

Keywords List 2022

A Collaborative Project of ENGCMP 440 section 1030 – Critical Writing Fall 2022

Ability

Cancel

Class

Communication

Colonialism

Democrat

Division

Health

Image

Justice

Mental

Minority

Norm

Pride

Race

Relationship

Rich

Social

Sick

Toxic

Woke

Keyword: Ability
By Claudia Huggins

"Can you look at this for me?" "Could you hand me the TV remote?" "Can you please get me a drink?" "Can you tell me where the restrooms are?" All of these phrases express the **ability** for someone else to do something. A person must *go* somewhere, *do* something, complete a request by another person. This is all characterized by the word **ability**.

History and definitions of ability

Ability is defined by *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)* as, "a natural faculty; a particular power of the body or mind; a personal talent or skill. Frequently in plural." It has been adapted from multiple different etymologies in Middle English and French, however it dates furthest back to Latin, originating from the word "**habilis**." **Habilis** is most recognizable for its use in a more common word, "homo habilis," which refers to the first species of humans able to craft and use stone tools. This reference checks out, as they had a newfound **ability** to complete a task, aligning with the definition of "**ability**" ("Homo Habilis").

Multiple definitions that have existed throughout history have been swapped out for more mainstream definitions as we learn more about **disabled communities** and how to better represent a person's **abilities** and **disabilities**. One past definition states that **ability** is defined as "bodily power, strength: (also) sexual potency," ("Ability, n." n.d.). This definition is quite limiting and does not include anything about **emotional** and/or **mental ability**, therefore exclusive to **physical** and/or **sexual ability** alone. Nowadays, the more current definition of **ability** is much more encompassing. However, neither definition attaches specific actions that are associated with a person's **ability**. This leads to a more inclusive conversation on a person's **ability**. However, one cannot discuss **abilities** without discussing **disabilities**, as well.

Additionally, one can't speak of the definitions and meanings of ability without speaking of its opposite: **disability**. **Disability** is defined in the OED as a "lack of ability (*to* discharge any office or function); inability, incapacity; weakness." Its second definition takes on a more specific approach in referring to a distinct condition, which is "a physical or mental condition that limits a person's movements, senses, or activities; (as a mass noun) the fact or state of having such a condition" (OED).

The idea of being "able-bodied" and having ability privilege

The terms **able-bodied** and **ability privilege** have been hot topics to discuss in recent years, especially as people have been more open to conversations about **disabilities** and such. According to the National Center on Disability and Journalism, they advise journalists avoid writing that someone is **able-bodied** because it "implies that all people with **disabilities** lack 'able bodies' or the ability

to use their bodies well.” There were other terms they advised journalists stay away from, as well, including calling someone “crazy, insane, nuts, psycho,” or saying someone is “afflicted with” or “suffering from” a **disability**. This implies that the person is suffering and/or has a reduced quality of life because of their **disability** when this isn’t always the truth.

In a 2014 paper titled, “**Ability** Privilege: A Needed Addition to Privilege Studies” by Gregor Wolbring for the *Journal for Critical Animal Studies*, **ability privilege** can be described as “advantages enjoyed by those who exhibit certain **abilities** and the unwillingness of these individuals to relinquish the advantage linked to the **abilities** especially with the reason that these are earned or birth given (natural) **abilities**.” In this definition, it is assumed that the person with the privilege *knows* they have it and their “unwillingness to relinquish the advantage” they have because of their **abilities**.

Ability privilege is not having to worry about whether or not the venue a person in a wheelchair is going to for a concert has a way for them to get up to the top level. It could look like someone without a **disability** not making captions available for those with hearing impairments, or not providing a way for a blind person to access important information. This privilege is ingrained in all of us who don’t have a **disability**, and by expanding definitions of **disability** and speaking on it more often, this provides more insight on how to be more inclusive to these groups.

How ability and disability go hand-in-hand

There are many ways in which **ability** and similar words to it are used, both now and in the past. References to **able-bodied** people and **ability privilege** are commonly associated with anyone with a disability. **Ability**, as we saw earlier with its definitions, often refers to the **capability** of a person, thing, or object, or in opposition, the **disability** of a person, thing, or object. The ways in which people discuss **disabilities** or a person’s **abilities** has changed a lot over the years, especially as **disability resources** and **ableism** has become more of a mainstream, political topic.

However, one main issue arises with defining “**disability**;” it can mean a lot of different things. Someone lacking the **ability** to move physically, a person with a brain disorder, a mental illness, an amputated limb, epilepsy, etc., can all be considered **disabilities**, all of which require many different kinds of accommodations. The Center of Disease Control (CDC) defines a **disability** as “any condition of the body or mind (impairment) that makes it more difficult for the person with the condition to do certain activities (activity limitation) and interact with the world around them (participation restrictions).” They list a number of ways a **disability** can impact a person, including their vision, movement, thinking, remembering, learning, etc. (2020).

Disability-rights movements and how they contribute to the overall meaning of disabilities

The newfound ways in which **disabilities** are talked about and supported are mostly thanks to **disability activists** and movements that have been going on since the 1800s ("Disability History: The Disability Rights Movement"). The development of both the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which "prohibits discrimination against people with **disabilities** in several areas, including employment, transportation, public accommodations, communications and access to state and local government' programs and services" and the 2008 ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) are among the movement's largest accomplishments. The ADAAA took the legitimacy of the ADA even further to make "significant changes to the ADA's definition of '**disability**' that broadens the scope of coverage under both the ADA and Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act" ("Americans with Disabilities Act | U.S. Department of Labor").

There are many groups devoted specifically to advocating for several marginalized groups of people with **disabilities**. Groups such as the Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (**DREDF**), Americans Disabled Attendant Programs Today (**ADAPT**), and the Center for Independent Living (**CIL**) are all among these groups that advocate for disability rights and equal treatment/opportunity ("Disability History: The Disability Rights Movement").

Disability studies as a field

There are many layers to the definition of both **ability** and **disability**. According to Leslie Francis, PhD, JD and Anita Silvers, PhD, **disability** is a diverse word that can take on many unique definitions in order to fit the needs of the organization using it. Pre-civil rights era, usually an all-encompassing definition was used to refer to **disabled** groups in order to easily segregate and discriminate against them in company/organization policies. However, after World War II, people were granted **disability** status more easily and more frequently, giving them access to more benefits and accommodations. Beginning in 1948, and after many years of debating **disability** and how to best serve those with **mental** and **physical disabilities**, the Rehabilitation Act was revised in 1973 "to more meaningfully protect people with **disabilities** against exclusion from opportunity by prohibiting **disability discrimination** by federal contractors and in any program receiving federal support" (Francis and Silvers 2016).

Increased representation in the media and entertainment has also contributed to the overall acceptance of **disabled communities**. Shows like *the Good Doctor* and *Atypical* both feature main characters who are on the autism spectrum. In a review of *The Good Doctor*, Kerry Magro, an adult with autism, wrote that the show did a great job showing the diversity of those with autism, especially when showing that not all people with autism behave the same way. They also compared it to *Atypical*, which like *The Good Doctor*, used many outside sources and consultants to try to be as realistic as possible when conveying a person with autism ("My Review of 'The Good Doctor' as an Adult with Autism"). According to Rotten Tomatoes, a trusted

site for reviewing TV shows and movies, *The Good Doctor* has a 68% and *Atypical* has a 91% approval rating (Rotten Tomatoes).

Over the years, many efforts have been made to expand definitions of a **disability**. Today, universities all over the country have many different resources and programs for **disabled students**, companies send out **disability/diversity statements** to better serve their company, etc. These strides would not have been possible without past work by the activists mentioned earlier and many more. The first step is always expanding the definition and making it better to encompass more backgrounds and experiences.

Keyword: Cancel

By Isabella DeVito

As a verb, “**cancel**” originated in the English language circa 1440 in England with the definition from the *Oxford English Dictionary* “To deface or obliterate (writing), as by drawing lines across it lattice-wise; to cross out, strike out. Of legal documents, deeds, etc.: To annul, render void or invalid by so marking” (“**Cancel**”, v). This use of the word is not commonly used today, but it is not an extinct definition of the word either. The most current form of the word “**cancel**” is **cancel culture**. Another important early meaning from the *Oxford English Dictionary* in 1513 is “To annul, repeal, render void (obligations, promises, vows, or other things binding). Also with *out*” (“**Cancel**”, v). While this definition of the word is still used today, it is not a contributor to the most current meaning of the word.

Etymologically, both definitions of the word originated in Middle English, in the forms **cansel**, **cancell**, and **cancel**. “**Cancel**” has French, Latin, Italian, and Spanish origins that all contribute to its earlier definitions (“**Cancel**”, v).

In its noun form, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary* “**cancel**” means “Prison bars, limits, bounds, confines. Chiefly *figurative*. *Obsolete*” (“**Cancel**”, N). This usage of the word began in 1596 and continued through 1667. Beginning in 1803, a new definition of the word arose in use: “The suppression and reprinting of a page or leaf. Hence *concrete*:(a) a page so **cancelled** or struck out;(b) (in full, **cancel-leaf**) the new page substituted for that **cancelled**; also **cancel-page**, **cancel-sheet**” (“**cancel**”, N). Throughout history, “**cancel**” has had many uses, and beginning in 1559 other definitions of the word that give insight into the current meaning of the word started to gain popularity.

Definitions 3a and 3b of the *Oxford English Dictionary* do anticipate the current meaning of the word “**cancel**”. These definitions are “To obliterate, blot out, delete from sight or memory” (“**Cancel**”, v) and “To frustrate, reduce to nought, put an end to, abolish” (“**Cancel**”, v), respectively. These definitions of the word are early hints at the most current definition of the word, and these forms are still used today since someone still **cancels** their dinner plans or **cancels** their meeting. However, definitions 3a and 3b are more aligned to the idea of **cancel culture**. Abolishing someone’s reputation or putting an end to something someone has done is what **cancel culture** is.

The most current definition of “**cancel**” is listed as a 2021 draft in the *Oxford English Dictionary* as a noun under “**cancel**” **culture** with the definition “the action or practice of publicly boycotting, ostracizing, or withdrawing support from a person, institution, etc., thought to be promoting culturally unacceptable ideas” (“**Cancel**”, v). The idea of **cancel culture** began with Black empowerment movements during the 1950’s and the 1960’s; however, the terminology is new and gained popularity in music during the 1980’s and 1990’s and on social media in Black Twitter in 2015 (Romano).

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary also published an article via their “Words to Watch” section. In this section the dictionary highlights words that are close to being put into the dictionary but do not yet meet the requirements. The article highlights ‘**cancel culture**’ which also has a verb form “**cancelling**”. The “Words to Watch” article states that the current trend of using the word originated with the

#MeToo movement and other movements that aimed for public figures to use their social platforms to spread awareness to certain events. (Editors). One celebrity exposed during the #MeToo movement is Harvey Weinstein as multiple women came forward as victims of sexual violence. Weinstein was sentenced to 23 years in prison for rape and sexual assault (Walsh). The beginning of the current phase of **cancel culture** began with the Weinstein accusations and following this came the #MeToo movement in which sexual assault victims turned to the Internet to share their stories. By 2018 the #MeToo movement canceled 201 men in positions of power (#MeToo).

A near synonym to **cancel culture** is the term "callout culture". According to the Cambridge Dictionary, callout culture means "a way of behaving in a society or group in which people are often criticized in public, for example on social media, for their words or actions, or asked to explain them" ("Call-Out Culture"). The difference in the two phrases is that callout culture is more of a criticism, while **cancelling** somebody is more severe since it is more like publicly blacklisting the person.

Cancel culture has become an increasingly controversial topic. The most common complaints about **cancel culture** are that it promotes online bullying as it gives people an excuse to point out what they do not like about others online. This bullying can lead to physical threats and gives people an excuse to invalidate others if they have a differing opinion. Also, skeptics argue that it is not very productive since no real change is made, and **cancel culture** merely raises awareness for or against certain people or things. However, there are some pros to **cancel culture**. It allows minorities a voice to seek justice since it is basically the online form of boycotting (Pro and Con). A few examples of **cancel culture** or people who have been **canceled** are J.K. Rowling and Ellen DeGeneres. Rowling was **canceled** for several social media posts that were considered transphobic by LGBTQIA+ organizations and DeGeneres was **canceled** because several of her employees accused her of having a toxic work environment.

Politically, Democrats and Republicans have very different views on **cancel culture**. Republicans are very against the idea, and Democrats are more for the idea of **cancel culture**. In fact, the phrase "**cancel culture**" was originally a derogatory phrase coined by Republicans to criticize Democrats, which is also appropriation since the term originated on Black Twitter (When Republicans). One of the politicians that have been very outspokenly against **cancel culture** is Marjorie Taylor Greene, but she is also one of the Republicans that Democrats have attempted to **cancel** the most. Greene has attacked **cancel culture** saying, "There is nothing more pathetic and hypocritical than the left's whiny **cancel culture**" (@RepMTG). Democratic supporters have attempted to cancel Greene because of her controversial opinions and racist tweets. But as stated previously, **cancel culture** is the modern form of boycotting. Nicole Holliday, an assistant linguistics professor from the University of Pennsylvania states that "It is used to refer to a cultural boycott," she said. "We've had the term 'boycott' forever and ever. It just means, 'I'm not going to put my attention or money or support behind this person or organization because they've done something that I don't agree with.' That is not new, that's very old" ("When Republicans Attack 'Cancel Culture,' What Does It Mean?").

Keyword: Class

The keyword **class** has multiple origins. Each origin is borrowed from both French and Classic Latin. The term in classical Latin "*classis*" is also defined as "class or division of the Roman people on the basis of property" as well as "division or category" (*Oxford English Dictionary*). In middle French, "*classe*" is defined as "class or division of the Roman people on the basis of property" (*Oxford English Dictionary*).

The term today is used based on the classic Latin definition of "division or category". In the *Encyclopedia Britannica's* "social class" article, they state that the "term class started to become widely used in the 19th century to describe the social and economic hierarchy in today's world." Social groups had begun to emerge from western European societies. **Social class** is one of the terms that can be used to define and describe these different social and economic hierarchies. **Social class** is defined as "a group of people within a society who possess the same socioeconomic status" (*Britannica*). Many of the "class" phrases that we use to divide the economic hierarchy are **lower class, middle class, upper class, and working class**, which are all different groupings and divisions of what **social class** is. All of the four social groups somewhat each have different beliefs when it comes to education or personal ideologies. Many of those who are a part of the **upper class** have better opportunities when it comes to their education while those who are a part of the **lower** and **working classes** don't (Boundless). This makes it easier to send their children to the best schools possible. One of the concepts that we use to describe **social class** is **class consciousness**. **Class consciousness** is a topic that has been discussed for over many years now. This concept was first introduced by famous philosopher and sociologist Karl Marx in the 1800s (Crossman). In Ashley Crossman's article, she states that "Karl Marx had believed that **class consciousness** was the awareness of one's social and economic status."

