or not. This difference, some women thought, “defined” (stated; described) a woman by her “marital status” (whether one is single, married, divorced, widowed, etc.). Many women thought that this was unfair and so the title “Ms.” became widely used, especially for women who wanted to keep their own last name after marriage. (The tradition is for women to change her last name to her husband’s after marriage.)

Ms. magazine is still published today and features articles about women related to business, politics, and activism. It has also featured controversial topics in the past. For example, in 1972, it published an article about women who admitted having had an “abortion” (operation to end a pregnancy), which was illegal at that time in many states. The magazine has also featured other topics not typically included in women’s magazines, such as “domestic violence” (family members hurting each other physically), the “wage gap” (difference in salary) between male and female workers, and many more.



COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

You're listening to ESL Podcast's English Café number 417.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast's English Café episode 417. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

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This week we're going to talk about a famous American author – a famous American writer by the name of Betty Friedan, who wrote a book called The Feminine Mystique. We're also going to talk about Taos Pueblo, which is a historic town in New Mexico, in the southwest part of the United States. And, as always, we'll answer a few of your questions. Let's get started.

We begin this Café with a discussion of a famous American author, Betty Friedan (Friedan). Betty Friedan is most famous for her writings about, and participation in, the women's rights movement. The word "movement" here means an organized effort or an organized attempt to accomplish some political goal. "Women's rights" would refer to the rights of women – things that may be specific to the rights of women. The women's rights movement was popular in the 1960s and 70s, in particular. That's the time when Betty Friedan first became famous as someone who was a leader of that movement.

Friedan was what we would call an "advocate" as well as an author. An "advocate" (advocate) means that she worked hard to protect the rights of other people. She, of course, was also a woman, but when we talk about someone being an advocate, we're talking about them trying to protect the rights of other people. We sometimes call a lawyer or an attorney an "advocate" – someone who argues for you in front of the judge.

Betty Friedan was born on February 4th, 1921. When she was growing up, in the 1920s and 30s, she experienced the traditional roles for girls and young women, especially when it came to children; taking care of the children was something that women were always expected to do. There were some women who went to college and had jobs during the early part of the 20th century in the United



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States. Many of them, however, when they got married quit their jobs to raise their families – to be at home and take care of their children. Betty Friedan didn't want her life to be like that.

She decided to go to college, to a women's college by the name of Smith. After she graduated from Smith College, she got a job working at a magazine in New York. In 1947, she also married. She married a man by the name of Carl Friedan. They had a son in 1948, but Betty went back to work two years after her son was born. When she got pregnant with her second child, in 1952, she was fired from her job. She was told she had to leave her job. So, Betty stayed home with her children and took care of them, as most American mothers did at this time.

In 1956, Betty and Carl had their third child. Betty was not happy being at home all the time with her children. It was what society, what people living in the United States, expected of women, but she wasn't happy with it. She felt there was something missing in her life. She decided to go and interview some of her friends who were also mothers to see if they were happy.

Now, it's very important to understand that Betty Friedan's group of interviewees – the women that she spoke with – were all, or most all of them, part of her own social circle. She was a college-educated woman in the 1940s – that wasn't a very common thing, at least not as common as it is today. So, the women with whom she spoke were certainly not typical of American women during this time. That's a point that some people sometimes forget when they look at her work, at her book.

The book that made her famous was a collection of these interviews, and her analysis of them, called The Feminine Mystique. "Feminine" (feminine) refers to females, to women. "Mystique" (mystique) refers to a set of beliefs about a person or a kind of person. The word "mystique" is often related to something that is secret or mysterious about this person. The title of the book refers to, or talks about, the ideas that many people had about women, especially in the 1950s and early 1960s.

They talked about their beliefs about what a woman should do as she got older, their beliefs about marriage, and about the role or the job or the function of women within a marriage. In the book, Friedan talked about what her friends from college had said when she interviewed them. She talked about how women – the women she interviewed – wanted more from life than to be happy homemakers. A "homemaker" (homemaker) is a person who stays at home, cooks, cleans, and takes care of the children in the family.



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Friedan talked about how many of her friends love their children but also wanted to work outside the home. Friedan said that society was making women do something they did not want to do, which was to stay at home. As you can imagine, the book was very shocking, very surprising to many people. Many people got angry at the message of the book and said that Friedan was wrong about what American women wanted from their lives.

The book became popular and made Betty Friedan a national figure – a very well-known author and speaker. The term “The Feminine Mystique” later became synonymous with – or the same as, or having the same meaning as – the women's rights movement. So, there's a connection between this title “The Feminine Mystique” and the popularity of the women's rights movement, especially during the later 1960s and 1970s.

Friedan was, of course, happy that her books sold a lot of copies – all authors are happy when their books sell a lot of copies – but she wanted to do more. She wanted women to become more involved in politics. So she started an organization, or helped start an organization, called the National Organization for Women, or NOW (now). This organization is still around, and some people think it's still important in the cause of women's rights. When Friedan grew up, women did not have the kinds of opportunities and choices that they do now.

