

'Saint'

Hypothesis

We expect a) to find 'saint' at various points of the continuum between literal and loose uses and b) to find some variation in the properties of sainthood that will come to the focus in each case (narrowing)

General types of variation expected:

Variation in the property(/ies) of sainthood which become relevant in each case
Variation in the degree of possessing these properties

Chosen word set

'Saint'

Corpus used

The Bank of English

Method

Concordance lines independently of collocation

Comments

1166 lines in the whole corpus

- In the first **500** occurrences of saint (coming from all sub-corpora), the term is used most frequently **literally** to refer to real saints.

There are also many irrelevant cases such as Saint Saens, Yve Saint Laurent, Top Saint etc
=>
from a total of 500 cases I looked at only the instances I have included in the tables are relevant to our search.

- It is easy to think how 'saint' can be used literally (referring to an actual saint),

metaphorically (as a metaphorical ad hoc concept attributed to someone who is not an actual saint), hyperbolically (when a property of the target -patience, compassion etc- is exaggerated; in which case it seems that metaphorical use is presupposed) and ironically. Our sample involves examples of all these pragmatic processes sometimes occurring independently and sometimes combined. It is a bit harder to use 'saint' as an approximation. I guess an approximation would be such an over-human degree of, say, patience, compassion etc that it is only just removed from that of true sainthood: e.g. 'Mother Teresa was a saint'. But again, how can we be sure that such an utterance is an approximate and not hyperbolic reference to mother Teresa's saint-like qualities? Unlike strict terms, here there is no defined scale against the properties of sainthood can be compared. Of course 'you are a saint' said of someone who made a small donation to a charity is more of an exaggeration than if said of mother Teresa... But then, where does the 'Saint Bob Geldof' example lie on this continuum (if said with an endorsing attitude)?

The term is used very frequently in negative constructions.

[*Understatements* (?) We haven't discussed Understatements in any of our meetings and I am not completely sure how to deal with them. Maybe these are not Understatements at all (i.e. cases where the property encoded by the epithet understates the one communicated) but there is something interesting about them as they kind of reverse an otherwise hyperbolic utterance]:

'I am prepared to take responsibility. I am not a saint, I have a character of 1000 demons...'

'David Morris was not a saint. His reasons for the humanitarian work he was doing...'

'...they took his cousins for their brides. He was no saint, of course. His talent for organisation could even...'

'Buddy wasn't a saint by any means, but he certainly wasn't a goody-goody...'

In all cases encountered in our search the term 'saint' is fine-tuned differently according to context, either by narrowing the literal concept SAINT into an ad hoc concept SAINT* which picks out only certain properties of sainthood or by creating a metaphorical ad hoc concept which picks out only certain properties of sainthood.

Compare:

1. *'...law does not require a teacher to have the patience of a saint. You may think that is a good thing...'*

Where 'saint' is narrowed to a communicated concept SAINT* (along the lines of saint with patience and serenity) and also used as an Understatement, because what the law does not require is far removed from patience at the level of sainthood. I am not sure about that because I do find the negation a bit confusing, but I guess this must be an understatement since the same expression without the negation would be a Hyperbole: '*law requires a teacher to have the patience of a saint*'. No?

2. *'David Morris was not a saint. His reasons for the humanitarian work he was doing...'*

Where 'saint' is narrowed to a communicated concept SAINT* along the lines of saint of compassionate and humanitarian nature and used as an Understatement(?)

3. *'She said the praise lavished on her when she first arrived in Canberra was `enough to challenge a saint, let alone one female politician from the west''.*

Where 'saint' is narrowed to a communicated concept SAINT* along the lines of person who does not get tempted by the vanity of praise

In the next utterance, narrowing combines with metaphor and hyperbole:

4. *'...for famine relief in Africa. Geldof was dubbed Saint Bob" for his role in organising the 1985 concert'.*

Here Geldof is metaphorically referred to as *'Saint Bob'*. It seems as if 'saint' is first narrowed to pick out only saints of compassionate and humanitarian nature. This narrowed term is then used metaphorically to refer to Geldof (=>*Saint** PERSON OF COMPASSIONATE AND HUMANITARIAN NATURE) and also hyperbolically because the humanism and compassion in question are far removed from that of a saint.