Social class plays a vital role when it comes to the dynamic of different families broken down into four categories. The first is the **upper class**. The **upper class** is at the top of the hierarchy, usually heirs and those with great wealth. Although wealth may be a big factor it is not the only thing that matters when it comes to being a part of the **upper class**. Your social status and how you are perceived by others play a big role in what class or category you are put in (Cole). The bourgeoisie is a good example of what the **upper class** would look like. Next, you have the **middle class**. The **middle class** consists of those who are close enough to be a part of the **upper class** but not quite, somewhere in the "middle". Those who were a part of the **middle class** were those who had white-collar jobs. White-collar jobs may consist of people who work in management, administration, or any type of sales job (JobsPikr). **Middle-class** workers had enough money to be separated and placed aside from the **lower-class** workers, but they were not wealthy enough to be categorized as a part of the **upper class**. Today we can say that the **middle class** can be broken up into two different categories, the **upper middle class**, and the **lower middle class**. Families or individuals who make around 150,000 a year would consider themselves to be part of the **upper middle class** and those who may make around 50,000 a year would consider themselves

to be a part of the lower **middle class** (Bird and Newport). **Upper-middle-class** workers were those who have occupations that may involve medicine, law, or anything that involves a bachelor's degree or higher (Boundless), while many **lower-middle-class** employees don't necessarily hold anything higher than a bachelor's degree or they may have gone to a two-year college. Today, the middle class has started to slowly decrease in the past five decades (Kochhar and Sechopoulos). Based on their research, Kochhar and Sechopoulos state that in 1971 61% of households in America were considered to be a part of the middle class. Now the percentage has dropped to 50% in 2021.

Lastly, we have the **lower and the working class** which some can say that they are the same thing. The concept of the **lower and working class** came along not long after the end of the industrial revolution (Lumen). When we were first introduced to the working class, they were people who worked in manual labor. If we think about it, they were somewhat similar to **middle-class** families but not just quit. According to Tamara Draut, Most of the **working class** do not hold anything over a high school degree. She also states that those who are a part of this class can also include the unemployed, "who are counted as still in the labor force as long as they are actively looking for work" (Draut). Even though some of these families may not be a part of the **lower class** they still may have some type of financial struggle. The working class consists of people who somewhat live a paycheck-to-paycheck type of life. The **lower class** can be considered those who are living in poverty. Many people who are a part of the **lower class** make much lower incomes working full-time jobs that you don't necessarily have to have much skill for. Most of the **lower class** "lack a high school education" (Boundless). Either they have not finished high school and got their diploma, but instead could have gotten their GED. **Lower-class** working families barely have access to the right type of health care. Many also rely on government assistance, such as food stamps or welfare checks (Boundless).

Social classes create social stratification of different roles in duties to somewhat try and keep people in line or maybe under some type of control. Today, your social status or class may not be used to keep people in some sort of control but they are used to help with your connections between the different hierarchies. After going through the four social classes we can kind see how they can create different cultural identities.

Keyword: Colonialism

By Becket See

The word "**colonialism**" is derived from the word "**colonial**," which is in term derived from "**colony**." We first see recorded usage of the word "**colony**" in the 14th Century, used in the early version of the Wycliffite Bible, translated by John Wycliffe, to describe the colony (spelled "**colonye**") of Macedon. This word is derived from the French term "**colonie**," and the Latin **colonia**," in both cases being used to describe conquered territories under foreign rule, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*. The first instance of the word "**colonialism**" is found in the Correspondence of Jeremy Bentham, edited by Timothy Sprigge, and containing letters written both by and to Bentham throughout his life. The context in which this word is used is in an economic sense, describing the means by which this act of acquiring and using **colonies** to increase exports might or might not be of economic benefit to the nation responsible for said **colonization**.

Colonialism is used by Bentham to describe the institution which we see in the middle stages of the British Empire, particularly around the time of the inking of this letter, in 1791. 1791 is an important year in British Imperial history, following soon after the end of the American Revolution, this year marks the end of the American Revolutionary period, with the ratification of the Bill of Rights of the United States Constitution. Bentham, a progressive writer at the time, was openly opposed to imperialism as a concept, as well as slavery. With a focus on economics, as well as morality, he surprisingly was opposed to the American Revolutionary effort, claiming that it had little reason for taking place over the revolution of any other **colony** at the time. Despite this, he became a loud voice in support of liberation of other **colonies** in the years after making these statements, in 1793 he stood before the French National Assembly to deliver his address, titled, "Emancipate Your **Colonies**!"

This speech made by Bentham highlighted many of the injustices he perceived in the French occupation of Canada. Among other things, he cited the right to their own governing body, which he does not believe that they had at the time. He stated that the French colonies in Canada were not truly part of the French Empire, but merely unrighteously governed by the French. Bentham asked, "what may be the feelings of the **colonists**. Are they Frenchmen? they will feel like Frenchmen? Are they not Frenchmen? then where is our right to govern them?" When we think of **colonization**, we often associate this process with the mistreatment of the **colonized**, the displacement (at the very least) of the natives, and the neglect of those living within the **colonies** by their governing bodies in a mother country. Bentham highlighted the disconnect between the French parliament and the French **colonies**, in distance, environment, in economics, and culture as he explains why these **colonies** cannot and should not be governed in this way. He argued the **colonies** instead should have been liberated, allowed to rule themselves as they saw fit, as the former British **colonies** to the south had done a few years before.

In both Early American and in modern use, we see this view of the word **colonialism** be fueled by negative experiences of the residents of **colonies** under

colonial rule. We further see this topic of animosity between the **colonizers** and the **colonized** described in Professor Andrew Dorman's article, "**Colonialism** in International Relations." This article hones in upon the racial nature of **colonization** and imperialism. When we think of **colonialism** from a euro-centric standpoint, our minds tend to jump to the colonization of the Americas throughout the Age of Exploration, at the hands of the Portuguese, Spanish, British, French, and other European nations. This viewpoint stems from the undeniable fact that Europe has been the singular most dominant continent in terms of **colonization** throughout world history, which Dorman suggests "has resulted in a pervasive 'methodological whiteness.'" In addition to white supremacy and racism, Dorman acknowledges that widespread European **colonialism**, throughout Africa, Asia, the Americas and Oceania, has perpetuated the patriarchal values held by these countries. Dorman points out all of these negatives of **colonialism** in an attempt to redirect conversation on international relations and force readers to reevaluate preconceived notions on developing countries, particularly those that were former **colonies**, European or otherwise.

Although not a developing country, the United States of America was formerly a collection of various European **colonies**, French, Spanish, but mostly English. European **colonialism** in the United States of America is perhaps most strongly associated with the United Kingdom, due to the **colonial** history of the country. The negative connotation of the word "**colonialism**" to the average American can be attributed to nationalist sentiment lingering centuries after the Revolutionary War. Despite how long ago the American Revolution was, however, many **colonies** of the United Kingdom have only in recent years gained independence and freedom from British occupation. Janelle Griffith of NBC News writes on the matter of Queen Elizabeth II's recent death, and the late monarch's involvement in British imperialist history. We find many people of the world rejoicing, rather than mourning the death of this monarch. This sentiment is reported upon in Nigerian former **colonial** subjects, many of whom experienced oppression and violence under British rule, or were displaced or killed during the Nigerian Civil War. A Nigerian interviewed by Griffith "said that her perspective on the queen has been shaped largely by Britain's role in the suffering of her parents and many others during the Nigerian Civil War that followed the nation's **decolonization** in 1960." Despite the recent British occupation of Nigeria, and the fact that the Civil War was a direct result of British **colonization**, the British offered little to no support to the Nigerian government during this bloody war. Many Nigerians also witnessed the damage apartheid in South Africa caused Black Africans living under a **colonial** regime, as the Nigerian government was a leading force against apartheid. The Nigerian government collectively issued hundreds of passports to South Africans seeking refuge, up until the end of apartheid in 1994, when Nigerians began to move to South Africa due to overpopulation.

Another place in which we see the lasting effects of British **colonization** is within the Caribbean Islands, perhaps most recently, in Barbados. Despite declaring its independence from the United Kingdom almost three decades ago, this country only renounced Queen Elizabeth II as its monarch in 2021, less than a year before her death. Barbados was originally **colonized** to aid in the hugely profitable plantation

economy in the Americas, with native islanders and Africans alike being forced to work in sugarcane fields. This practice continued on the island until 1833, with the Slavery Abolition Act of the United Kingdom. On the topic of renouncing the English monarch, “The time has come to fully leave our **colonial** past behind,” wrote Prime Minister Mia Amor Mottley in a speech prepared for Mason. ‘Barbadians want a Barbadian head of state.’” (McGreevy) This rhetoric is largely due to the immense profits the British are typically able to reap from **colonized** nations, in the Americas from various plantations, and in Africa and Asia primarily from oil. These profits are rarely shared proportionately with the **colonies** in which they are conceived, leading to alienation of already mistreated native people by the **colonizing** body.

Colonialism, unsurprisingly, has throughout history become perceived more negatively the more the general populus has become aware of its effects and entirety. The financial exploitation, violence and oppression enacted on native people, general mistreatment of the **colonized** peoples, and inability to govern these **colonies** have all led to this reaction to hearing this word. The power imbalance in **colonial** relationships has always bred animosity throughout history and have, in turn, made the concept of **colonialism** near impossible to see without viewing it through the perspective of all of those negatively experiencing the effects of the institution today. **Colonialism** is a government policy and practice, but it is also an institution responsible for irreparable pain and suffering around the globe.

Keyword: Communication

By Reid Weber

Our lives are filled with **communication**. Whether its over the phone or in person, **effective communication** is the key to building and maintaining relationships in every aspect of life. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines **communication** as “the transmission or exchange of information, knowledge, or ideas, by means of speech, writing, mechanical or **electronic media** (Communication)”. **Communication** runs deep in linguistic nuances, facial expressions, and nonverbal cues. Recently, **communication** has developed significantly with the advancements of technology. Will Baker, a professor at the University of Southampton, writes that “We are able to instantly connect with people around the world via **digital communication**, cultural forms and practices [that] can achieve rapid global circulation through social media, our workplaces and educational institutions” (Baker).

Another definition of **communication** is “the action of sharing in something; mutual participation or ownership” (Communication). Thomas Jefferson writes, in The Declaration of Independence, that “We might have been a free and a great people together; but a **communication** of grandeur and of freedom, it seems, is below their dignity” (Communication). In this definition, Jefferson is conveying that, while under the authority of Britain, the subjects were unable to participate in grandeur and freedom because of the high-held dignity of Britain’s government. This example of the word shows the act of sharing or partaking in something.

The act of **communicating** is wide ranging in its uses. The first telephone was created in 1876, and this shifted what communication looked like. At that point, conversation changed from being only happen in person, to one that could happen when a distance away. At this point in history, the act of **communicating** would have been contested as communication at this point could be defined as talking or interacting with someone in-person. With most people not even having a phone, **communication** over the phone would have been new and strange to a group of people are not use to technology. One current example that is seen in society today is the use of cell phones with the older population. The older generation often disregards the use of social media and modern-day communication because of many things. For one, it's hard to use for someone who had not grown up most of their life with technology. Before the emergence of social media and phones, social life was built in-person. There were no means for communicating without being in the presence of another individual. As a result, the generation of individuals that lived before social media, simply had no use for it as their social life was established through in-person interactions.

The definition of **communication**, however, has shifted over time. Modern communication deals with how you convey your thoughts and ideas through different forms of media. With advancements in technology over the past 20 years, we have seen a new form of **communication** that is represented in this definition; electronic media. Texting, snapchat, or even phone calls have shifted **communication** away from in person to online. This has affected the efficacy of communication and has lopsided **communication** to being strictly verbal.

Communication includes two key concepts, **verbal and nonverbal communication**. **Verbal communication** encompasses your spoken word and "how you deliver messages and how you receive them" (Doyle). An important aspect of **verbal communication** is delivering your message clearly, without confusing your audience. This helps your audience understand the points that you are trying to convey. **Nonverbal communication** is also essential to **effective communication**. Jeanne Segal, a psychologist, and mental health pioneer, says that "While the key to success in both personal and professional relationships lies in your ability to communicate well, it's not the words that you use but your nonverbal cues or "body language" that speak the loudest" (Segal). **Nonverbal communication** is most natural and tells your audience if what you are saying is truthful or if you're listening to them. This type of **communication** is taken away when using online forms of **communication** like texting or phone calls. While doing either of these, the person on the other end is not able to read your facial expressions or body language. Body language such as facial expression or eye contact are crucial to your understanding as well as your audiences. When communicating, knowing that your audience is understanding what you are saying helps you better articulate your ideas or what needs expanded on.

The word communication arises in clusters of words also. Take, for example, **communication skills**. The act of communication differs in efficacy if the skills of the communicator are not up to par. Another example of communication is **metacommunication**. This means "all the nonverbal cues (tone of voice, body language, gestures, facial expression, etc.) that carry meaning that either enhance or disallow what we say in words" (Hartwell-Walker). In other words, it's the communication that is hidden beneath the words. Along with this is

noncommunication. This is simply the act of not communicating. This could come from a lack of communication or an inability to. Interestingly, not communicating is a form of communicating. Many times, feelings drive our communication. Feelings can also drive a lack of communication. Anger, frustration, or other actions that show resentment can accompany noncommunication. The opposite of noncommunication is the word **overcommunication** meaning “to deliberately communicate more than is normal or generally considered necessary (as to emphasize important information)” (Overcommunication). This can be used to bring clarity to a point that the audience does not get.

Communication is vitally important on a wide scale. It is essential for everything from businesses to the government. For a business to properly function and be successful, it needs a good relationship with its customers. The public relations department is responsible for **communicating** the agenda of the business to the consumers as well as the attitudes from the consumers back to the business. This helps finetune the product and can help strengthen the business in order for customer satisfaction to improve. Another use of **communication** is a press release. Press releases are used by the government in order to inform the public of news or information relevant to the time. For example, the president would release a press release to inform the public of his/her stance on a particular issue. After 9/11, George Bush released a statement acknowledging the terrorist attacks and, importantly, detailing actions that the government was going to take in the future. **Communication** between the government and its citizens helps inform the public and alleviate fear.

Keyword: Democrat

By Oscar Mailman

We live in an increasingly polarized world of angry politics, with a lot of this centered in America. A few decades ago, there was more of an idea of two sides trying to support their beliefs through politics, but now it appears that most consider it a battle between good and evil, right and wrong. **Democrats** and Republicans are not different factions of the same team, but rather opponents in a war of beliefs. Who is considered a **Democrat** and what a **Democrat** even is has changed significantly since the word's inception, especially recently. Consider the difference between the lowercase word **democrat** and the capitalized **Democrat**. Different people fall into these groups, and there is even anger between them, separated by the capitalization of one letter.

