

嘩眾取寵

hua1 zhong4 qu3 chong3

A British journalist on the science beat wanted to find out what eating human flesh is like. Since he couldn't just bite a chunk of flesh off someone's arm, he cut a small piece of muscle from his own thigh.

And because eating human meat, even your own, is illegal in Britain, the journalist sent samples of his meat to a laboratory for biopsy to determine its "aroma." He then infused it into a replica burger using lamb and pork, tasted it, and said it was "pretty good."

Science is about seeking knowledge, even if there isn't any conceivable application. But one just cannot see the point of learning about what eating human meat is like. The related report and video did cause an international sensation, but it is hard to see it as anything other than an attempt to "嘩眾取寵" (*hua1 zhong4 qu3 chong3*).

Idiom by Lon Yan

"嘩" (*hua1*) means "to create a lot of noise," "眾" (*zhong4*) "a crowd," "the masses," "取" (*qu3*) "to get," "to take," and "寵" (*chong3*) "to love," "to dote on." Literally, "嘩眾取寵" (*hua1 zhong4 qu3 chong3*) means "make a lot of noise to a crowd to get love."

"嘩眾取寵" (*hua1 zhong4 qu3 chong3*) is "sensationalism," "to please the public with clap-trap (浮誇的言行、噱頭)," "to play to the gallery." To experience "cannibalism" and get publicity is "嘩眾取寵" (*hua1 zhong4 qu3 chong3*), so are acts like hurling objects, ink and abuse during Legislative Council meetings.

Terms containing the character "寵" (*chong3*) include:

- 寵愛 (*chong3 ai4*) - to dote on; to love dearly
- 寵物 (*chong3 wu4*) - a pet; a treasured thing
- 寵壞 (*chong3 huai4*) - to spoil
- 失寵 (*shi1 chong3*) - to fall out of favor