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sectarian, *adj.* and *n.*

Pronunciation: Brit. /sɛk'tɛrɪən/, U.S. /sɛk'tɛrɪən/

Frequency (in current use):

Etymology: < SECTARY *n.* and *adj.* + -AN *suffix*.

A. *adj.*

1. Pertaining to a sectary or sectaries; 'belonging to a schismatical sect' (Phillips, ed. Kersey, 1706). *Obsolete exc. Historical.*

Apparently first used in the Commonwealth period by the Presbyterians with reference to the Independents; subsequently by Anglicans with reference to Nonconformists.

- 1649 in *Milton's Wks.* (1738) I. 346 The Sectarian Party in England.
- 1650 *Rec. Comm. Gen. Assembly* (S.H.S.) III. 92 That Sectarian armie now infesting this Kingdome.
- 1664 H. MORE *Apol.* in *Modest Enq. Myst. Iniquity* 545 Which is..to arm the Sectarian Rabbles, that phansy themselves such Inspiradoes, against the orderly-Reformed Churches.
- 1687 DRYDEN *Hind & Panther* III. 114 But that unfaithfull Test, unfound will pass The dross of Atheists, and sectarian brass.
- 1822 A. CUNNINGHAM *Trad. Tales* I. 188 To all this answered Micah Meen, a sectarian mason.
- 1827 P. CUNNINGHAM *Two Years New S. Wales* II. xxx. 252 Drawling out the words of Scripture with deep sectarian drone.
- 1837 R. SOUTHEY *Doctor* IV. 69 When a hawker came he had no pestiferous tracts either seditious or sectarian for sale.

2. Pertaining to a sect or sects; confined to a particular sect; bigotedly attached to a particular sect.

In recent use, often a pejorative synonym of *denominational*, esp. with reference to education (N.E.D.).

- 1796 E. BURKE *Two Lett. Peace Regicide Directory France* in *Wks.* (1808) VIII. 237 They..have been taught to look on religious opinions as the only cause of enthusiastick zeal, and sectarian propagation.
- 1836 T. ARNOLD in A. P. Stanley *Life & Corr. T. Arnold* (1845) II. 23 All our education must be Christian, and not be sectarian.
- 1837 T. ARNOLD in A. P. Stanley *Life & Corr. T. Arnold* (1845) II. 91 A Christian, and yet not sectarian University.
- 1841 T. CARLYLE *On Heroes* iii. 149 Dante does not come before us as a large catholic mind; rather as a narrow, and even sectarian mind.
- 1841 E. MIALl in *Nonconf.* 1 1 A natural and invariable tendency..to fall into distinct bodies and become sectarian, both in spirit and in aim.
- 1876 J. GRANT *Hist. Burgh Schools Scotl.* II. 419 The burgh and parish Schools of Scotland were never Sectarian.
- 1877 CANDLISH in *Encycl. Brit.* VII. 338/2 There are some doctrines in every system that are merely sectarian, adopted by one particular branch of the church, but not recognized by others as correct expressions of Christian faith and life.

- 1884 H. P. LIDDON in J. O. Johnston *Life & Lett. H. P. Liddon* (1904) 331 I am not at all frightened by the word 'sectarian'. Christianity is sectarian as against the non-Christian world.
- 1903 *Brit. Weekly* 11 June 219/3 He was reluctantly compelled, for conscience sake, to refuse that part of the education rate which would go to the support of sectarian schools.
- 1903 *Brit. Weekly* 11 June 219/4 An audience who loudly cheered every declaration of determined resistance to the sectarian rate.

B. n.

1. Originally, an adherent of the 'sectarian party' (i.e. the Independents as designated by the Presbyterians); subsequently, a member of a schismatic sect, a schismatic. Now chiefly *Historical*.

- 1654 R. WILLIAMS *Let. in Coll. Mass. Hist. Soc.* (1849) 3rd Ser. X. 2 Youre Father and all the people of God in England, formerly called the *Puritanus Anglicanus*, of late Round~heads, now the Sectarians (as more or lesse cut of from the Parishes) they are now in the sadle and at the helme.
- 1685 J. BUNYAN *Disc. Pharisee & Publicane* 7 The Pharisee was a Sectarian, one that deviated..in his Worshipping from the way of God;..for such an one I count a Sectarian.
- 1807 R. SOUTHEY *Lett. from Eng.* III. 79 Charles willingly permitted this, because he dreaded the political opinions of these Sectarians.
- 1816 R. SOUTHEY *Lay of Laureate* liii The stern Sectarian in unnatural league Joins her to war against their hated foe.
- a1834 S. T. COLERIDGE *Literary Remains* (1838) III. 197 The *Ecclesia* has been an eclipse to the intellect of both Churchmen and Sectarians.
- 1860 J. L. MOTLEY *Hist. Netherlands* (1868) I. ii. 25 The Queen of England hated Anabaptists, Calvinists, and other Sectarians.

2. An adherent of a specified sect; a sectary of a particular teacher. Now *rare*.

- 1819 *Ann. Reg., Chron.* (1820) 273 Shortly after it was agreed, that the family of the plaintiff should become his sectarians, and they accordingly joined the Baptist society and became a part of his congregation.
- 1828 J. F. COOPER *Notions Amer.* II. 328 The whole number of the sectarians [*i.e.* Shakers] is, however, far from great.
- 1836 E. BULWER-LYTTON *Athens* (1837) II. 416 A general feeling of alarm and suspicion broke out against the sage [Pythagoras] and his sectarians.
- 1875 C. MERIVALE *Gen. Hist. Rome* lxxv. 522 The constancy of these sectarians inflamed, no doubt, the anger of rulers who were accustomed to more pliant submission.

3. A bigoted adherent of a sect; one whose views or sympathies are sectarian.

- 1827 T. CARLYLE *Goethe* in *German Romance* IV. 22 Shakspeare is no sectarian: to all he deals with equity and mercy.
- 1855 *Punch* 27 Jan. 34/2 Sectarians who believe that no good deed can be done, except by a votary of M'Howl and O'Muggins.

1867 R. W. EMERSON *Progr. Culture in Wks.* (1906) III. 226 The narrow sectarian cannot read astronomy with impunity.

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