The official definition by the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) sheds some light on this. Since at least the late 1700s, the official definition has been "An advocate or supporter of democracy or **democratic** principles; (originally) *spec.* a republican opponent of the aristocracy in the French Revolution; (more generally) an advocate or supporter of a republican form of government," ("democrat, n.") This is a fairly inoffensive definition; it represents some factual positions of **Democrats** and not much else. Where the definition gets more complicated is "With modifying word (and capital initials): an advocate or supporter of a particular form of democracy; *esp.* a member of a political party advocating **democratic** political principles of a particular kind". This is an extremely vague definition; it essentially states that a **Democrat** is someone with **Democratic** beliefs. But what are **Democratic** beliefs in the first place?

The word democracy can be broken into "demos" and "-cracy". Demos is Greek, meaning the populace as a political unit. -Cracy denotes a form of government or rule, ("-cracy, comb. form".) The result is a word meaning the population as a government. Being that America is a democracy, that checks out. Voters control who is elected, despite some restrictions such as the electoral college that prevents it from becoming a complete popular vote.

Uppercase **Democrats** are often associated with representatives employed by the **Democrat** organization. Congressmen and Congresswomen, presidential candidates, all of them are part of the **Democratic** organization. This does not automatically put them in good graces with **democratic** voters, however. **Democratic** voters are those who vote for the democratic candidate despite not being part of the political organization officially. They represent the base that **Democrat** politicians are trying to appeal to. To be a **democrat** in America today implies being a left-leaning liberal, which comes with a set of opinions on the major political issues. Pro-choice, pro-gay rights, pro-gun control, and many more make up a lot of the values **democrats** consider important, to various degrees. (Nadeem) But every individual **democrat** voter prioritizes some of these values over others, and that's essential to their identity. The family of a school shooting victim might be a strong advocate of gun control, and vote **Democrat** as a result of this. The same is true for Republicans and their values. Choosing a political party means deciding which of these values mean most to each individual person and evaluating which party handles the issue better in their opinion.

What's interesting is how the definition over the years. On the US Embassy official site, there is detailed account on how the parties have changed over the years. There was a time, in the early 19th century, when it was Republicans such as Theodore Roosevelt who wanted increased environmental protection, and **Democrats** who fought against it. Today, **Democrats** are the main supporters of clean energy (Siegal). The same can be seen in Andrew Jackson's time as a **Democrat** president. He wanted less government regulation, but this would now be seen as a conservative ideal. By expanding the scope a bit, there's another interesting phenomenon; While **Democrats** in America are seen as liberal, as far as other countries are concerned, American **Democrats** are far closer to centrists as far as their ideals go. The Wikipedia article on European liberalism ("Liberalism in

Europe”) is an excellent place to explore this idea. In most European countries, a classical liberal might be considered center-right, as it refers to liberal policies from potentially centuries ago. The Christian population is often considered a liberal demographic, while in America, Christians are majority conservative. The article also contains a list of all of the official European political parties, some of which consider themselves **democratic** more than others. Worth noting is that *every party* in Europe identifies at least partially as liberal. This signals that, while in America, democracy is an option, in Europe it’s all but a requirement.

Also worth considering is the rift between **democrat voters** and the **Democratic party**. Recently, there’s been a vocal sect of the voters that is disappointed with the party’s actions. Joe Biden has a fairly low approval rating among **democrats** at 81% according to a Reuters survey. Voters are in agreement on the issues, but aren’t seeing any action from their representatives in law. The recent abortion ban angered a lot of voters, since many want the party to take significant action against it, which doesn’t seem to be happening. In an ABC News article that released around the time of the ruling, the author writes, “Instead, the **Democratic** message is shaping up to be: Elect more **Democrats** to protect abortion rights. That, however, risks falling flat among **Democrats** who argue that passionate calls to vote hardly translate automatically into people doing as they’re asked” (Riccardi). Although the **Democratic** party represents **democratic** voters in the government, the overlap isn’t ubiquitous. The party will never please everyone, but due to the lack of a popular third option, they resort to voting **Democrat** at elections.

Keyword: Division

By Mary E. Foley

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* **division** is a noun that originates from the Latin word *dīvisiōn-em* meaning to separate or set apart one thing from another. Its original uses were in reference to the **division** of the Earth (1559), the **division** of languages (1634), and the **division** of time (1715). The word that is most seen today, **division**, is most often used when referring to something that is being split into parts or separated. In contrast to historic use, **division** is now more commonly used to emphasize conflict between two groups. Its contemporary meanings can be attributed to a rise of modernity in sectors such as military, government, labor, digital, economic, theological, educational, political, and so on.

At its origins, the term **division** was used mainly in an administrative sense. Beginning around the 1300s, **division of government** began an era of high authority among country leaders. **Division of labor** can be traced back to the late 1300s in which economic organization was building up after tragedies such as The Black Death. **Division** can also be applied to the term **military divisions** which rose around 1600 with the prominence of infantry, airborne, and other **divisions**. These phrases notably rely on the idea that a superior power is dividing either people or work for efficiency and organizational purposes, a contrast to many modern uses of the word.

The phrase **military divisions** is a strong example of the more neutral sense of the word, as described above. The *OED* definition of this phrase explains that this use of **divisions** is to show how the military is split up into subsections. These subsections are often categorized by rank and branch of the military. The different **divisions** are then supervised by a higher officer (*OED*). While actual **military divisions** themselves are still used today in many cultures and countries, it is important to note how the phrase itself was most popularly used around the eighteenth and nineteenth century.

Similarly, to **military divisions**, the phrase **division of labor** is also one which historically has a more neutral context. The *OED* definition of this phrase explains how it is used in a more economic sense. Again, a higher power is the source of the **division** by taking a group of employees and portioning out work amongst them in order to create a more productive work environment. The *OED* also explains how **division of labor** can be used in terms of family roles. For example, "the husband ploughs, or cuts timber; the wife cooks, manages the house, and spins or weaves; the sons hunt or tend sheep; the daughters employ themselves as milkmaids," (*OED*). Here, the definition of the phrase is clearly dated from its use in the 1500s, 1600s, and 1700s, but much like **military divisions**, it can still be applicable today. For example, with a rise in same sex marriage and a push to unlearn gender norms, the **division of labor** among families looks very different today. Instead of the mother doing housework and the father doing labor, both parents will take on these roles equally.

Today, the way in which the term **division** is used has gone through a major shift. What was once a mostly neutral word, now holds more weight. This can be highlighted through the current common phrases seen with the word such as **political divide**, **digital divide**, **class divide**, and **athletic division**. In many of these cases, the use of **division** denotes a sort of inequality or turmoil among the groups to which these phrases are applied. Instead of a structured, singular, higher power dividing groups into subdivisions, this use refers to the **division** of people amongst themselves through disagreement, difference in views, and difference in economic status.

The phrase **political divide** refers to the separation between the Democratic party and the Republican party, liberals and conservatives, and people in general. As the article titled, "Healing the **political divide**," mentions, the term **political divide** reflects the extremes that political parties and/or sides have created around certain topics such as gun policies, abortion policies, etc. that ultimately create a polarization and a need to pick which opinion one belongs to (Waldroff 2021). While **divide** can often refer to the mere split of something, its stance with the word, political, is almost always used to highlight the constant back and forth between two groups that heavily disagree. Many people today are looking at ways to bridge the **divide** between the parties by encouraging conversations that are educational and respectful.

Another phrase which shares this type of usage is **digital divide**, which is becoming more prevalent as technology continues to evolve and become increasingly relied on and prices continue to rise. A scholarly article from the *Public Policy Institute of California* shares that, "Full digital access remains lower among Latino (63%), Black (71%), and low-income households with school children (59%)," (Starr et al. 2022). This example sheds light on the aspect of **division's** contemporary use which puts an emphasis on inequality. When talking about the **divide**, it is not structural or calculated, it is from the inside. In other words, there is no higher power intentionally distributing separation between groups, but a systemic problem of inequality among race and economic status which creates these **divisions**. This phrase goes hand in hand with **class division** in which many lower income communities don't have access to resources such as education, healthcare, housing, food, and so on.

Relatively recently within American culture, specifically college sports, is the topic of **athletic divisions**. These **divisions** are commonly known as **Division I**, **Division II**, and **Division III**, with DIII being the highest level of performance and DI being the lowest. A scholarly article from the *Journal of Issues in Intercollegiate Athletics*, mentions that "the philosophy of **Division III** athletics' is solely concerned with the academic and social success of student-athletes, rather than athletic triumphs and national exposure as stipulated for **Division I** institutions," (Katz, Matthew, et al. 2015). Here, the contrast between the different programs is highlighted, expressing how each **division** contains its own level of competition and importance surrounding athletics as well as schooling. The athletes that get into higher athletically demanding programs often come from areas with more resources, emphasizing **class divisions** yet again. These differentiations have led to divisions in funding that affect team transportation, gear, equipment, and overall opportunities in both education and athletics. Although this is viewed as unfair by many in the sector of **Division III**, the term **division** itself reinforces the results of such separations.

Keyword: Health

By Cara LaBelle

Health is a noun commonly used in everyday conversation going to the doctor, seeing a therapist, a dietician. All of these professions may ask, "how is your health?" But what are they referring to as **health**? The *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) defines **health** as the "Soundness of body; that condition in which its functions are duly and efficiently discharged" ("Health"). The word comes from the West Germanic language and has changed meanings throughout time. In Middle English, it began as "Hal" but soon became "Hail" with the meaning wholeness. The word also had religious meaning, referring to "Spiritual, moral, or mental soundness." In a more modern era, the word is applied to Mental soundness, but not applied spiritually. Other modern definitions of the word exist such as "a condition in which someone or something is thriving or doing well" or "The general condition of the body." (Health definition and meaning). The word has become more holistic in use. In recent events, **health** has been in the headlines regarding the global pandemic COVID-19. We see the word referred to in titles of **health** organizations such as The World Health Organization (WHO). In these cases, **health** is used in a medical sense, regarding a person's individual medical status or the overall wellbeing of the public. Not only is **health** used in a medical sense, but also in a mental and social sense.

Health from a medical standpoint is sometimes used as the opposite of disease. But how are they related? The *OED* defines disease as "disorder of structure of function in an organism that produces specific symptoms and is not the result of physical injury" ("Disease"). The word "disease" would classify as a synonym for **bad health**. **Bad health** refers to being unwell. The term bad health can be applied to **mental health, physical health** etc.

The *OED* definition of **health** being "Soundness of body; that condition in which its functions are duly and efficiently discharged" ("Health") limits the meaning to just the body and does not specify if soundness relates to just **physical health** or mental and **emotional health**.

The word **health** is constantly contested when discussing if health is pertained to the full body, or can pertain to the brain and mental illness which is referred to as **mental health**. Many question if our physical health involves our **mental health**. According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), **mental health** and physical health correspond with one another. For example, depression can increase problems such as diabetes and heart disease (About Mental Health). On the other hand, the treatment of **mental health** is not as prioritized as **physical health**. For example, 42% of adults with a mental illness reported not being able to get treatment because they could not afford it. Not all insurance companies cover mental health treatment which may be a result of varying beliefs in whether mental illness is truly a health matter. Multiple doctors believe that mental illness is not in the realm of health as a disease such as Dr. Thomas Szasz, professor at NYU who says that, "There is no blood or other biological test to ascertain the presence or absence of a mental illness, as there is for most bodily diseases. If such a test were

developed...then the condition would cease to be a mental illness and would be classified, instead as a symptom of a bodily disease ("Real Disease").

Physical health is defined as the condition of your body, taking into consideration everything from the absence of disease to fitness level (Physical Health). This definition is written to include all types of wellness, for example lifestyle, biology, environment, and service ("Physical Health"). **Physical health** is the all around health of a person and their environment.

In 2008, doctors started having the conversation of "redefining" **health**. The World Health Organization defines health as "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."(Health and Wellbeing). Many doctors who are focused on research state that "the WHO definition has no direct operational value"(Brussow), meaning that there is no way to measure **health**. Redefining **health** and coming up with a way to standardly measure it was a difficult task, so doctors rely on surveys for different activities which helps assess one's personal **health** (Brussow).

One compound of the word health is **healthcare**. According to the *OED*, the word **healthcare** is from the U.S. and is defined as "the general health of a person, community, etc. especially that provided by an organized **health service**". (Healthcare). The WHO defines primary healthcare as "a whole-of-society approach to health that aims at ensuring the highest possible level of health and well-being and their equitable distribution by focusing on people's needs and as early as possible along the continuum from health promotion and disease prevention to treatment, rehabilitation and palliative care, and as close as feasible to people's everyday environment"("Primary Healthcare"). The word **healthcare** is prominent in society today in politics when discussing free **healthcare** and the access to healthcare in America. There are also debates about what basic **healthcare** means. According to the American Medical Association, basic healthcare is defined by being transparent, includes input from the community, protect vulnerable patients, considers scientific data related to safety, seeks to improve the outcomes of **health services**, checks for care variations, and protect against discrimination, and considers adjustments and innovation (Defining Basic Healthcare). **Health insurance** is also a highly debated political topic because some people believe that **health insurance** should be universally free, while others think that everyone should pay for their own. Although there are more than one definition of universal/free healthcare, all include aspects of providing people with the care that they need.

Currently, **Public Health** has been a common phrase used regarding the COVID-19 Pandemic. **Public health** refers to "the health of the population as a whole" ("Public Health"). **Public health** deals with vaccinations and the spread of diseases. Over the COVID-19 pandemic, **public health** evolved. Doctor Parodi, a practicing infectious disease doctor, discusses how **public health** must also deal with issues such as food supply, housing issues, and safety concerns. These factors had a role in COVID-19 as well. **Public health officials** had "to provide some of the safety net" (Andis).

Healthy and **unhealthy** are used to describe a multitude of factors, including weight, lifestyle, habits, diet, and exercise. Whereas something like weight can be calculated to find a BMI and defined as either **healthy** or **unhealthy**, other factors are more subjective. In different cultures, exercise and diet are viewed differently. As well, some people think they are **healthy** after walking three miles, while others believe they must run to exercise and consider themselves healthy. In some cultures drinking alcohol excessively is not considered a bad habit, whereas in the United States, we consider such a habit to be an **unhealthy** addiction. When referring to diets, many people choose to eat what they think of as **health foods**. **Health foods** are “foods chosen for its dietary or **health-giving** properties”(Health-foods).

Health and compounds of the word health give out different connotations. The phrase **good health** gives a positive connotation. **good health** is referred to as “handling stress and living a longer and more active life” (Felman). Whereas **unhealthy** would be referred to as a negative connotation. Unhealthy is defined as being “Not possessed of good health, weak or sickly in health” (“Unhealthy”). Both words include **health** but when read, give off different meanings resulting in opposing connotations. The word health itself is neutral, but when compounded with other phrases or by adding a suffix or prefix, the connotation may change.

