

Definitions starting with C

Conch

/kohnɡk/ [from conch, the large sea snail (*Strombus* sp.) eaten by Bahamians; cf. OED Conch "a local nickname for the lower class of inhabitants of the Bahamas, the Florida Keys, etc., from their extensive use of conchs as food. (Also written conk)"; cf. US dial. South conch a descendant of the early English settlers on the lower east coast of Florida (Ayres 1950:75); cf. Honduran Sp. pirates caracoles (lit, pirate conchs) white Bay Islanders (F. Kalm p.c.)]

n. 1. Obs. any native Bahamian (white or black): 1804 The inhabitants of the Bahama Islands, previous to the American war, when the loyalists from the southern part of the United States removed to them, and introduced the general cultivation of cotton, were principally engaged in a seafaring life; and from a lively allusion to the large and beautiful species of shells with which their shores abound, by their visitors were nicknamed Conchs. These are the persons generally employed, with their slaves, in the occupation of wrecking (McKinnen 140). 1869 The inhabitants of the Bahamas. . are called (and call themselves) "Conchs" (Bacot 4). 1895 Every hut has its quota of a dozen little black "Conchs" (Edwards 16).

2. white Bahamians, especially those who are poor: 1888 The native white inhabitants of the Bahamas are now universally called "Conchs" (Powles 40). 1942 You can't stop a conch from beating the government [of white merchants] (Tribune). 1978 "Conch" in more recent usage mainly applies to Bahamian whites (Bethel 165). cf. [CONKY JOE](#) (Gen.)

—adj. Obs. Bahamian: 1895 Bahama, . .speech is a mixture of negro dialect, "Conch" cockney, and correct English (Edwards 19).

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