

*Darrell Petska*

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## **A Short History of Cheerios**

Cows have been grateful since the Pleistocene.  
Neanderthal women strung them about their necks  
to attract Homo sapien suitors. Mesopotamian potters  
patterned wheels after that ancient oaten aphrodisiac.  
For a halo, Jesus emulated his daily grain's holiness.  
Ptolemy over his breakfast bowl conceived the universe  
as a set of nested spheres. People of the Dark Ages  
found the bright yellow box a handy lantern.  
Petrarch's sonnets to Cheerios remain lost to this day.  
Christopher Columbus forded the "Ocean Sea"  
to trade the bead-like O's for New World gold.  
Minus its buoyant payload, his Santa Maria wrecked.  
Later in America, colonists protesting British taxes  
dumped a boatload of Cheerios into Newport Harbor.  
As the 20th century turned, 63-year-old Annie Taylor  
successfully traversed Niagara Falls in a barrel  
packed with Cheerios. And is there one student  
of history who does not know why Molly Brown  
proved unsinkable when the Titanic went down?  
For soldiers worldwide during the contentious 1900s,  
Cheerios fun packs became the field ration of choice.  
The commoner Princess Di wanted Cheerios  
strewn at her wedding, but Charles held out for rice.  
Sales of Cheerios spiked substantially circa  
2YK festivities: a readily accessible, edible confetti.  
A similar spike in consumption occurred in 2012  
when Colorado and Washington legalized marijuana.  
Pollsters suggest Hillary Clinton would have been elected  
had she run a "No Bowl Unfilled" campaign.  
Videos from the International Space Station reveal  
Cheerios floating in the cabin. And fortunately, Elon Musk's  
O-shaped Elysium shuttle nears readiness, anticipating  
Earth's end of days when, the Cheerios website states,  
we can cash in our boxtops and claim our just reward:  
a bottomless bowl of eternal goodness and angels crooning  
"Cheerios is heaven for you, and me."