Keyword: Image
By Lauryn Martin

The word **image** comes from French origins, as well as evolving with a Latin background in the 1400s. First used in the late eleventh century the connotation behind the word **image** has grown as time went on. It was first used to talk about to talk about an “artificial imitation or representation (in solid or flat form) of a person or object.” (*Oxford English Dictionary*). Throughout the 12th and 13th centuries, it was also used to mean “illusion, likeness, a mental representation of something or someone, a reflection, appearance, and the representation of the constellations, plants, or fixed stars in the sky.” Moving into the 14th and 15th centuries, the word began to fuse with Latin meanings **imagin-** and **imago** to represent a more artistic side of the word, including more painted portraits and sculptures in its meaning (*OED*). As time continued to pass, the word **image** continued to be associated with different domains or clusters of meanings. There is also debate on positive and negative connotations of the word and how it affects society. These different contexts and connotations behind the word **image** make it a keyword, or a word that is commonly used in language, but also commonly debated (“Keywords Project”).

Plato, an early philosopher from Ancient Greece, focused on the negative meanings behind **image** and how they can affect our mental perception of the world. According to Notre Dame professor James Porter, Plato takes the stance that “The phenomenal world is a (bad) copy of an original **image**. Art and poetry are necessarily caught up in the same metaphysical process of imitation (*mimēsis*) and copy, producing **images** that lie at an even farther remove from the original Forms” (Porter, *Plato and the Platonic Tradition*). In this context, Plato explains that **images** are flawed representations of the real, original world. This causes them to be evil and manipulate the people of the world into seeing a false reality. These false copies of the real world can cause people’s perception or **mental image** of the object to be flawed as well. This fuels Plato’s argument that art and **images** are evil and lie to people about the true object portrayed. This makes **images** evil in Plato’s eyes, giving a more negative connotation to the word.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* also gives the definition of image as a verb, meaning “to create a **mental image**”. Aristotle, another famous Greek philosopher and student of Plato, looked more in this context of the word. He took an opposite approach to **images** that Plato did, viewing people’s imagination as cognitive development and giving it a positive connotation. He states that imagination is how people process their view of the world or stimuli they encounter, and the brain imagines through **mental images** or pictures it creates (Shields, *Imagination*). As people imagine more, they continue to grow their cognitive abilities. This means that images, specifically visualizing mental images, help people instead of hurting them, giving images a positive more meaning.

Moving into the early 19th century, technology started to impact the meaning of the word **image** significantly. In 1826, Joseph Nicéphore Niépce from France invented the first ever permanent photograph according to the Nashville Film

Institute. This advancement caused **image** to take on a whole new world. Spinning off its original meaning, photography introduced the ability to physically take an **image** of someone or something, creating an exact representation of a person or object on film paper. The concept of photography and technology together became more and more advanced, leading to a more digital association with the word **image**.

With the invention of the internet and digital mobile phones, images could be accessed anywhere at any time online. Instead of a physical connotation, the word **image** took a more digital meaning. The internet allows people to search for **images** with just the click of a button, pulling in millions of digital representations of what they are trying to find. Most recently on the internet, NFTs, or non-fungible tokens, have become the new trend. NFTs are “digital representations of properties that have been compared to digital passports, and each token has its own special, non-transferable identification that allows it to be distinguished from others” (Bhalla, “What is NFT?”). In other words, an NFT is a one-of-a-kind **image** or digital representation of something that only one person can own at a time. This brings the word **image** into the more current and advanced side of the internet, dealing with cryptocurrency and complex coding to make each **digital image** unique.

In today’s day and age, the word **image** has also taken a more personal spin to it. Due to the influence of social media, **image** has become a way of describing us as people. We increasingly use it to talk about physical aspects of ourselves and others. According to the National Eating Disorders Association, **body image** is, “How you see yourself when you look in the mirror or when you picture yourself in your mind” (“Body image”). **Body image** has become a pressing topic over the past couple years. With increasing use social media and idolization of influencers and celebrities, there has been conflict behind the word. In a more negative connotation, “Social media can negatively affect **body image** by over-exposing you to ‘idealized’ body types” according to journalist Erin Heger. Apps such as Facetune and Photoshop can allow people to distort their own physical **images** to fit a specific aesthetic. This false representation of altering an image and creating the ideal body or picture can cause negativity and illusions behind **images** online.

Erin Heger goes on to explain that there is also a positive side to **body image** on social media, as we now are able to connect with people around the world to make communities dedicated to **body image** positivity. There has been an increasingly high focus on *body positivity* on social media apps like TikTok and Instagram, with content creators focusing more on showing their true selves rather than using apps like Facetune and Photoshop to manipulate their bodies and **images** they share online. These creators and online communities can cause people to feel better about their own **body images**, creating a more positive outlook and therefore a more positive connotation of the word **image** itself, contrasting the negativity connected to it from other aspects of social media.

Keyword: Justice
By Hunter Wieland

The word "**justice**" has been in use since the year 1050, having the meanings of fair behavior, as well as the regulation of the legal system. It comes from Anglo-Norman and Old French roots. However, the word has kept these meanings and has gained new meanings over the years. In the late 1100s, **justice** also gained the meaning of the retribution of a criminal, and in the 1400s, meant a place of the death penalty, which is no longer used (*OED*).

The *Oxford English Dictionary* explains that the word is typically used today for the regulation of the legal system, the perpetuation of "what is **just** or right" through the use of jurisdiction, a title for members of a council that regulate the legal system (as in the Supreme Court), or the disciplining of a lawbreaker. And with the word **justice** comes the word **just**, where many people refer to **justice** as "the quality of being **just**" (*OED*). **Just** refers to the "right thing," or the "moral thing" in society. Relating to morality, **justice** can also be used in a theological sense. In this case, **Justice** means being considered worthy or proper in God's view (*OED*). Many people believe that doing the **just** thing, as in God's work, will make them worthy to go to heaven.

Two important words closely related to **justice** are the words **judicial** and **judgment**. In the **justice** system, such as the **judicial** branch of the government, judges will make **judgments** regarding a case, determining if someone is guilty of a crime or not. The *OED* defines **judicial** as "relating to proceedings in a court of law" and **judgment** as coming up with sensible opinions or decisions given all the obtainable information. An important phrase often used regarding **justice** is "to bring to **justice**," which according to the *OED*, means to make sure that someone is brought to a court of law or punished for their actions. This phrase is often used for criminals.

Justice would be considered categorical in the sense that the word is used in society today, whether it be the Supreme Court **justices** dealing with a case, helping someone because it is the **just** thing to do, or a group of people fighting for the **justice** they deserve.

Due to **justice** being a word with strong meanings and relevance in society, it comes with a lot of disagreement. **Justice** can lead to reward or punishment in certain situations, and depending on someone's point of view, two people may be on opposite sides of the spectrum for that situation. For example, recently the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v Wade*, allowing the states to decide if abortion should be legal or not. 5 **justices** voted to overturn the law, and 4 voted to keep it. This led to a nationwide outcry by many citizens, explaining that it is not **just** to tell women what they can or cannot do to their bodies.

An important symbol around the United States that represents **justice** is a **Lady Justice** statue wearing a blindfold. There are many of these statues around

the country. According to the article "Lady Justice" on the *Missouri Courts* website, the **Lady Justice** is based on the Greek goddess Themis, who represents strong insight and sound **judgment**, as well as the Roman goddess Justitia, who represents strong morality. "She is blindfolded because **justice** is unbiased and should not be based on a person's appearance or other outside influences." Many times, the **Lady Justice** is also holding scales and/or a sword. The scales are meant to symbolize the neutrality of the court's rulings, and the sword is meant to represent "the power of **justice**."

Justice has many interrelated words that are used together for certain situations. One important distinction that David Miller, writer for the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* makes is between **conservative** and **ideal justice**: "Philosophers writing on **justice** have observed that it has two different faces, one conservative of existing norms and practices, the other demanding reform of these norms and practices" (Miller). This analysis by Miller can be applied to debates that liberals and conservatives have. This relates to **social justice**, which is very closely related to human rights where it is meant to combat conflict and oppression over a group of people (Briskman). This term is mainly used by liberals. An example of **social justice** in society today is members of the LGBTQ+ community fighting for equal rights, treatment, and respect from others (mainly conservatives that don't agree with their beliefs).

Social justice has many interpretations depending on race, religion, and other beliefs. However, with **social justice** comes a lot of disagreement from opposite political parties. For example, Washington Post writer Abby Ohlheiser explains that in 2015, the phrase "**social justice warrior**" surfaced, meaning a person that advocates for development and advancement in society, mainly someone on the far left. In the 1990s, Ohlheiser explains that the term used to be used in a positive sense, as in giving someone approval for being an activist. However, recently people on the right have used this phrase as an insult. Originally, this phrase started in the gaming community, but can be used by anyone. Ohlheiser clarifies that if a community was considered a creature, then "To call someone a '**social justice warrior**' in this context is to label that person as an invading force, a target for the white blood cells. They are unwelcome outsiders, seen as threats to the health of the entire body."

A second phrase often used concerning **social justice** is "No **justice** no peace," a common saying used by Black Lives Matter protestors at rallies fighting against violence that is directed towards African Americans. These protestors ask for fair conditions and treatment, and if they are not given them, they will continue to fight for change to try to disrupt the typical social order in society. On top of rallies, singer Chelsea Williams released a song in 2020 called "No Justice, No Peace." She used lyrics such as "No killer police" and "Blood in the streets" to try to raise awareness against racism in the United States. In addition, hip-hop artist Z-Ro also released a song in 2016 called "No Justice No Peace" where he used lyrics such as "It's us against police" and "Every time I turn around they shoot another brother down in these cold, cold streets."

Another word often paired with **justice** is environmental. Writer Laura King explains that **Environmental justice** is a form of **social justice** “that focuses on the ways in which specific environmental issues and policy decisions have a disproportionate and negative impact on marginalized communities.”

Environmental justice typically advocates for better living conditions for the marginalized communities and low-income families in terms of exposure to toxins and other factors that create an unfair and unsafe environment. An example of **environmental justice** is “the anti-toxics movement.” This movement started when the New York government notified a community that their neighborhood was dangerous to live in because of the effects of “toxic waste dumping.” Many of the community members tried to make the government buy their homes so they could move elsewhere, but the movement was not successful until these members resorted to more aggressive ways (King).

Keyword: Mental

By Kamryn Hartman

Reading the title, a person might have thought of **mental health**, or even being called crazy. Fortunately, **mental** has more meanings than just being called crazy, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED), **mental** also means, “characterized by the possession of an active mind; thoughtful, intelligent. *rare*” (OED). The term **mental** is an example of a keyword, which “is a socially prominent word ... that is capable of bearing interlocking, yet sometimes contradictory and commonly contested contemporary meanings” (Adamson, et al. 2018). **Mental** is a word that has multiple meanings with some being contradictory.

The origin of **mental** was either borrowing from French or Latin (OED). **Mental** went through a progression of forms; it started with **mentale** in late middle English, then as **mentel** in 1371, but changed to **mental** in 1457, then to **mentall** in the 1500s to 1600s, then to **mentalle** in the 1600s again (OED). Now the late Middle English **mental** is being used.

Mental, as an adjective also means, “senses relating to the mind in the most general sense” or “carried on or performed by the mind; taking place in the mind; formed in the mind” (OED). This part of the definition can be interpreted as a physical means or the functions of the brain itself. What is interesting is that **mental** can refer to the chin in anatomical terms (Merriam, et al.), but in both the OED and Merriam-Webster dictionaries, **mental** does not refer to the brain explicitly. Only by strong association has our society related the term **mental** with the brain. Even the OED definition, “Of or relating to the mind as an object of study; concerned with the phenomena of the mind” (OED), does not specify that the brain is being studied.

The exclusion of the brain being part of the definition of the **mental** term may relate to how our brain holds our emotions and is connected to the rest of our body. “Interoception refers collectively to the processing of internal stimuli by the nervous system” (Khalsa, Sahib S, et al, 2017). Interoceptive signaling would

involve our nervous system processing what is happening with our internal systems, (like cardiovascular, immune, gastrointestinal and thermoregulatory systems). The dysfunction of the system can lead to **mental disorders**. An example of the dysfunction of interoceptive signaling are the physical symptoms of **mental disorders**, like trembling, sweating and nausea symptoms for General Anxiety disorder. This direct connection between **mental state** and our body shows how our **mental state** is not just in our brain.

Mental as an adjective was used in conjunction with other terms, like health, state and illness, so how is **mental** used in this way? A **mental state** is referred to "... as intentions, desires, and beliefs, to explain and predict our behavior and that of others" (Bulgarelli, et al, 2017). A **mental state** refers to the states of emotions and beliefs to communicate to others. **Mental health** would be better explained in conjunction with the definition of **mental illness**. **Mental health** is, "... a spectrum of mental and emotional wellbeing" (Johnson, 2022). This comparison to **mental illness** which, "is a medical and scientific understanding of things like depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, manic depression and other disorders treated with psychotherapy or medications" (Johnson, 2022). **Mental illness** is like the low end of the spectrum of **mental health**. This explanation is interesting, because **mental health** is an area of our lives that must always be worked on. Therefore, it is appropriate to describe **mental health** as a continuously changing **mental state** on a spectrum, compared to having a more rigid definition of what **mental health** is. This explanation also connects to Dr. Khalsa's article that explains how our nervous system is directly connected to our emotional experiences that can lead to **mental disorders**.

As earlier in this essay, **mental** is a contradictory term. **Mental** in one way means is, "designating a person suffering from an illness or impairment of mind" (OED), like in **mental case**. This is the most neutral of the OED definitions in describing a person with a **mental disorder**. The less neutral definition is, "mentally ill; mentally disabled. Also in weakened sense: irrational, uncontrolled, eccentric, crazy" (OED), in a colloquial sense. This part of the definition is less sympathetic towards those with a **mental disorder**. This OED definition relates to the other colloquial term, as in, "To go mental: to become mentally unbalanced; (later chiefly) to lose one's self-control, give away to overwhelming emotion (frequently in negative context, but more recently (as in quot. 1992) also in positive sense of ecstatic sense of abandon)" (OED). It is interesting how, as a society, used this term in a negative context, when it could mean a positive context. This colloquial OED definition strongly contradicts the one **mental** adjective term that is "characterized by the possession of an active mind; thoughtful, intellectual, *rare*." (OED). In social media, having good **mental health** is viewed as a goal in life. People tend to associate having good **mental health** with having confidence, setting goals, getting enough sleep, exercising consistently, having healthy eating habits and feeling optimistic. However, telling someone that they are "**mental**," is not a complement.