In the following case, the use of 'saint' seems like a one-off special use:

5. *'Buddy wasn't a saint by any means, but he certainly wasn't a goody-goody. <p> He was a saint in the fact that he was a saved Christian.'*

Where SAINT* picks out those who have endorsed 'the truth of Jesus'

The expression 'the patron saint of' is in some occasions used in contexts with negative connotations as in:

6. *'... 'Mercury' the patron saint of thieves...'*

the expression as a whole is used here metaphorically to mean THE PROTECTOR of thieves; but it could also be carrying a somewhat ironic tenor (because of echoing the normal use of *patron saint* but in the context of a set of individuals –thieves- who would not normally fall under the protection of sainthood).

The same ironic tone might also be present in the following example:

7. *'Jill Phipps... is about to become a martyr, the patron saint of calves and vegans'.*

Here, 'Martyr' and 'patron saint' are used metaphorically to mean DEDICATED TO AND WILLING TO MAKE SACRIFICES FOR A HIGH CAUSE and PROTECTOR respectively. They are also used hyperbolically, as the sacrifices, for example, and 'suffering' of a vegan activist fall sort of that of a religious martyr. Note also, that here again the speaker plays with re-contextualizing the terms 'martyr' and 'patron saint' in a discourse environment which is atypical of their normal use. If the speaker's attitude is dissociative this is not only a case of hyperbole but also a case of irony.

Or in the following line about Dianna, (visiting and helping HIV patients):

8. *'...the patron saint of sodomy.'*

Again, irony combined with hyperbole also runs through the following utterances:

9. *'In the case of Allan Border, anything less than sainthood would be underdoing it. <p> Let's face it, if this does not qualify as a miracle, nothing ever will. <p> We could get a floating statue of Saint AB and each morning crowds could gather to watch it walk across the Brisbane River'.*

The speaker in this case produces a little narrative punctuated with religious vocabulary. Except for 'saint', terms like 'miracle', 'sainthood' are used to denote properties and deeds of

Allan Border which fall far sort of the properties and dids of an actual saint (=>hyperbole) and echo dissociatevely their standard environment of use (=> irony).

In some cases 'saint' is used in antitheses:

'is music A curse and a blessing, a whore and a saint, a witch and a goddess, my joy and vamp till fade'

'..is Jean-Paul good or evil, saint or sinner...'

the accessibility of the properties that will go into the ad hoc concept SAINT* here is influenced by the contrast of 'saint' to 'whore' or to 'sinner'.

Search

Search by 'Saint'

Orthographic Conventions

L = LITERAL USE	N = NARROWING	A= APROXIMATION	/ = and in parallel
H = HYPERBOLE	MR = METAPHOR	@= NOT APPLICABLE	MET/MY=METONYMY

In the following tables I have included only those cases that do not involve reference to actual saints.

[I haven't characterize the lines as usual because I wanted us to discuss the findings first]

1-50 of 1166 lines of Saint

<p>old activist is about to be become a martyr, <i>the patron saint of calves and vegans</i>. Already Brigitte Bardot, in</p> <p><i>ruins is a simple sentence carved where the altar once stood: God forgives.</i></p> <p><i><p> Holding Jill Phipps's funeral in Coventry Cathedral already is drawing flak from those worried that the 31-year-old activist is about to be become a martyr, the patron >>>> saint <<<<< of calves and vegans. <p> Already Brigitte Bardot, in an letter to a French newspaper, has called Jill Phipps `the Joan of Arc of veal". <p> Protesting against truckloads of calves being taken into Coventry airport to be shipped to Holland Ms Phipps,</i></p>	Irony?
<p>season scheduled for April 2. AAPSPORT Top Saint cops hefty suspension</p> <p>MELBOURNE: A personal apology</p> <p><i>upheld the Five Nations disciplinary panel's decision. <p> Baseball STRIKING US Major League players and owners met for five hours in an</i></p>	

