

Poisoning the well (Envenenando el pozo)

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Before the advent of modern plumbing people would visit the village/town well to collect water. If this water was not fresh then there was the possibility that the entire population could get sick. In ancient times cutting-off or even poisoning a water supply was a good way of defeating one's enemies.

In modern English we tend to say that someone is 'poisoning the well' in a metaphorical sense. For example, they might be saying negative things about someone, or trying to create a negative atmosphere in order to sabotage a situation. For example -

- 'I wouldn't listen to what Cath says... she is just trying to poison the well and make trouble'.
- 'Clive is so jealous of his brother's new cafe that he keeps poisoning the well and saying the food is bad... It's actually delicious!'.

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