In contrast, being "**mindful**" has a more positive connotation than being **mental**. The definition of **mental** does not include the word **mind**. According to the

online Cambridge dictionary, **mind** is: (1) "The part of someone that makes it possible for him or her to think, feel emotions, and understand things;" (2) "a very intelligent person" (McIntosh). In therapy, "mindfulness" is a strategy used to become more emotionally aware, and it is associated with a positive state of being. The different connotations with **mental** vs. **mind** might highlight how our society views **mental health** with only the negative associations, and not the positive associations of the **mind**.

The negative portrayal of **mental illness** behavior negatively impacts the **mental health** community due to the increased levels of prejudice from a movie's portrayal. According to Damian Scarf, just viewing the 2019 movie, *Joker*, the prejudice of the audience towards those with **mental illness** was higher after watching the *Joker* movie, compared to watching *Terminator: The Dark Fate* movie (Scarf, 2020). As the psychologist Damian Scarf explained, "... *Joker* may exacerbate self-stigma for those with a mental illness, leading to delays in help seeking" (Scarf, 2020). This study shows how society still has a **mental health** stigma, especially against those who have a **mental illness**. It's understandable to include **mental health** in a movie for representation and education, but when a portrayal of **mental illness** behaviors is presented out of an educational context, like a supervillain's origin story (of all things), then the audience is going to receive the portrayal of the **mental illness** behavior and link that behavior to a villain's origin story.

This movie may have long term effects on some of the audience members who may still have implicit associations of some **mental illness** behaviors presented with *Joker's* behavior. If an audience member has a confidential **mental illness**, then the audience member will receive that negative association of behavior from the movie. Therefore, the negative association of **mental illness** might persuade the audience member to not seek help in the future, which can be harmful to them in the future if a **mental health** crisis were to arise.

Another study was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of school-based interventions programs that were meant to educate students on **mental health** and reduce the **mental health** stigma (Ma, Karen Kei Yan, et al, 2022). This study found that this intervention program can be effective in its intended purpose, but there was not enough evidence for long term effectiveness (Ma, Karen Kei Yan, et al, 2022). This study proves that it is still possible to reduce the **mental health** stigma and that the stigma is gradually reducing with the right resources. Our thoughts about what is "**mental**" creates a direct impact on everyone, regardless of a person's **mental health**. Even if the reader believes that they have no real power to change society's definition of **mental**, the change can simply start with how you think of others. The reader cannot know exactly what is happening inside of another person's **mental state**, no matter how the other person may look. But, in contrast, only the reader can know exactly what the reader's **mental state** is. This makes **mental health** invisible and visible. Therefore, the reader cannot know the exact **mental state** and story of someone with a **mental illness**, so just being kind to others is the first step to real change.

Keyword: Minority

The word **minority** has many different definitions, which is often paired with other words or contexts that create a contradictory idea.

Early Usage

Minority is derived from the French word "minorité" and it was used as early as 1493 to describe "the period of a person's life prior to attaining full age; the state or fact of being a minor" (*Oxford English Dictionary*). This definition is outdated, for people do not utilize the word **minority** in this context, but would simply say that the individual is a **minor**. While it lost this definition, it has many other definitions that are more prominently used today.

As this usage declined, "**minority**" gained another definition. In 1533, the word was used to mean "the condition or fact of being smaller, inferior, or subordinate in relation to something else" (OED). **Minority**, with this definition, is no longer used today. However, it can still be found lingering in the subconscious mind, for it still brings up the connotation that a **minority** is a smaller, weaker, and inferior group in many different situations.

Minority Political Party

The "**minority party**", according to the Oxford English Dictionary, is a "group or subdivision whose views or actions distinguish it from the main body of people" and who will join together to go "against a majority in a deliberate assembly or electoral body" (OED). The **minority party** is the political party that has the least number of elected representatives present in a government or legislative branch. The **minority party** is not permanent and can fluctuate from Democrats to Republicans, or vice versa, based on the results of the elections. The **minority party** is often associated by the press and American citizens as the political underdogs. The connotation implies that they are the weaker group and are required to fight against an extremely powerful opponent, with very slim chances of success. However, this is not always true, for sometimes the **minority** can be a dominating power despite its small size.

Minority Rule

A "**minority rule**" is a "government drawn from and elected by a **minority**" (OED). **Minority**, in this context, refers to a smaller percentage of the (country/county/region's) population. A **minority rule** is a direct challenge to our existing democratic system. Democracy values enacting legislation that reflects the will of the majority of Americans, but also protects the will of the **minority**. However, a **minority rule** system suppresses the will of the majority and amplifies the powers/ability and will of the minority.

The idea of a **minority rule** can also be seen in terms of the representative's voting power in the Senate. The Senate was founded on the belief that there should be "equal suffrage" in that every state gets the same number of representatives (Martin). The Senate currently has an equal number of Democrats and Republicans. However, each state does not have the same number of constituents. The Senate

Democrats represent about “41.5 Million more people” than their Republican counterparts (Liasson). This means a Senator from Wyoming that represents a “few hundred thousand people” has the same voting power as a Senator from California or New York, who represents “tens of millions of people” (Liasson). Thus, the votes on a bill does not directly reflect the true will of the **majority** of Americans, but instead allows the **minority** to skew the narrative in their favor.

Ethnic/Race/Religion

The government also classifies certain people as a **minority**, in which the word is used to describe “a small group of people differing from the rest of the community in ethnic origin, religion, language, etc” (OED). This new definition arose during the Civil Rights era, “as laws were reshaped to include and enfranchise more Americans... [who later] came to refer to nonwhite groups- or in theory, any group that was less than half the population- as **minorities**” (Morris).

Previously established laws were written in such a way that it disenfranchised the rights of **minorities**, who were systematically “debarred from certain opportunities [or were] excluded from participation from national life” (Morris). On the contrary, white people were able to benefit from this system due to their white privilege; they were provided more opportunities to maintain and expand their own power, wealth, and success. This position of power allowed them to label themselves as the model majority, or the standard, while **minority groups** were held in a “lower esteem” (Morris).

While **minority** in this context was used to primarily represent nonwhite individuals, the **minority** category has many different subtypes. The main subgroup is **racial minority**, which classifies the individual based on their skin type or outer appearance. These include people who identify as Asian, African American, Native American, or White. While **minorities are typically** held to a “lower esteem,” there is one **racial minority group** that is held to a higher standard than the others.

Model minority revolves around the idea that certain **minorities** are superior to others, in the sense that they are better educated, have better jobs, or have a certain familial background. An author for Time Magazine said that shortly after being verbally harassed for being an Asian American, his ethnic group became the “**model minority**: the desirable classmate, the favored neighbor, the non-threatening kind of person of color” (Nguyen). He continues to say that this idea of a **model minority** is often discriminatory, for it compares the different **minorities** and perpetuates the stereotypes that the white majority has created for them. This idea also puts one singular **minority** on a pedestal, often at the expense of the others; this in turn can negatively impact the so-called “**model minority**” for they can feel less inclined to share stories of their own suffering or hardships.

Some other subtypes include **religious minorities, linguistic minorities, or sexual minorities.**

This definition of a minority has led to the creation of a similar term, called the **Majority Minority**. The **Majority minority** is a term used to describe the collective group that includes multiple ethnic groups that are classified as a **minority**. An **ethnic minority** is a group of people "within a country or community which has different national or cultural traditions from the larger, dominant population" (OED). These **ethnic and racial minorities** are recorded in the national Census; this is a survey that the government provides to its citizens to get an accurate representation of the racial and ethnic makeup of the country. The last Census showed that America is still majority white. However, the results also suggest that **minorities** are having more children at a higher rate than white people. Thus, analysts determined that the "nation will become 'minority white' in 2045" (Frey).

Keyword: Norm

By Marisa Brown

The word "**norm**" is defined in the *Oxford English Dictionary* as, "that which is a model or a pattern; a type, a standard". The derived term "**normal**" is not only a societally perceived fact but, it is also an opinionated mentality of what is socially correct. This specific term has many different understandings, all providing significantly different effects.

The word originated from the Latin word, "**norma**". "**Normal**" dates back to the English language starting in the late 1840s, followed by the term **normality** in 1849, later leading to **normalcy** in 1857. Currently, the word **normal** or **norm** is associated with the way people act, the mannerisms of society, and human behavior. However, this was not always the case. These terms were originally used in connection with mathematics. (Jonathan Mooney) The word "**norm**", originating from the latin term "**norma**", is referencing a carpenter's square also known as a T-square. From Latin descent, the term "**normal**" referred to "perpendicular" or "right angles". **Normal** is not a simple term in geometry to describe an angle, it is more complex than what it is initially speculated to be. This term can be used to describe for example, a right angle, however this is a very subjective word. Mathematics is built on the idea of perfection and beauty making it objectively verifiable. However beauty is subjective, so to one individual "**normal**" can have a completely different connotation to another individual's perception of the word. When **normal** is being used in the sense of identity, there is not a concrete verifiability like there would be for mathematics. This phenomenon is what makes the term so diverse and compelling (Jonathan Mooney).

The first people to ever use the word **normal** outside of a mathematical context were a group of men from the mid 1800s. These men were in the fields of academic disciplines in both comparative anatomy and physiology. (Jonathan Mooney) They used "**normal**" later evolving into the term "**normal state**" which they used in context to describe the functioning organs and systems of the body. Though these men were using the word to describe organs of the body, they were adopting a similar connotation to how "**normal**" is perceived today. The men used it as a synonym to "ideal" or "perfect" condition. In this period of time, they were perceiving and applying the word to describe something that was "**not abnormal**." (Jonathan Mooney).

The term "**norm**" meets the requirements and passes the expectations of a good "Key-word" in many areas. "**Norm**" has many different definitions connoting different rationales. This word has been a prevalent term in recent history, continuing to stay relevant. **Norms** have the ability to grow and flourish however, they can likewise perish. A good example of a **norm** dying out is smoking. (Cristina Bicchieri) Yes we still see people smoking daily, however, it is not nearly as socially accepted. Smoking is for the most part commonly frowned upon in most places. Individuals used to be allowed to smoke in hospitals, airplanes, and inside buildings. Now, it is common to see a "NO SMOKING" sign in almost every place commonly stepped foot in. It is a societal pattern, or **norm**, that has been chosen to follow as a group (Cristina Bicchieri).

A few related synonyms to "**norm**" and "**normal**" include common, typical, regular, and ideal. Another definition of "**norm**", also coming from the *Oxford English Dictionary* is, "a standard or pattern of social behavior that is accepted in or expected of a group". Most of the time individuals view the word "**norm**" as this given definition. Society sets specific standards that are acceptable to the public and to not be outcasted from the group, they choose to follow these standards. This definition also ties into the idea of "**cultural norms**". **Cultural norms** are defined as "the standards we live by, they are shared expectations and rules that guide behavior of people within social groups." (Winston Sieck) Cultural norms are learned and reinforced through impactful figures in individual's lives. **Norms** often differ across cultures, races, religions, etc. People are not born with these standards, they are taught them through the influence of people that shape their perceptions throughout their lifetime. Some societies stay true to their "**cultural norms**" and are very strict about the enforcement of them. In this case, they reflect ideas of "cultural tightness" however, there is a completely opposite point of view known as "cultural looseness". To the culturally loose or tight societies each seems completely flawed and dysfunctional when viewed from the others perspective (Winston Sieck).

Another term stemming from the term "**norm**", relating to **cultural norms**, is "**social norms**". **Social norms** are unofficial rules that administer the way in which groups and societies behave or interact. This term is fairly similar to **cultural norms** but is more highly focused on factors involving societal expectations. **Norms** are commonly seen as constrictions of behavior, so it is difficult to differentiate between **social norms, moral norms, and legal norms**. More

attention has been put on the idea of enforcing these **norms** and following definite behavior than distinguishing between those types. **Social norms** have been found to be the primary base for social order, so it is important to investigate how these **norms** encourage people to conform. Social norms are used heavily in day to day conversations, "It has been argued that **social norms** ought to be understood as a kind of grammar of social interactions". Grammar relates to **norms** in the sense that they are both determinants of whether something is correct in the ideology of a society or group. Two concepts that are generally looked past, are the ideas that **norms** are both the comprehension of **normative beliefs** and the physical action of them. Select individuals think of **norms** as the societal expectations and mindsets, while others think of them as the performance of said mindsets. It is important to highlight that not all individuals conform to societal **norms**. Individuals that do not choose to conform to societal **norms**, would believe that other individuals act on societally set mindsets. Conformity is a difficult idea to pinpoint and individuals have different personal reasons for choosing to conform (Jonathan Mooney).

Norms can very commonly be seen as a very negative societal standard, however they can also be seen in a positive light as well. It is a highly debated concept whether **norms** are positive or negative. Some ideas as to why **social norms** exist promote the idea of motivation in society. One idea is that **social norms** are a resourceful way of promoting social welfare that aids in assistance of disadvantaged individuals. Another positive perspective is that these **norms** "cut social costs" which improves our society and community. (Jonathan Mooney) Social costs can be factors relating to anything from fuel to driving time, ultimately causing negative impacts on the environment. By society setting standards promoting positive attributions to the environment, this can be seen as a very positive aspect of **social norms**. Many people argue that **norms** are put in place in anticipation of holding each other accountable for socially acceptable principles. They put us in positions of accountability, where we are forced to discuss our behaviors and agree on what we are willing to tolerate as a Society. Overall, the term "**Norm**" or "**normal**" is very complex and is more than what meets the eye.

Keyword: Pride

By Lia Marquette

The term **pride** is a relevant word in today's social and political climate. Currently it is often associated with people who identify as being Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ+). According to the *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)* this term's first use was associated with being the first of the Seven Deadly sins, "pride goes before a fall" and "pride feels no pain" (*OED*). Due to **pride** being closely related to the bible the term's meaning has been seen to be a guide for Christians on how to live their lives. Since some Christian beliefs don't align with LGBTQ+ peoples' lives and their way of living, there is controversy surrounding the term. So, along with changing meanings through history, there is some uncertainty in regards to the definition of the word pride.

The noun **pride** has its origins in Old-Middle English with some borrowing from French terminology. The stem of the adjective **proud** was converted to form the noun **pride**. The forms of **proud** in Old- Middle English were: prut, prout, prute, and prowthe. The French words prod, prud, prou, and preu gave rise to a change from -t to -d in English usage (*OED*). The *OED* defines **pride** as "A high, esp. an excessively high, opinion of one's own worth or importance which gives rise to a feeling or attitude of superiority over others; inordinate self-esteem"(*OED*). Along with that "arrogant, haughty, or overbearing behaviour, demeanour, or treatment of others"(*OED*). These definitions give the term **pride** a negative connotation and associate it with an ill-manner of living. If a behavior is thought to lead an improper and immoral life it is thought of as a sin. The Seven Deadly Sins are listed in order as: pride, greed, wrath, envy, lust, gluttony, and sloth. **Pride**, as a proper noun in the Christian realm, is thought to lead one to committing other sins which is why it is the first of the Seven Deadly Sins (Riggleman). The Seven Deadly Sins are associated with the Book of Proverbs and the seven things that God hates. In an article from Christianity.com, Heather Riggleman states that "Proverb 16:18 says, **Pride** goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall" (Riggleman). This message is warning people that when a person begins to think too highly of oneself, they will make a foolish decision trying to gain power. But ultimately, that decision will instead lead to their own demise (Riggleman). She also stresses that having some **pride** is appropriate, but "sinful **pride** is refusing to recognize God's sovereign role in everything" (Riggleman). She recommends that Christians should continually acknowledge God's contributions to one's own achievements, so they do not become haughty (Riggleman).