<p>effort to strike a deal before the start of the main season scheduled for April 2. <p> AAPSPORT Top >>>> Saint <<<<< cops hefty suspension MELBOURNE: A personal apology failed to save St Kilda ruckman Vido vic from a hefty suspension at the AFL tribunal last night. <p> Vidovic was suspended for six matches after pleading guilty to two striking charges during last</p>	
<p>I am prepared to take responsibility. I am not a saint, I have a character of 1000 demons, and I recognise</p>	
<p>law does not require a teacher to have the patience of a saint. You may think that is a good thing. You may</p>	
<p>nothing ever will. We could get a floating statue of Saint AB and each morning crowds could gather to watch it</p> <p>losses over the past 68 years were just flukes. <p> In the case of Allan Border, anything less than sainthood would be underdoing it. <p> Let's face it, if this does not qualify as a miracle, nothing ever will. <p> We could get a floating statue of >>>>> Saint <<<<< AB and each morning crowds could gather to watch it walk across the Brisbane River. <p> Or maybe he could just raise his arms inthe air and the river could part and let him walk through. <p> But, of course, we can't forget the rest of the team. <p> We</p>	Irony
<p>food supplied to the company. David Morris was not a saint. His reasons for the humanitarian work he was doing</p> <p>Later Morris bravely took the place of two employees who had been kidnapped by Somalis over a dispute about payments for food supplied to the company. <p> David Morris was not a >>>>> saint. <<<<< <p> His reasons for the humanitarian work he was doing were mixed, but as Senator Evans said yesterday: `He was a courageous and adventurous character who, although he did obviously get up a lot 's noses really did make a difference."</p>	
<p>At 40, the American woman has to be a frustree or a saint or a big businesswoman who's nasty to men. Alors, the</p>	
<p>off the Maroons yet By PAUL MALONE PETER JACKSON, patron saint of the lost Queensland State of Origin cause, could</p> <p>t Ellery Hanley may have played his last match for Leeds, with an announcement of the Great Britain coach joining the ARL expected any day. <p> MALONE P Fatty or fiction, don't write off the Maroons yet By PAUL MALONE PETER JACKSON, patron >>>>> saint <<<<< of the lost Queensland State of Origin cause, could hardly contain his mirth as he imagined the propaganda Paul Vautin would be spreading this week. <p> I know what Fatty is like in a Queensland camp," Jackson chuckled last night. <p> He whips the</p>	Irony
<p>to canonise Mr Hayden as Australia's first liberal-Left `saint". Perhaps next time B. Smith Kedron. June 6 IT</p> <p>share Mr Hayden's view on euthanasia is a guess at best. <p> It is surprising that, following an excess of highly improbable superlatives and the stench of obsequiousness,you actually forgot to canonise Mr Hayden as Australia's first liberal-Left >>>>> `saint". <<<<< <p> Perhaps next time B. Smith Kedron. <p> June 6 IT is a strange `right" your newspaper June 23) proclaimed: the right to do something completely unavoidable that is, to die. <p> You would have received a comparably emphatic `no" had you rephrased</p>	
<p>tax on many building products. STUBBS G Top Saint supports merge plan ST GEORGE captain and Test rugby</p>	@
<p>for famine relief in Africa. Geldof was dubbed Saint Bob" for his role in organising the 1985 concert.</p>	
<p>they took his cousins for their brides. He was no saint, of course. His talent</p>	

for organisation could even	
<p>she first arrived in Canberra was `enough to challenge a saint, let alone one female politician from the west".</p> <p><i>f backbenchers are becoming worried about damage to the ALP. <p> Dr Lawrence said on Wednesday female politicians were treated differently to men. <p> She said the praise lavished on her when she first arrived in Canberra was `enough to challenge a >>>> saint, <<<<< let alone one female politician from the west". <p> Our visibility is certainly a two-edged sword Dr Lawrence said. <p> She said both she and Mrs Bishop had been victims of the `Madonna-whore complex". <p> Female mps were painted as either flawless</i></p>	
<p>said she was amazed Dr Lawrence typecast herself as `a saint with a tarnished halo". She said Dr Lawrence</p> <p><i>Bronwyn Bishop got labelled with the rough end of what I think is a false dichotomy women politicians get pigeon-holed into," she said. <p> Senator Vanstone said she was amazed Dr Lawrence typecast herself as `a saint with a >>>> tarnished <<<<< halo". <p> She said Dr Lawrence clearly had an ego `bigger than Texas". <p> Senator Vanstone said Dr Lawrence in seeking to play victim, was setting a poor example for women.</i></p>	irony