Some people say that Betty Friedan's book and the movement that she founded are the cause of the changes in the American economy and in American society in general. Other people would point to or indicate other reasons why women's participation in the workforce – in the “job market,” as we might call it – has increased over the years that are unrelated to the political developments. But we're not here to answer that question, but rather to talk about why Betty Friedan is famous and continues to be a hero for many people in the women's rights movement. Friedan died on her 85th birthday, in 2006.

Now let's turn to our next topic, which is a town in the state of New Mexico, which is in the southwest part of the United States, in between the states of Arizona and Texas. The town we're going to talk about is Taos Pueblo. It's the oldest community, according to some, in the United States. It is primarily a “Native American” or “American Indian” community. It is inhabited by the Taos Indians. “To be inhabited” (inhabited) means to be lived in by a certain group.

Taos Pueblo is located, somewhat confusingly, outside of another town called “Taos.” So, we have Taos, and then we have Taos Pueblo. Taos is in New



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Mexico, about 70 miles north of the city of Santa Fe, New Mexico. I actually have a friend (or, well, not exactly a friend – a woman with whom I went to grade school and high school) who lives in Taos. I haven't talked to her in many, many years.

Taos Pueblo, then, is outside of Taos. It's rather large. Taos Pueblo takes up a very large area near the mountains of northern New Mexico. There are, however, only about 150 Native Americans who live in the actual town or pueblo full-time, all the time. There are an additional 1900 Native Americans who live on the land near Taos Pueblo but have houses in the pueblo itself where they go during special ceremonies.

It's not known exactly when Taos Pueblo was built, but many people believe it was at least one thousand years ago. During its long history as a Native American village, it has been attacked several times, both by Spanish and American settlers – people who were moving into that part of the world. The Pueblo has been under siege several times. “To be under siege” (siege) means that you are being attacked, usually from all sides. Typically, during a siege, there's no way for you to escape. The opposing or attacking army surrounds the city so that there's no way for you to leave.

The Spanish controlled Taos Pueblo, as they did most of the southwest of what is now the United States. Eventually, of course, the American government took possession of the land, and then the Taos Pueblo was under the control of the American government. Today, like all Native American communities in the United States, Taos Pueblo is what we would refer to as a “sovereign nation.” “To be sovereign” (sovereign) means that in some way the government of the Pueblo is independent of the government of the United States, or of the state in which they are located – in this case, New Mexico.

The Indian communities, the Native American communities, have – at least in areas where they have the land, where they own the land – their own government. They control their own people, they have their own police force, they have their own courts, and so forth. However, it wouldn't be right to think of the Native American communities in the United States as being independent countries. We talk about them as sovereign nations, but they don't have ambassadors to the United Nations. They don't have relations with other countries. It's more like what in other countries would be called an autonomous region – an area that has its own political institutions.



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The Taos Indians welcome visitors to their Pueblo. Visitors are an important part of their economy. People come during all times of the year to visit the town. The Pueblo buildings are very popular with tourists. The Pueblo buildings are similar to what we might now call “apartment buildings.” One of them in Taos Pueblo is five levels, or five stories tall. What’s interesting about the buildings is that they are made out of a material called “adobe” (adobe).

If you own a computer and are interested in graphics, you’ve probably heard of Adobe – the company Adobe. This is not a technology company, but rather a way of making bricks, a way of building buildings. Adobe is a material made in part from dirt and water. This mixture is left in the sun to dry after you mix the water and the dirt and what is called “straw” together. You then put that out into the sun where it dries, and then you use that like a brick to build the building. Adobe as a material helps control the heat inside the building so it doesn’t get too hot or too cold.

There are two main Pueblo buildings in Taos Pueblo where families live. Visitors to Taos Pueblo can also visit the many shops, the many stores around the central plaza or the central square. The Taos Indians sell a lot of traditional items such as pottery and jewelry that are, of course, decorated or have the images of the Taos Indian community.

Lucky visitors may also have a chance to see one of the traditional ceremonies, one of the traditional Native American ceremonies that take place in Taos Pueblo.

A “ceremony” is an official celebration – a public event that is meant to perform some sort of duty, often related to a religious belief. The most interesting ceremony among the Taos Indians is what is called a “Pow-wow” (Pow-wow). A “Pow-wow” is a ceremony where Indians – American Indians or Native Americans – from different nations come together and celebrate, wearing their traditional clothing and performing traditional dances and songs. Not all of these ceremonies, however, are open to the public. Some of them are just for the Native American community, especially those that have a more religious purpose.

Another building you can visit in Taos Pueblo is called the San Geronimo Chapel. This is a small church in the center of Taos Pueblo. Many of the Taos Indians practice Christianity. Of course, the Spanish settlers who first went to New Mexico were themselves Christians, and converted many of the Native Americans to Christianity – to Catholicism, primarily. There are also, however, still Native American rituals or religious acts that you can see in Taos Pueblo.