In the eyes of Christians, **pride** can lead people down a destructive path that could cause alienation of oneself. In the article "Is Pride Really a Sin?" the writer Julie Suttie, quotes psychology professor Jessica Tracy, that too much **pride** can be negative and lead "to hubris—meaning, self-aggrandizement at the expense of others. Hubris, [Tracy] says, is pride that has been falsely assumed without merit in order to drive away an inner sense of insecurity" (Suttie). In these situations, **pride** has morphed into a false identity of oneself and creates a sense of superiority over others. This distorted image of oneself can lead to bullying, and the spread of incorrect information from individuals who act like they are more knowledgeable than they are (Suttie). Although it would appear that **pride** is a bad thing to have, it is only a negative when an individual has too much of it. If having **pride** were to be viewed on a spectrum, a hubris would be on the end of having too much. Having some or limited amount of **pride** can be a positive aspect for many.

If one can control their **pride** and not allow it to get out of control, **pride** can make one feel more empowered. According to Tracy from the article "those who regularly experience pride tend to be outgoing and friendly, agreeable, calm ... and are generally communally oriented, meaning they place a high value on their relationships and friendships" (Suttie). In most instances **pride** is viewed in a more positive light. Having a sense of **pride** encourages people to pursue more challenging endeavors and overall feel more confident. Confidence can help people to interact with others especially in situations where they might be outside their

comfort zone or in crowds of unknown people. **Pride** can bolster a person's image and give them more authority (Suttie).

This notion of **pride** is why it can also be defined as "A sense of confidence, self-respect, and solidarity as felt or publicly expressed by members of a group (typically one that has been socially marginalized) on the basis of their shared identity, history, and experience" (*OED*). The use of the word with this definition began to appear in 1870s (*OED*). The phrase "to takes pride in" something, means one views their accomplishments or personality/characteristic traits as part of their self-image and identity. Many individuals who are LGBTQ+ identifying relate more closely to this latter definition. The use of the word in relationship to the LGBTQ+ community began in 1978 (*OED*). **Pride**, in a proper noun form, is commonly used to refer to an event that celebrates LGBTQ+ individuals. Some examples are **pride parades**, **pride month**, and the **pride flag**. Erik Piepenburg writes that "the L.G.B.T.Q. community and its allies will celebrate Pride across the New York region this June on city streets and in parks, theaters, museums and clubs" (Piepenburg). The article also mentions many events that were held during **Pride**, "rainbow-festooned floats manned by go-go dancers, dance-the-night-away music festivals ... here's a selection of events and festivities to celebrate Pride as it was meant to be" (Piepenburg).

The controversy that surrounds the term pertains to the two groups that have differing definitions of **pride**. The argument is between conservative Christians and LGBTQ+ individuals, who do not agree on what is a proper/respectable way of living. A topic that is highly debated are rights for homosexual people, like the right to same sex marriage. According to Markham, Christians use the bible as a guide on how to honor God in people's daily lives. Markman states that "for many evangelicals and other conservative Christians ... their interpretation is that same-sex relationships are not able to reflect God's creative intent" (Markham). The core of the argument is in the differences of people's interpretation of the bible. Liberals and LGBTQ+ people tend to argue that the bible was not referring to same-sex relationships. While some conservative Christians still debate the legitimacy of homosexuality. This controversy is not directly tied to their differing means of the term pride. But both groups base their lives off having a certain amount of **pride**. The Christian's definition has a more negative connotation and focuses on people who have too much **pride** that develops into a superiority complex. While LGBTQ+ identifying people view **pride** from a more positive perspective and define it as confidence in one's self-identity.

Keyword: Race

By Cindy Obiero

Race was first borrowed from the French in the early 1500s, having no relation to the Latin root, radix which means base. (N.6) The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) describes that **race** began as a term defining, "a group of people, animals, or plants, connected by common descent or origin." (N.6) It then progressed to "attempted systems of classification: any of the (putative) major groupings of humankind, usually defined in terms of distinct physical features or shared ethnicity, and sometimes (more controversially) considered to encompass common biological or genetic characteristics."(N6d) Its initial form was an effort to describe distinct groups of people. Now, it is a prevalent term that is heavily discussed in today's social climate.

The definition of **race** has drastically evolved through several key social points throughout history. All of which fall back to the idea of ethnicity. **Race** and **ethnicity** are often used interchangeably throughout society because of the way the meaning of the word **race** has shifted. **Ethnicity** is used to describe a group of people who share the same culture, whereas **race** has shifted to define a group with the same physical characteristics. The new shift in the term, **race** has seemingly replaced the word ethnicity because of its new meaning.

Europeans focused on imperialism and strayed from attributing phenomena to religion during the Enlightenment period. This movement sparked the process of scientific reasoning. During the Enlightenment period, European and Euro-American thinkers developed ideas that helped create the term **scientific racism**. This period in time aimed to stimulate thought and present new ideas that philosophers believed would aid the progression of society. The practice of **race-based slavery**, which put one group who shared the same physical characteristics, "whites", over another group who shared the same physical characteristics, "blacks, was justified by the retrospective definition of **scientific racism**. The problematic aspect of **scientific racism** was that it failed to discuss the ideas of ancestry and interracial relationships, along with the bloodlines they produced. A lot of slave owners ended up bearing children with their slaves, yet according to **scientific racism**, these children were alienated from their biological parents because they were considered to be of a separate **race**. However, the biological definition of **race** insisted that even if people had different skin tones, their genetics would declare that their biological similarities fall under the same **race**. This divide in definitions led to further disputes spanning decades.

The conflicting definitions of the previous meanings of **race** and **scientific racism** led society to look to the law for a more concrete distinction. From this, a new definition was formed. Enslavement in the United States became permanent and inherited in the 1600s, but became illegal in the 1870s. According to the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC), "being enslaved was not necessarily a permanent lifetime status. The boundaries between specifically whites and blacks were more fluid but began to shift during the

1870s after the Reconstruction era to make strict distinctions, which eventually became law (“Historical Foundations of Race”). New terms, such as **institutional racism** and **structural racism** emerged upon reflection of the Jim Crow era. According to the NMAAHC, the southern half of the United States of America segregated almost all aspects of society from 1865-1964. (“Race and Racial Identity”) These restrictions made housing, educational, and employment access difficult for anyone who was not white or white-passing. Once these inequalities became law, it was harder for society to not emphasize the differences of skin color because they allowed for special privileges that enabled certain groups (whites) to thrive at the expense of others (minorities). In this sense, **race** shifted from objectification to the legalization of treating specific groups in specialized ways.

Once the major laws of segregation ended in 1964, the use of the term **race** decreased, while the use of **racism** increased. While many were adjusting to the idea of all groups of people sharing different physical characteristics, but still coinciding together, discrimination began to arise from others, mostly whites, who still believed other **rac**es were not equal. These conflicts raised debates in areas such as education, and these issues were raised to the Supreme Court in cases such as SFFA v. Harvard University and SFFA v. University of North Carolina. Currently, these milestone cases are being revisited and if overturned, will remove “precedents that allow **race** to be considered during the college admissions process.”(Ford) The potential overturning of these cases would also affect the Equal Protection Clause found under the Fourteenth Amendment. This clause ensures that all “**rac**es” are to be treated equally. (Ford) These monumental cases set the precedent to strive for diversity in colleges across the country. It gives the school the ability to ensure that its admissions are not specific to only one demographic. This variation of **race** that is considered in admissions is tied to ethnicity, rather than skin color.

Over time, the terms “white” and “black” have shifted in their connotations depending on different circumstances, and the **rac**es possess varying equality levels. Suddenly, depending on what **race** is placed along with the circumstance, someone’s opinion towards the matter could drastically change. The media could portray both “**rac**es”, particularly dealing with skin color, in different lights depending on the media outlet. Specific to this debate is the Black Lives Matter Movement. After many instances of police brutality towards the black “**race**”, thousands of peaceful protests occurred across the country calling for a change in the justice system. In today’s society, **race consciousness** has become a prevalent topic, creating landmark circumstances, which have educated the world, especially the United States, of the privileges each **race** has. This term makes people think about the things their skin color in today’s society has made them susceptible to.

Often associated with the word **race** come the terms **equality, ethnicity, race discrimination, and racism**. As society moves to become more socially aware, the term **racism** is often brought into question. However, it has become difficult to decipher what is a difference in culture, and what is a prejudice against a common group. For example, in the last few months, Asian Americans have been targeted in

random hate crimes throughout the United States, some say as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In a New York Times article, "The American cultural theorist Minh-Ha T. Pham has proposed a stronger term, '**racial plagiarism**' zeroing in on how racialized groups' resources of knowledge, labor, and cultural heritage are exploited for the benefit of dominant groups and in ways that maintain dominant socioeconomic relationships." (Mishan) In this sense, the groups themselves are emphasizing the separation of racial groups to showcase the distinct differences in respective cultures. When comparing the 1900s to the modern day, there has been a noticeable shift from shame to intense acknowledgment when analyzing the way **race** was and is currently discussed in all forms. It seems as though a majority of **races** are trying to appreciate their differences and celebrate them, rather than encourage suppression. While **race** originated as a term utilized for seclusion, it has now stemmed into a broadly defined term that presents hope for equality as society evolves.

Keyword: Relationship

By Phoebe Appel

The Oxford English Dictionary defines the word "**relationship**" as "The state or fact of being related; the way in which two things are connected; a connection, an association", as well as "An emotional and sexual association or partnership between two people" (The Oxford English Dictionary, 2009). The word dates back to 1724, at a time when the concept of a **relationship** was inconceivably different from today's interpretation of the word. In the years since, various terms have appeared that take the place of the word "**relationship**" used in its original fashion. Terms like "**situationship**" and "*hookup*" are beginning to fully replicate the concept that was once defined as a **relationship** (Travers). These things fully encompass the sexual, and more often than not, emotional, part of the word's traditional definition. The missing piece is the aspect of connection and association. In today's world, two people may share a brief stint that can very well be defined as a **relationship** in emotional and sexual terms, but without a label, commitment, or any other once-defining characteristic (Travers). **Relationships** are an ever-changing, amorphous concept that is constantly being defined in different ways according to the time period it exists in.

*Past connotations of the word "**relationship**"*

The word itself is subject to currently acceptable societal behavior, which explains why its interpretation has changed so much over the years. In today's world, the interpretation aligns more heavily with the latter definition from The Oxford English Dictionary, relating to sex and emotional intimacy. This definition has held true, but the biggest change comes from society's definition of what constitutes a **relationship**. The once rigid and universal boundaries of a **relationship** have fallen away, revealing emotional and sexual entanglements that redefine and complicate the word. In the Bible, a **relationship** can only be defined as such if it aligns with the teachings of the Scripture. From a theological standpoint, this means a sexually pure and devoted connection between two faithful

individuals (VanLuik). In this sense of the word, a **relationship** is a committed connection that is to be taken seriously and keep progressing. Additionally, the Bible presents the Song of Songs as a guide for religious followers to learn how to love each other romantically. The song puts an emphasis on the efficiency and practicality of love (VanLuik). Religious contexts informed the way **relationships** were perceived throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Practicality remained a top priority for choosing a partner, as **relationships** were mostly implemented for economic or social gain along with producing legitimate children (Brand).

*The beginning of romantically defined **relationships***

While previous **relationships** were certainly committed and intentional, the word **relationship** did not step into its definition of love and emotional connection until the 1800s (Brand). This was referred to as a “companionate marriage”, which emphasized the prioritization of attraction over the traditional expectations of practicality (Simmons). Companion, as defined by the Oxford English Dictionary, means “A person who often spends time with another; a person one chooses to socialize or associate with, a friend.” In the context of nineteenth century **relationships**, the emphasis rests on the act of *choosing* someone to be with. Former methods of selecting a partner based on functionality were eschewed in favor of a more individualized and defiant approach (Simmons). While this generation defined **relationships** with more freedom, the traditional values of monogamy and intentional progression remained (McNearney). The concept of “going steady” emerged in the 1940s, in which dating was approached with fun and individual expression while still adhering to societal rules of monogamy (McNearney). Intention and commitment continued to act as the hallmarks of defining the word “**relationship**.”

***Relationships** as defined in modern society*

Today’s definition could not have strayed further from the former implications of the word. The change stems from our generations embrace of “hookup culture” and “**situationships**.” The term *hookup* culture refers to the now rampant phenomenon of brief sexual encounters with no emotions or attachment (Freitas 1). This lifestyle would have fully overtaken the traditional interpretation of the word relationship if it were not for **situationships**, which are everything that a traditional **relationship** is established as, except for the formal title that defines this concept. Many people who are involved in this type of intricacy are often unsure of what their situation is, and what they can call it (Noenickx). The once common practice of pursuing someone with clear intentions and goals has left us. Here is where the lines get blurred when defining a **relationship**. We can no longer rely on the previous definitions of emotional intimacy or boundaries, since they do not exist in today’s atmosphere of *hookups* and **situationships** that make up the bulk of “**relationships**” in our generation. A new sense of the word is being formed, one that encompasses an indecisive and vague take on previous definitions. It may seem as though the intimacy and emotional interest that once propagated the definition of a **relationship** is now falling by the wayside, but our integral human need for bonding is still there (Freitas 8). What has left us is the defining characteristics of meaning and intention. Today, a **relationship** could be

defined as a hookup, a **situationship** that lasted for months without a title or any form of direction, or a **relationship** as defined by the older sense of the word. This lack of consistency in the ability to define the word causes its meanings to be heavily contested.

*Platonic **relationships** and their meaning*

The Oxford English Dictionary offers another definition of the word **relationship** as, "A connection formed between two or more people or groups based on social interactions and mutual goals, interests, or feelings." This type of relationship can be observed in positive platonic **relationships** between acquaintances and friends. Despite the lack of romantic or sexual attraction in these connections, friends can absolutely be considered life partners and be chosen in the same way one would choose a significant other. Aristotle described necessary virtues of friendship to be reciprocity, empathy, self-knowledge, and participation in a shared life (Roache). These values are strikingly similar to those expected in a romantic relationship. While platonic relationships carry many of the same values as their romantic counterparts, they differ in their expectations for commitment. There is no such thing as a monogamous friendship, and many operate under the belief that quantity surpasses quality in terms of friends (Roache). As indicated by accounts as old as Aristotle's, platonic **relationships** are a feature as old as time in society, surpassing the restraints of differing definitions across generations.