51-100 of 1166 lines of saint

was open to talking other subjects. Buddy wasn't a saint by any means, but he certainly wasn't a goody-goody.	
<p>but he certainly wasn't a goody-goody. He was a saint in the fact that he was a saved Christian.</p> <p><i>a tile installation company in their hometown of Lubbock, Texas, refused to discuss rumours of illegitimate children, but was open to talking other subjects. <p> Buddy wasn't a saint by any means, but he certainly wasn't a goody-goody. <p> He was a >>>> saint <<<<< in the fact that he was a saved Christian. <p> He accepted Christ as his saviour when he was younger." <p> Buddy Holly and the Crickets made just one tour of Australia, along with Paul Anka Jerry Lee Lewis and Ritchie Valens, in February 1958. <p> In</i></p>	
<p>enough Leipzig has links with `Mercury", the patron saint of thieves. MAP TABLE COLDITZ Off the</p> <p><i>Leipzig was the city where the first calls for freedom were heard, and it must bring a lump to the local people's throats when they look up and see the Stasi building now standing empty. Funnily enough Leipzig has links with `Mercury", the patron >>>> saint <<<<< of thieves. <p> MAP TABLE <h> COLDITZ </h> Off the beaten tack and on the way to Dresden is the sleepy hamlet of Colditz, home to perhaps the most infamous POW cap of the war. The castle is now sued primarily as a hospital, but with GTF you can visit</i></p>	
You'll need good ears, good logic and the patience of a saint to free the marble that's trapped inside this	

101-150 of 1166 lines of saint

<p>THE SMOTHERER The Smotherer seems <u>like a saint</u>. She's the one who slaved for weeks over your elaborate</p>	<p>Simile</p> <p>But the characteristics alluded to are not physiological</p>
<p>For this, the Mail on Sunday calls her "the patron saint of sodomy". She gets hate mail. Celebrities in AIDS</p> <p><i>clothing, and reached out and touched. <p> In August last year, she left a Balmoral holiday to be with Adrian Ward-Jackson, deputy Chair of the AIDS Crisis Trust, at St Mary's, Paddington. <p> For this, the Mail on Sunday calls her "the patron >>>> saint <<<<< of sodomy". She gets hate mail. <p> Celebrities in AIDS charities involve the public in a unique way. They are stars and yet they normalise the giving and sharing. The recession has hit hard and the demand grows. <p> If Diana stays our saint, well and</i></p>	<p>irony</p>
<p>has hit hard and the demand grows. If Diana stays our saint, well and good. Saints can perform miracles.</p>	<p>MR</p> <p>Protector, minder</p>
<p>in other ways, too I had been happy to play the role of saint and martyr; it suited me to devote myself entirely to</p> <p><i>like a death says Lesley There was no time to adjust, no slow unravelling of ties. Jemima's departure left the most terrible vacuum, suddenly I'd lost my 'cause to be <p> Lesley was unprepared in other ways, too I had been happy to play the role of >>>> saint <<<<< and martyr; it suited me to devote myself entirely to another human being. I only wanted to see Jemima smile <p> But Jemima was not a happy child. She resisted cuddling and would scratch, hit out and whine pitifully. The bigger she grew, the more</i></p>	<p>MR/H</p>
<p>we learn, is music A curse and a blessing, a whore and a saint, a witch and a goddess, my joy and vamp till fade. Of</p>	
<p>of The Commitments-the little angel who plays at being a saint in a leper colony is also a little terror who makes his</p> <p><i> fights. In Paddy Clarke Ha Ha Ha (Martin Secker & Warburg pound; 12.99) Roddy Doyle enters the mind of a small boy in Sixties Dublin. It is wickedly funny, as you would expect from the author of The Commitments-the little angel who plays at being a >>>> saint <<<<< in a leper colony is also a little terror who makes his brother swallow lighter fuel-but the blacker moments capture the stresses of being a child. Doyle's ruthless lack of sentimentality helps the message come across. <p> First Nights (Hamish</i></p>	

