

Hooker ^[1]

Hooker



Joseph Hooker,
1962. Image
courtesy of Library

by Whitmel M. Joyner, 2006 of Congress. ^[2]

See also: [Prostitution](#) ^[3]

"Hooker," a slang word for prostitute, was used in an 1845 letter written by a student to a classmate at the [University of North Carolina](#) ^[4]. This is the earliest known written usage of the word in this sense. The letter was found in the university library's [Southern Historical Collection](#) ^[5] by noted UNC professor and philologist [Norman E. Eliason](#) ^[6]. The date of his finding undermines the popular notion that the term came into usage in the [Civil War](#) ^[7] era in "honor" of Union general [Joseph Hooker](#) ^[8]'s well-documented personal proclivities.

Reference:

Norman E. Eliason, *Tar Heel Talk: An Historical Study of the English Language in North Carolina to 1860* (1956).

Image Credit:

Joseph Hooker, 1962. Image courtesy of Library of Congress. Available from <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2008680202/> ^[2] (accessed July 23, 2012).

Subjects:

[Antebellum \(1820-1861\)](#) ^[9]

[Culture](#) ^[10]

Authors:

[Joyner, Whitmel M.](#) ^[11]

From:

[Encyclopedia of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press.](#) ^[12]

1 January 2006 | Joyner, Whitmel M.

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