Final thoughts

The concept of a **relationship** is something that will never leave human society. Sexual **relationships** are essential for propagating life on Earth, as romantic and platonic **relationships** are essential for a communicative and efficient society. Platonic **relationships** have carried the same definition throughout history, providing a dependable boundary for what the concept constitutes. The same cannot be said about romantic and sexual **relationships** due to the loss of concrete perimeters for its definition. Whereas there was once a widely followed societal standard of **relationship** milestones such as "companionate marriages" and "going steady", *hookup* culture and situation have created a scattered and frayed definition of the word (Simmons, McNearny). What one person may consider to be a *hookup*; another person would consider a **relationship**. The issue with today's definition of **relationship** lies here; there can be no core definition if a generation's ideas and beliefs are so scattered that people are unsure whether they are even in a **relationship**, or what a **relationship** means to them.

Keyword: Rich

By Megan Reynaert

Rich is an adjective, noun, and adverb which earliest form is *riece* in early Old English. Its origin began in early Germanic, where it was inherited. Its earliest cognate is Old Frisian **rike, rik**. In history, the word can be seen evolving from *riece* and *ricra*, all the way up to *ritche*, and eventually **rich**. In the past, **rich** had been used to describe someone or something's economic state (i.e., a person, family, country, etc.). This also happens to be one of the most common meanings today. A few of the most popular definitions as stated by the *Oxford English Dictionary* are:

- "Having much money or abundant assets; wealthy, moneyed, affluent. Opposed to *poor*."
- "Having an abundance of immaterial possessions, esp. blessings or good qualities; fortunate, blessed"
- "Of a country or region: having or holding valuable natural resources or a successful economy"

Other meanings include to be '**rich** in love' or to be **rich** in time. Today society sees sayings such as 'time is money' and 'to be **rich** in love' demonstrating that to be **rich** isn't simply to own a big house, or to take lavish vacations over Christmas or spring break. Steve Glaveski's states that "In a world of resource abundance, but time scarcity, what it means to be **rich** is shifting" (Glaveski 2021). In his article, Glaveski explains that working eighty hours a week or more to buy an expensive yacht or a house on the waterfront means nothing when there is no time left at the end of the week to enjoy said yacht or beach house. This can also be seen with 'to be **rich** in love.' All the money in the world can't buy people to live life with, or enjoy material possessions purchased such as a yacht or an enormous house with.

The phrase 'the **rich**' has often been used in a hostile or negative way when referring to the richest people in society today. This is seen in sayings such as 'eat the **rich**' and 'tax the **rich**.' One of these sayings seen emerging more and more over the past few years or so is 'eat the **rich**.' Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (NY-14: Bronx and Queens; Congresswoman) was seen at the Met Gala, of all places, wearing a white gown with the bold statement 'tax the **rich**' in red words/ink across the back. Tax the **rich** is seen as a less aggressive 'sister saying' to eat the **rich**, but the meaning is virtually the same, the cause behind it is the same. Eat the **rich**, as a saying, became more and more popular throughout the past few years as more and more information regarding the wage gap became available. Inflation and the increasing talk of a recession coming have also added to the abundance of these sayings.

The **richest** people throughout history tend to be the royals, the monarchs of the world. Today, people such as Jeff Bezos, Elon Musk, and Bill Gates, all have net worths well into the hundred billions. These people are where sayings such as **eat the rich** are aimed at. People that make more money in a week than most people make in a year.

The concept of economic state or being **rich**/poor is becoming increasingly a taboo topic in society today. It's not supposed to be asked about, the topic is avoided at family get-togethers or at the dinner table. If the synonyms for **rich** are examined, the vast differences in connotation stand out. Synonyms range from *wealthy* and *lavish*, to *inexhaustible* and *prolific*. Phrases such as **filthy rich** are more examples of phrases that hold a negative connotation. The connotation of **rich** can even vary for each individual person using it. Referring to oneself, one could use '**filthy rich**' in an excited or proud tone. On the contrary, if someone is '**filthy rich**' it could mean that they have more money or assets than they necessarily need or deserve. **Rich** is used often to designate a person's, businesses', or country's economic state. According to Caroline McClatchey from BBC News, it can be hard to classify what being **rich** looks like to the everyday eye.

The concept of being rich is going to look different based on environment and location. Meaning- money goes further in rural Wisconsin than it would in Los Angeles, CA, simply based on location. The seemingly obvious dividing line between 'the **rich**' and everyone else, would be the top tax bracket versus the rest of the brackets. Stated by the Bradford Tax Institute, in 2022, the highest tax bracket for unmarried individuals (excluding surviving spouses and heads of households) included anyone making over \$539,900 in a year.

On the other hand, phrases such as 'that's **rich**' have a meaning completely unrelated to money or assets. The Urban Dictionary defines 'that's **rich**' as an "ironic or amusingly hypocritical accusation" or a false statement that is so extremely out of pocket, its outrageous (That's Rich-Urban Dictionary). The Urban Dictionary provides an example of someone responding to a hypocritical statement with "Wow, that's **rich**." In this context, **rich** also has a hostile or negative connotation attached.

Another saying that doesn't have anything to do with economic state is when referring to something as having a '**rich history**' or a '**rich culture**'. These aren't talking about money or assets. If a country has a **rich culture** that country has a plentiful history full of many different religions, cultures, etc. In the context of the saying "**rags to riches**" or "**from rags to riches**" means "from a state of having very little money to a state of having a lot of money" as defined by the *Merriam Webster* dictionary, (From Rags to Riches – Merriam Webster). This tends to be a bit of an unrealistic saying, as this isn't something that is very common.

Varying terms including **rich** are as follows: **riches** as referring to assets or money someone holds, for example: someone having **riches** qualifies them to be known as **rich**. **Enrich** has a slightly different meaning. The Merriam Webster Dictionary defines **enrich** as follows: "[the] addition or increase of some desirable quality, attribute, or ingredient" (Enrich-Merriam Webster). At its core, **enrich** is to enhance, to improve upon something.

Keyword: Sick

The word **sick** is commonly used to describe a state of being or when used by teenagers, to rate something's features. It has an assortment of meanings that differ drastically from one another. The most commonly used definition is a result of being **ill**, but in the past 40 years the meaning has changed tremendously. Growing up, most children have always thought of the word **sick** as an excuse to not go to school, the act of vomiting, or having a minor cough, but *The Oxford English Dictionary* provides examples dating back to the 1500s where the term was used on various occasions and meant different things. For example, "in December 1958 France was the **sick** man of Europe; it had no exchange reserves and was incapable of facing the Common Market" uses **sick** to describe something, a country in this case, that is less fortunate or at a lower economic state. We do not hear that phrase used now, but it was a common usage in the 1950s. Lauren Levy, a graduate of Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism, wrote an article in 2020 debating the various meanings of **sick**. Usually, it was used to describe someone who is physically **ill**, but throughout the years the word was coined by teenagers and started to be used as a slang term to express/describe how much they liked something. Levy suggests that "the slang meaning of **sick** is the opposite, and instead is used for something that's outstandingly or amazingly good or impressive." From becoming **ill** to seeing a disturbing site, the definition of the word **sick** has changed significantly over the years, and has become a way to describe things in both positive and negative ways.

One meaning of the word that is not used commonly anymore and is deemed offensive is using the term to describe someone who is mentally **ill** as having a **sickness** that makes them a weak human being. **Sick** can also refer to someone who meets the mental criteria of having a deranged, or **sick mind**. Some people's interpretations of mental illness are radical because of infamous figures like Jeffery Dahmer and Ted Bundy. A common phrase to describe someone like Jeffery Dahmer is "having a **sick mind**." People like them have created a stigma around mental health and how having these issues always has a negative outcome. It's clearly not a medical diagnosis, but since society pairs their actions with that phrase, our minds automatically pair the two together. Many cultures have used the term mental illness as a way to describe religious punishment or demonic possession. The term has been used to describe the mental state of someone and more often than not it was used negatively. Labeling someone as crazy, a **sicko** or psycho makes people with mental illness sound dangerous. But this is a myth (Holohan). Unfortunately, opening up about mental health is extremely frowned upon in many cultures. In these households, mental illness is often described as a **sickness** that one will naturally overcome and can be brushed off, which is not the case. Mental health is not a **sickness**, let alone something that can be cured easily. The stigma around mental health is that the person who has these issues is assumed to be dangerous, unwell, crazy, and incompetent. They are often called weak or are mocked for seeking help (Health Direct).

On the contrary, **sick** can also be used to describe an impressive skill, feelings about something, and theatrical performances. These meanings of the term

are catered to and used by younger generations: in the context of a “**sick** move” or “I’m **sick** about that.” Referring to something as “a **sick** move” means that they demonstrated an incredible feat of athleticism that deserves to be recognized. For example, one could say “you have sick dance moves,” which means that they think your dance moves are awesome, and not that your moves made them physically ill (Sharpened Productions). The other way **sick** can be used (generally by a younger population) is using the term to describe their emotions towards something negatively. It is commonly used when upset or angry in extreme situations. An example from Urban Dictionary is, “I took my girl to a fancy restaurant last night. As I went to take care of the check I realized I had left my wallet in my other jeans. I was SICK!” The usage here means that the person using the phrase was upset and annoyed that he left his wallet in his jeans, causing him to not be able to pay the bill. It’s ironic how the two slang meanings of **sick** are used positively and negatively.

Along with the different meanings of **sick** touched on above, it can also be used as a way to describe the way a person or an event makes you feel. The *Oxford English Dictionary* provides many examples of how **sick** can be used in this way. An example that clearly depicts the message behind this usage is from the *Oxford English Dictionary*, “it makes one **sick** to see..men sweating their guts out to dig a trench.., when some easily devised machine would scoop the earth out in a couple of minutes” (Oxford English Dictionary). This unsettling site is making the viewer feel **sick**, or causing their stomach to feel uneasy by watching the event play out. Watching someone do something that causes them physical pain, when it could be easily done by a newer, faster device definitely causes one to feel bad and often upset. In this example, **sick** is being used in the context of feeling disturbed.

Sick is one of those words that has many meanings, but only a couple that genuinely make sense according to the true, original definition. The *Oxford English Dictionary* touches on each one of the definitions mentioned and provides examples to help get a better understanding of each meaning. When the word is used in the right context, **sick** is a descriptive word that helps people understand meanings of things without a long description.

Keyword: Social
By Sarah Connerly

Social originates from the C5 Latin word *sociālis*, meaning a sense of belonging among partners or allies, and the French word *social* (1355), meaning "allied militarily" ("social"). The word's noun form has two current definitions. Since 1857, it has referred to an unofficial gathering, often of individuals belonging to a club or group. In its modern sense, the noun form is a shorthand version of **social security number** in the United States or **social security programme** in the United Kingdom ("social"). **Society**, a C16 derivative of **social**, refers to the interactions between those in a **social group**, specifying the location, type, and/or qualities of a specific group ("society").

As an adjective, **social** refers to a person who is either "friendly or affable in company; disposed to conversation and **sociable** activities" ("social") or one "naturally inclined to be in the company of others" ("social") depending on the context of use. Additionally, the adjective form can describe a group of people that interact amicably, refer to a facet of **society**, or allude to a "theory, philosophy, etc.: concerned with the constitution of human **society**" ("social"). According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, no new adjective forms of **social** have developed since C19 ("social"). Adjective forms of **social** operate similarly to the word's derivative forms. Both create nuanced meanings in different contexts (personal, professional) and fields (psychology, politics) ("social").

In compounds, **social** combines with adjectives to create the sense of **social-and-**(adjective), as in **social-emotional** or **social-political**. **Social** also creates compounds "with the sense 'concerned with **social issues**,' as **social-minded**, **social-conscious**, etc." ("social"). When used as an abbreviated form of a compound, social's meaning gains complexity ("A New Kind of Social?"). Many different compounds are formed by joining different nouns to the word **social**. Each compound typically fits into one of two categories. The first category, interpersonal, includes compounds that give a sense of personal connection, as in **social engagement**, **social interactions**, and **social benefits**. The second category, community, indicates the situation of a group within a larger **society**, as in **social exclusion**, **social welfare**, and **social structure** ("Social Collocations").

Many of **social's** compounds have unique definitions in their current senses that were not used fifty years ago ("social media"; "social network"). Examples of this change include the terms **social media** and **social network**. The meaning of **social media** changed as technology was developed to support online media platforms ("social media"). In the 1970s, **social media** took the form of e-chat and e-mail programs. Now, it exists as applications like YouTube, TikTok, and Facebook ("social media"). The meaning of **social network** evolved over a longer time. The 1845 definition of this compound describes a group of people connected by a relationship ("social network"). Contemporarily, **social network** still holds the older meaning, but the increased accessibility to the Internet observable today creates a new connotation of this compound, one akin to the definition of **social**

media ("social"). Compounds of this keyword create a sense of community and describe a unique form of human interaction across many fields and applications.

Social is important in zoology, botany, **social sciences**, and other related fields ("social"). Most notably, it is important in psychology. Psychologists concerned with **sociology** attempt to understand interactions between people in **social groups** by studying "the development, structure, and functioning of human **society**" ("sociology"). Such **sociologists**, particularly Herbert Spencer, modify the meaning of **social** through their theories and postulates. Spencer's **societal** evolutionary theory, **social Darwinism**, uses the *Oxford English Dictionary's* 5.d. definition of **social**—"Of, referring, or relating to a person's status in **society**" ("social")—to propose that **societies** form by individuation ("Herbert Spencer"). In doing so, Spencer creates a paradox in which one word holds two drastically different meanings. One implies a friendly interaction between people or groups while the other indicates that groups separate based on their common differences during **societal** evolution. This makes the age-old cliché claim, *humans are social creatures*, confusing. This phrase can assert that humans have an inherent tendency to interact with one another. Conversely, the same phrase can indicate that humans are biologically inclined to separate into groups. Thus, it is essential to understand the context of use where **social** is concerned.

Social distancing has changed meaning over a relatively short time. **Sociologist** Karl Mannheim used the term in 1957 to reference the stratification of **social groups** in a **society** based on the level of power held by said group (Poole). This meaning of **social distancing** was used in psychology for the rest of the century. A 1991 research study, conducted by Susanne Nicolai-Mays and Beverly Grottkau, used **social distance** as a measured value to study the degree to which individuals would avoid partnerships and interactions with members of other **social groups** (145). In the mid-2000s, **social distancing** became a term used by medical authorities to recommend the isolation of individuals to combat the intercontinental spread of disease (Poole). The medical term was hyper-popularized by the global COVID-19 pandemic. In May 2020, a contributor from Johns Hopkins Medicine defined **social distancing** as "staying home and away from others as much as possible to help prevent the spread of COVID-19" (Maragakis). After only fifty years, **social distancing** transitioned from describing an intangible concept to denoting a physical separation.

