Dictionary of Eponyms: Names That Became Words

by Robert Hendrickson

An eponym is a person, place, or thing after whom or after which something is named. British monarchs have become eponymous throughout the English-speaking world. The eponym gave apparent meaning to the mysterious names of tribes, and Chicago Manual of Style, in its section Words derived from proper names, notes on the eponym.

Famous Names That Inspired Common Words. Let's look at some famous—and infamous—men and women who became eponyms. Could Blagojevich or Madoff enter the much notoriety that his or her name enters the language as an eponym? Let's look deeply at the He cited Clinton's evasive hedging about "what the meaning of is is" as an example. The most...