151-200 of 1166 lines of saint

<p>by comparison. With the able assistance of a PALE SAINT, our favourite Breeder clambered on the aforementioned</p> <p><i>p> fortunately, though, back at the hotel Kim deal heroically came to Kristin's rescue. Kim decided to do something that looked so silly that Kristin's barnet would look totally stylish and sensible by comparison. With the able assistance of a PALE >>>> SAINT, <<<<< our favourite Breeder clambered on the aforementioned piano and proceeded to perform</i></p>	<p>???</p>
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<i>the appropriate dance to the dulcet plink of LET'S TWIST AGAIN <p> Just as entertaining was the slight of Red House Painters' glum-faced song-and danceman MARK THE</i>	
John Bush, formerly of veteran West Coast outfit Armoured Saint, is not about to piss off a hardcore metal audience	
<i>set firm in metals' prehistoric clay. Anthrax eventually got down to sacking a key member to whom Scott had barely spoken in three years - and then promoted him from within. <p> New vocalist John Bush, formerly of veteran West Coast outfit Armoured >>>> Saint, <<<<< is not about to piss off a hardcore metal audience built up over the best part of a decade. Amiable and laid-back, Bush possesses a bullish roar that lands somewhere in between Eddie Vedder and James Hetfield - interestingly in view of the fact that</i>	
the Vatican. The question is, is Jean-Paul good or evil, saint or sinner, or, finally, mortal or immortal? Should Paul	
s dark omniscience. He is the secret narrator, the patron saint in the emptiness, the crevices, the shadows, the cracks	
PHOTO WITH CAPTION The Return of the Saint: A gang broke into the home of Lady O'Neill, widow of	???
the Price of Denmark who might be described as the patron saint of depressives: vacillating, self-loathing and heroic.	
person at the time. I don't carry regrets forward. I am a saint I've never met one before. Don't you have any	
bags (with bits of paper inside) are looking for a patron saint then FM-Fred to his friends-is the man. He's never been	

201-250 of 1166 lines of saint

a church. Millroy may be many things, but he is not a saint. Accusations and rumours threaten his crusade.	
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251-300 of 1166 lines of saint

No relevant lines

301-350 of 1166 lines of saint

No relevant lines

351-400 of 1166 lines of saint

the the Virgin Mary or another like woman saint figure. And I just I think it's really interesting	
you know high respected positions of within the community because those are usually the ones <ZF1> that'll <ZF0> that'll not look to like you know Jesus or like a God male figure but to you know <ZF1> the <ZF0> the Virgin Mary or another like woman >>>> saint <<<<< figure. And I just I think it's really interesting because even though it has seeped in it really hasn't because you know <ZF1> the <ZF0> the goddess is you know whatever you make it whatever you make her to be. <FOX> Right. <FOX>	

<p>And she could be in</p> <p>then you can be like Mother Theresa. You know you can be Saint Yeah Angel Gabriel oh oh oh Yeah</p> <p>h <tc text=laughter> <F01> But when you do have <F03> They don't answer back. <tc text=laughs> <F02> <ZGY> <F01> But when you do have patient contact it's only like one patient at a time. So then you can be like Mother Theresa. You know you can be >>>> Saint <<<<< <F03> Yeah <F01> Angel Gabriel oh oh oh <F03> Yeah <F01> But when you're on the ward and you've got thirteen patients you don't have time to <F03> Yeah <F01> sort You're always cutting them. You know we don't have time. I mean if you've only got one</p>	
<p>you know If I give food to a hungry man they call me a saint if I say Why is he hungry? they call me a communist</p> <p>entire world and suffer the loss of his soul?" To be a saint means that you do not lose your soul. We are called to</p> <p>er all, whoever we are, whatever we are, we are called first off, above all things else, to be saints. That is our ultimate vocation. <p> Our Lord asked, `What does it profit anyone to gain the entire world and suffer the loss of his soul?" To be a >>>> saint <<<<< means that you do not lose your soul. We are called to be saints. <p> There is a very beautiful passage from G. K. Chesterton talking about those willing to live in this culture and change it and ennoble it. He says: <p> A light illumines them that</p>	
<p>is nothing made out of clay. There is no gingerbread saint. Each one of us, with his or her strengths, weaknesses,</p> <p>hristianity, he did not lose those temperamental characteristics. When we struggle to be saints, when we struggle to be holy, it is we, each of us, who must find our way. there is no model. There is nothing made out of clay. There is no gingerbread >>>> saint. <<<<< Each one of us, with his or her strengths, weaknesses, particular temptations, these are what we have to use to become saints. This is what Paul did. <p> In today's letter Paul recognizes that he is coming to the end of his life. He is in prison as</p>	

401-450 of 1166 lines of saint

No relevant lines

451-500 of 1166 lines of saint

No relevant lines