

Fasching und Karneval: Narren (fools)

der Narr, die Narren: (male) fool
 die Narrin, die Närrinnen: (female) fool
 der Jeck, die Jecke (Köln): fool in Cologne (dialect)

Die Narren sind los

Fools paint the town during fifth season

One interesting trait can be observed in all these types of Karneval (although in various versions). The masked or disguised “fools” claim certain traditional rights and privileges. This is not limited to the right to celebrate the Karneval in one’s own fashion (quite often staunchly defended against all sorts of oppression), or to the right to symbolically “occupy” the town halls. In addition the “fools” dispense their own justice. They hold “trials” of various sorts, where they reprimand in word or deed certain members of the community who have violated unwritten norms of behavior. They may even censure representatives of public authority.



Jesters appear to see everything viewed through the bottom of a schnapps glass, and they seem to have a thing about number eleven: the eleventh day of the eleventh month at 11.11 hours is the time when masquerade and buffoonery come back into their own, and the dull and dreary months devoid of the cries of Alaaf and Helau finally come to an end. In this respect, the ancient Carnival song hit, in which all is supposed to be over on Ash Wednesday, is false, because the festivities are preprogrammed to start afresh in the coming year.

- **Narr** — Fool, jester
- **Narrenhästräger** — Jester costume wearers

During Karneval’s Fool’s Congress, people are awarded prizes for the craziest costumes and the funniest speeches.

Germans have a saying that “Whoever is not foolish at Karneval is foolish for the rest of the year.” Anyone who shows disapproval at this time of year is called **Karnevalsmuffel** [CAR-nay-val SMOO-full], or “carnival sourpuss.”

JECK



Jet jeck simmer all! What in the world does this mean? this timely phrase.

Jecken



Im Karneval sind die Jecken die feiernden Leute. Verkleidet und mit bester Trinklaune. Jeck heißt eigentlich "verrückt" und wird im kölschen Sprachgebrauch das ganze Jahr über verwendet. Wird man gefragt "Bist du eijentlich jeck?" kann das auch bedeuten: "Spinnst du?"