

EDITOR'S MESSAGE

Words Matter

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Words matter. In fact, Merriam-Webster added 520 new words to their dictionary earlier this year. Not surprisingly, words related to the pandemic, such as "long hauler" and "COVID-19" made the cut, and the latter word added to the specious arguments on Twitter related to "what happened to COVID-1 to 18?"

Added words tend to reflect societal happenings or perhaps the normalization of events within our culture. Online communication and terms that were until recently only online have spilled over IRL (in real life). Many people will take a "hard pass" at the "flex" using these new words may produce in casual conversations. I particularly enjoy the crossover "@," as in "don't @ me bruh," especially when speaking with my teenage daughter. Not sure whether her perception of her father has been improved or damaged through my expanded vocabulary. The newly added words of gig worker and gig economy reflect the changes to the way people work and the influences of mobile technology in the workplace. Occupations have been changing over the past few years, and the coronavirus has hastened this change.

Expanding the dictionary to include words that are related to identity and self-identification have been added recently. Some of this year's inclusions are "BIPOC" (abbreviation for black, indigenous and people of color) and "folx," a version of folks that is used to explicitly signal the inclusion of groups commonly marginalized. This issue contains a very interesting research article regarding physician beliefs related to identity. For self-identification, I am happy for my future self for the addition of "silver fox" to the dictionary and hope my sapiosexual spouse appreciates the intelligence displayed by knowing these terms.

Within this issue, we tackle some of the pandemic complications, especially related to behavioral health. After coping with an incredibly stressful year, we take comfort in many things. The novel dictionary terms help provide words for this comfort. ASMR (autonomous sensory meridian response) is a pleasant tingling sensation that originates on the back of the scalp and often spreads to the neck and upper spine, that occurs in some people in response to a stimulus—such as a particular kind of sound or movement—and that tends to have a calming effect) is a wonderful term that hopefully reflects some thoughtful OMT. Another comfort term introduced included hygge (a cozy quality that makes a person feel content and comfortable), which seems to be more suited to something found at Ikea than the dictionary.

I hope you find comfort in this issue's words and find a time to use your newfound vocabulary in a non-stressful manner. Enjoy the journal, and have a good start to the summer of 2021!