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I mentioned that tourism is very important for the economy of Taos Pueblo. They want people to come and visit there. The Pueblo itself is listed as one of the UNESCO “World Heritage” sites. UNESCO is, of course, an organization of the United Nations that in part attempts to protect and preserve important areas like the Taos Pueblo. I'm guessing they don't give them any money, but the designation of the site as a “World Heritage Site” may help to protect it from people who want to change it in the future. “Designation” refers to an official title, usually one that gives a certain person – or a certain area, in this case – some power or protection.

If you ever visit the United States and are in the state of New Mexico, I can definitely recommend visiting the Taos Pueblo. I'm sure you'll find it very interesting.

Now let's answer some of the questions you have sent to us.

Our first question comes from Denner (Denner) in Brazil. Denner wants to know what “amidst,” “between,” and “among” mean. Let's start with “amidst,” since it is the least common word – a word only seen in poetry and older writing (amidst). “Amidst” means, or can mean, “during a certain period of time.” “Amidst” can also mean “surrounded by” – “They stood amidst the crowd.” However, it's not a word you will typically read, much less hear. So, I don't want to spend very much time on it.

The other two words, “between” and “among,” are quite common, and we want to talk a little bit about those two words. The traditional rule that you may have heard from your English teacher or read in a grammar book is that we use the word “between” when there are two things we're talking about and “among” when we're talking about three or more things. Unfortunately, this is not a very good rule. It's a simple rule, but it's often wrong.

If we are talking about what we might describe as relationships – one-to-one relationships – then we use “between.” For example, “We'll keep this secret between you and me,” or “You have to choose between ice cream or cookies.” However, we don't limit the use of “between” to cases where there are just two individuals in the relationship that we're talking about. You could also use “between” for more than two. For example, “The differences between English, Italian, and Russian are significant.” Notice there are three things in that relationship, but we use the word “between.”



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If you are talking about a group where you are not thinking about each individual person or each individual thing as being distinct or separate, then you would use “among.” For example, “There was a disagreement among the people in the crowd.” “People” is plural. It refers to more than one person, but we’re talking about it as a group, and as a group we would use, in that case, “among.” “Among” can also be used when we’re referring to one individual in a larger group. “This book was among the collection of books in my father’s library.” There, it doesn’t really matter if we’re talking about two or three or twenty – we use “among.”

Sometimes the differences between “between” and “among” can be quite subtle, quite difficult to understand by some sort of rule. For example, if I say, “He walked between the trees,” I mean something slightly different than if I say, “He walked among the trees.” If I say, “between the trees,” it sounds as though he was walking on a road or a path. If I say, “He walked among the trees,” the idea is he was sort of going from one place to another but not following any specific direction.

Finally, I’ll add one more word here, which is “amongst” (amongst). “Amongst” is an older form of the word “among” and will be more commonly found in British English than in American English.

Our next question comes from Jose (Jose) in Colombia. Jose wants to know the meaning of an expression he heard in a song by Coldplay. The expression is “stuck in reverse.” “To be stuck” (stuck) means that you can’t move, usually because something is broken or something is preventing you from moving. The phrase “in reverse” (reverse) refers to the part of a car or a truck that allows you to change the speed of the car or to make the car go backwards. If you’re going backwards in the car, you are going “in reverse.” The opposite, at least for a car, would be “to be going forward.”

“To be stuck in reverse,” then, would be “unable to go forward.” You can only go backwards. So, in the Coldplay song, the expression “stuck in reverse” would probably refer to someone whose life is not very happy, who isn’t able to make progress in their life. They feel like they are moving in the wrong direction. I don’t know the exact meaning of the phrase in the song, but that’s the general meaning.

Anyway, finally, Ali (Ali) from Iran wants to know the meaning of the expression “to keep minutes and lose hours.” The sentence he saw was, “A committee is a group of people that keeps minutes and loses hours.” This is sort of a joke



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expression, a funny expression. The key to understanding it is the word “minutes” (minutes). “Minutes” can be a unit of time. We could be talking about 60 minutes in an hour. A minute consists of 60 seconds.

However, the word “minutes” also refers to the notes, or written record, that a group keeps of an official meeting. In the minutes of the meeting, you will find a list of all of the topics that were talked about, the people who were at the meeting, and the decisions that were made. The verb that's used with “minutes,” when used in the sense of a record of a meeting, is “to keep.” So, “to keep minutes” would be to actually write down what was happening at the meeting.

“To lose hours” means to waste time – not to have anything productive going on. If you lose something, you no longer have it. So, if you're losing hours, you are, in a sense, losing time. You are really wasting time. The expression, then, makes a little more sense once we know the meaning of the word “to keep minutes.” The joke here is that meetings are a waste of time – that getting together and meeting with other people, especially for some sort of official purpose, often is a waste of your time. You don't get very much done. It's not productive.

So, this expression is making a joke over the word “minutes,” making you think you're talking about, at first, time – but you're actually talking about the written record of the meeting. I think, having participated in many different committee meetings, I agree with the idea behind this expression. Certainly, most meetings that I have been to, for example at the university, were definitely a case of losing hours – of wasting time.

I hope this episode hasn't been a waste of time. If you have some additional questions, you can email us. Our email address is eslpod@eslpod.com.

From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thank you for listening. Come back and listen to us again right here on the English Café.

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