

Oxford Australia Word of the Month

February 2008

rurosexual – a metrosexual who lives in a rural area

Australian National Dictionary Centre

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rurosexual

The story behind the Word of the Month

On 14 September 2003 ABC New South Wales Country Radio reported on the new word

rurosexual:

He is the long lost country cousin of the renowned Metrosexual. **Rurosexual** is the new term that explains the kind of guy you might see in a small country town these days. You'll find him drinking a café latte between fencing jobs instead of a cup of billy tea out on the property ... If you want to meet him, don't hang around for the annual B&S ball, but track him down at local salsa lessons.

Metrosexual was universally acclaimed as the 2003 word of the year, and it described the young, fashion-conscious, consumer-oriented, heterosexual, urban male. Suddenly, it seemed, they were everywhere!

In reaction to metrosexual the **retrosexual** appeared. Towards the end of 2003 the *Gold Coast Bulletin* described this alternative to the metrosexual:

The new man is a real man, anchored in the traditional qualities of being a bloke but with a sexy blend of style, compassion and intellect ... The new man is the **retrosexual**—a good old-fashioned male wrapped up in a sweet-smelling, well-dressed, healthy and knowledgeable package—without the nonsense of facials, painted toenails or Gucci carrybags ... While metrosexual continues to gallivant in carefully constructed outfits and strut tailor-made attitudes to impress other cardboard cut-outs in his tribe, the retro counterpart observes

from a warm candle-lit distance amid the glow of a woman's smile.

The **retrosexual** is still a bit of a 'new man', but he also embodies the traditional male qualities of the past. But while not being a metrosexual, he still sounds very much a man of the metro, a city-based person. What about the man in the country, who also feels spunkily modern?

Enter the **rurosexual**. He lives in the country, and he certainly embraces traditional rural values. But he doesn't need to swing the billy to prove he is a man, he scorns the vulgarities of the B & S ball, and is certainly not averse to using a bit of 'product'.

Is **rurosexual** an Australian word? In the ABC Radio article quoted above, the word's invention is attributed to Adrian Piccoli, the National Party Member for the state seat of Murrumbidgee. This is possible, although a web search will show that there is some use of the word in places as widespread as Canada, California, and India. It will require more research to establish if it is in fact originally Australian.

Will it last? A web search produces 1,630,000 hits for metrosexual, 88,400 for retrosexual, but only 203 for rurosexual. With only this amount of evidence, we will need to wait a few years before making a decision about whether to put **rurosexual** in our dictionaries.

metrosexual
weapon
of mass destruction
karrack
glycaemic
burka index
barbecue stopper
senior moment
Sudoku hornbag
dishlicker
cyberstalking
Naltrexone
pear-shaped
witlof
yakitoni
Bioterrorism