Social can place meaning on other words and concepts. This quality is seen in the term **social skills**, defined in the *OED* as "skills required for successful **social interaction**" ("social"). When used without **social**, "skills" means "an ability to perform a function, acquired or learnt with practice" ("skill"). Adding the keyword designates a certain set of skills as important in the interactions between individuals or groups ("social"). The definition of this compound is the same as it was in 1923, but the skills it refers to have changed. This effect is due to groups' **societal** roles changing over time. Children, for example, were expected to have strong familial connections and traditional skills like empathy and respect in the early 20th century. Now that America has increased its reliance on digital technology, different social skills are emphasized. **Society** now focuses on

streamlining connections for greater efficiency, so children learn to use skills like clear communication and computer operation (Downey).

The complex nature of **social** allows the word to unite or divide groups of people, deepening the divide between Democrats and Republicans. **Socialism**, a derivative of **social**, promotes state or group involvement in rulemaking and enforcement for the benefit of that group's constituents ("socialism"). The *OED* includes an important note in this definition: "Now also: any of various systems of liberal **social democracy** which retain a commitment to **social justice** and **social reform**, or feature some degree of state intervention in the running of the economy" ("socialism"). The implications that American Democrats derive from **socialism** are more positive than those derived by Republicans, adding to the term's convoluted meaning (Hartig). This divisive quality of **social** is the result of centuries of adaptations to its meaning. The capability to apply interrelated words and concepts to a larger **society** makes **social** a culturally significant word, one that is imperative to understand in all its applications.

Keyword: Toxic

The word "**toxic**" dates back to the year 1664 when it was used as an adjective to describe the poisonous quality of liquor. **Toxic** was one of the *Oxford Dictionaries'* words of the year in 2018. About 400 years have passed since the word **toxic** was first used, yet the word is still present and even more prevalent now than ever. The word itself still holds the same definition as it held in 1664, but it has also gained several more significant definitions and meanings.

By definition, the *Oxford English Dictionary* describes **toxic** to be "Of the nature of poison or poisonous" (*OED*). The *OED* also highlights other definitions that describe topics like **toxic waste**, **toxic shock**, **intoxication**, etc. All of these definitions, although describing different subjects, emit negative connotations and give the word itself a negative meaning. Other words that have been associated with the word **toxic** are hazardous, unhealthy, and detrimental, which all are the epitome of undesirable. In life, today **toxic** can be used to describe a person's personality, actions and much more.

Among the many definitions of **toxic** one use that is extremely literal, yet still supports the idea of **toxic** meaning something negative is its corrosivity and poisonous nature. The word "**toxin**" is a noun that is "a poisonous substance, especially one produced by bacteria, that causes disease" (Cambridge Dictionary). Toxins are something that have been extremely impactful on the lives and health of people for all of time, whether people knew it or not, or defined it yet. **Toxic** chemicals are extremely harmful and could lead to extreme health issues and even death, again leaving a negative connotation linger around the word itself. When the word toxic is used in conversation it can be assumed the speaker is referring to something unpleasant and potentially harmful.

For example, a reason why the word **toxic** has become more prevalent over the past few years is because of the phrase "**toxic masculinity**". **Toxic masculinity** can be described as a form of masculinity in which men can use their

power to assert control and dominance over others. This is also done to display the control they have and their superiority (White). The recent increase in **toxic masculinity** can be attributed to many things, one being idealized version of men that are present in forms of media, politics, entertainment, sports and so much more. **Toxic masculinity** is when men continually see their counterparts as unequal to them and view women as objects which can clearly lead to large societal issues between different identifying groups of people. This newfound term has also led to mental health issues among men because of this **toxic** mindset and the immense pressures they are under to uphold these characteristics of a "typical" man. An article from Healthline that highlights **toxic masculinity**, describes it as being "psychologically **toxic** to the perpetrators of sexism themselves" (White.), meaning specific men that impose sexist ideals on others. This means that because of the **toxic** ideologies enforced by some men onto others, and the pressure to adhere to these norms in which there is a lot of room for **toxicity** and destruction to society. This whole definition further contributes to the idea that the word **toxic** itself is negative. This idea and negative ideas and definitions can be contested because of the definition the OED provides referring to **intoxication**. The OED provides the definition that **toxic** can be "Of **intoxication, intoxicated, tipsy. Humorous**" (OED.) This definition can seem to contradict and contest the previous definitions because it describes something **toxic** as something in which a person is happy and joyous. Being **intoxicated** is still partly consistent with previous definitions because what exactly is being congested to gain a level of **intoxication**, but when talking about the state of **intoxication** it can be seen as something that can be amusing. Although this specific definition dates back very far it is still applicable today and we can see this "humor" in things like viral videos, depictions in entertainment and common laughter among drunk people. This word can be considered actively contested because the word, **intoxication**, which is something that is relevant and will continually be relevant.

Toxic is an important word that is becoming more prevalent today not only because of collocations like **toxic masculinity** but because of its use in the slang of the youth. Shifting to a definition that, rather than focusing on the poisonous nature of a certain substance or thing, people, today can use the word **toxic** to describe a person, their views, and mentalities. **Toxic** can be used to describe bad behavior or poor attitude, again contributing to the idea that **toxic** means something negative, but it has clearly progressed since the past. The Cambridge dictionary shares that the informal definition of the word **toxic** is "very unpleasant or unacceptable, causing you a lot of harm and unhappiness over a long period of time"(Cambridge Dictionary), and even acting as a synonym for the word unpleasant.

The word itself **toxic** has multiple meanings that are clearly socially prominent and contain a wide variety of meanings, making it a strong and intriguing keyword. The word itself has carried some of the same meanings throughout history, but many would consider the new and emerging definition of "**toxic**" to hold a different meaning than the originals and others throughout history. Although the changing of a definition might be seen to discredit the true meaning of the word, in this case, over all these years, this word has never lost any

credibility. As previously mentioned the OED named the word "**toxic**" the word of the year in 2018, and the *New York Times* published an article talking about just how impactful this word has been. Within this essay, Jennifer Schuessler says, "Oxford's word of the year is chosen to reflect 'the ethos, mood or preoccupations of a particular year, but also to highlight that English is always changing'" (Schuessler). This article touches on points about how, throughout history, the word **toxic** was used to describe actual corrosive chemicals that have an intensely negative effect on what it interacts with. Then shifts to how the word is used in pop culture, like in Brittany Spear's song "**Toxic**", to talk about the personality and actions of a rude, backstabbing person.

It has even been claimed that "**Toxic** is the perfect word to describe 2018" (Connellan). Although this a strong claim to make the year was full of events that harbored controversy and hateful relationships among people of differing opinions. Connellan even say that **toxic** being named the word of the year "makes sense considering the last 12 months, with the #MeToo and Time's Up movements championing the abolition of **toxic masculinity**, and **toxic relationships**" (Connellan). These movements have been caused and negatively impacted because of masculinity and relationships that have turned **toxic**. Although many aspects of the word have shifted, whether the word **toxic** is associated with another word or not has an extremely negative connotation. The controversy, newfound use, and versatility of this word have allowed it to become more impactful and to remain constant in the conversation of people.

Another leading contributor to the popularity of the word "**toxic**" is in its use to describe relationships. **Toxic relationships** have been defined as a relationship "that makes you feel unsupported, misunderstood, demeaned, or attacked. A relationship is **toxic** when your well-being is threatened in some way—emotionally, psychologically, and even physically" (Scott). This is another collocation of the term that emits an intense negative connotation and describes something that nobody wants to be a part of. **Toxic relationships** are talked about widely by the youth, a concern of many people getting into a relationship being that it is something that can be difficult to leave. The word relationship itself is something is positive and can be extremely beneficial to a person, but when paired with the word "**toxic**", the meaning is completely changed.

Toxicity is something that by definition dates back to 1664 and has been survived through is changing of meanings throughout the years leading to present day. The word itself continually emits a harsh, harmful and negative meaning through the definitions that follow the word, but the context and word pairings in which the word is used has changed significantly. The word has shifted from popularly being used to describe the state of a harmful substance to now being used to describe the state of a harmful relationship. It is extremely important to remember that all the definitions that have been used for the word are still applicable, only more definitions have been created, which contributes to the complexity of the word.

Keyword: Woke

By Wesley Luke

The word **woke** has its origins in old English, a time period from roughly 400 to 1000 AD. Back then, **woke** was used as an adjective that meant, "Lacking in strength, vigor, endurance, or courage; inferior physically or morally" (*OED*). This use of the word **woke** is now defunct and is no longer used in modern English, but it gives an important insight to the beginnings of a word that has grown to become very complex.

As time moved on, **woke** began to be less and less associated with weakness and began to be associated instead with being no longer asleep. This began to occur during the early years of Middle English. This use of the word **woke** has continued into today and is the most dominant use of the word. In this use, the word **woke** is a verb, and it means, "To be or remain awake; to keep oneself or be kept awake." (*OED*). In this sense of the word, **woke** is often found in the form **awoken** or **awoke**, which means to be brought out of a sleeping state. This version of **woke** is often interchangeably used with its present tense forms **wake**, **awaken**, and **awake**. As it is the oldest, non-defunct use of the word, it is by far the most common use of the word. If one were learning English for the first time, this is the version of the word **woke** that they would come to know and understand first.

The version of **woke** that is so hotly debated today has its origins in the first half of the 20th century. According to the writer Sally Hobart Alexander, this version of **woke** emerged in the 1930s, when it was first used in the music of Hudie Ledbetter aka Lead Belly. In his song, Lead Belly used **woke** in the phrase, "**stay woke**". According to Aja Romano, writing for the magazine Vox, "Lead Belly uses 'stay woke' in explicit association with Black Americans' need to be aware of racially motivated threats and the potential dangers of white America." This usage of **woke** stayed relatively only in the dialect of African Americans for much of the rest of the 20th century, only making small brushes with the mainstream. It is important to note, however, that, in this context, "**woke**" was almost always used in the phrase "**stay woke**" and almost never as a standalone word or phrase.

As the 21st century rolled around, this version of **woke** finally broke through to mainstream use. This occurred when Erykah Badu released an updated version of Georgia Anne Mudrow's song "Master Teacher" in 2008. What made this song important in the ever shifting definition of **woke** is that, according to writer Aja Romano, "Badu's version of the song simplified Mudrow's '**I'd stay woke**' to '**I stay woke**'..." As a result, the phrase "**stay woke**" went from a more passive usage in saying one *will* stay **woke** to injustices if they occur, to now a very active usage in that one *is* actively staying **woke** to injustices by actively seeking them out. Soon after the release of the song, many African Americans on social media began using this new version of, "**stay woke**" which helped to bring it more and more into the mainstream.

As “**stay woke**” broke more into the mainstream, it began to be adopted by left-leaning individuals of all races and ethnicities in the United States. It was throughout this process that the stay in “**stay woke**” was dropped and **woke** became a phrase in and amongst itself. What it meant to be **woke** also changed slightly. **Woke** no longer just meant being aware of injustices suffered by African Americans, but rather being aware of injustices and issues everywhere. Through this, **woke** began to take on a vastly larger scope than it previously had before. Being **woke** on issues could mean a many number of things. One could be **woke** on issues facing African Americans as well as issues facing members of the LGBTQIA+ community. Or one could be **woke** about the fact that the U.S. gained its territory through the genocide of the native peoples who once occupied the lands.

Two key events that are very much related allowed **woke** to jump from just being in the mainstream to being in the forefront of most Americans’ minds. The first being the killing of Michael Brown, an unarmed African American teenager, by a white police officer in Ferguson, Missouri in 2014 that sparked protests nationwide. Many activists in these protests used the phrase “**stay woke**” as a watchword towards possible police brutality and misconduct (Romano 2020). The second major factor, and the one fueling the first, was social media. In an article written in 2018, The Pew Research Center discusses the rise of social media usage and social media activism by writing, “Social media use has grown rapidly over the last decade. Today, Americans use a range of social media sites and are increasingly turning to these platforms to get news and information. Social networking sites have also emerged as a key venue for political debate and discussion, and at times a place to engage in civic-related activities.” This rise in political and social debates on social media is largely due to the fact that social media gives one the ability to speak to such a large audience of people with relative ease, making it very popular amongst activists. The combination of these two factors resulted in the usage of **woke** absolutely skyrocketing. **Woke** went from being used by a small number of left-leaning individuals to a vast number of them. **Woke** became the calling card for many left-leaning progressives, as they took pride in taking steps to end injustices in America.

By being so popular amongst those on the left, **woke** was made ripe for attack by those on the right. Beginning in the later years of the Trump presidency, many high profile, right-leaning politicians began to use **woke** to attack what they view as “radical” policies and politicians. This sentiment is summed up by Perry Bacon Jr., a writer for the *Washington Post*, as he states, “‘**Woke**’ was once used largely by Black people, invoking the idea that they should stay mindful of racism in America. The term is now used by political figures on the center-left, center-right and right as a kind of epithet against those they view as too left-wing on racial, gender and LGBTQ issues.” Oftentimes, these right leaning individuals will use the term “**wokeness**” along with **woke** as a way to describe what they view as a pattern of radical thinking, almost as if it's a virus infecting a system. A great example of this comes from Michael Lee of Fox News, a right leaning-news organization, as it reports that, “Republicans will look to clean up ‘**wokeness**’ in the U.S. military if they are able to regain the majority in Congress after this year's

midterm elections, according to a leading House Republican.” In this particular case, people on the right became upset that many in the military, particularly General Mark Milley, (a known enemy of Donald Trump) stated they were interested in learning more about critical race theory. Critical race theory, which is, according to Marisa Iati of *The Washington Post*, “an academic framework centered on the idea that racism is systemic, and not just demonstrated by individual people with prejudices”, is often a target of those on the right who claim it is very “**woke**”. Through their attacks on **woke** and **wokeness**, people on the right have made the word **woke** signify radicalism in political thinking and as a threat to their future. This has led many politicians on the right to proclaim they are in fact “**anti-woke**”. These right-wing politicians have even gone so far to pass laws that limit or restrict thinking they believe to be woke. One person at the center of **anti-wokeness** is Florida Governor Ron DeSantis. Recently, DeSantis has been passing a series of laws that target what he deems to be “**woke** ideology”. One of the more prominent **anti-woke** laws passed by DeSantis was recently struck down as being unconstitutional. This was reported by Joe Sutton of *CNN* as he writes, “A federal judge in Florida on Thursday ruled that a law pushed by Florida Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis restricting conversations around race in schools and the workplace is unconstitutional.” Even though it was struck down, **anti-woke** laws like this one have led many Americans to associate the word **woke** with what they view as radicalism.