Women's History Month

March 1 – 31, 2020

Growing out of a small-town school event in California, Women's History Month is a celebration of women's contributions to history, culture and society. The United States has observed it annually throughout the month of March since 1987. The 2012 theme, "Women's Education—Women's Empowerment," honors pioneering teachers and advocates who helped women and other groups gain access to advanced learning.

The Origins of Women's History Month

Women's History Month in the United States grew out of a weeklong celebration of women's contributions to culture, history and society organized by the school district of Sonoma, California, in 1978. Presentations were given at dozens of schools, hundreds of students participated in a "Real Woman" essay contest and a parade was held in downtown Santa Rosa.

Did you know? To coincide with Women's History Month 2011, the White House issued a 50-year progress report on the status of women in the United States. It found that younger women are now more likely than their male counterparts to hold a college degree and that the number of men and women in the labor force has nearly equalized.

A few years later, the idea had caught on within communities, school districts and organizations across the country. In 1980, President Jimmy Carter issued the first presidential proclamation declaring the week of March 8 as National Women's History Week. The U.S.

Congress followed suit the next year, passing a resolution establishing a national celebration. Six years later, the National Women's History Project successfully petitioned Congress to expand the event to the entire month of March.

International Women's Day

International Women's Day, a global celebration of the economic, political and social achievements of women, took place for the first time on March 8, 1911. Many countries around the world celebrate the holiday with demonstrations, educational initiatives and customs such as presenting women with gifts and flowers. The United Nations has sponsored International Women's Day since 1975. When adopting its resolution on the observance of International Women's Day, the United Nations General Assembly cited the following reasons: "To recognize the fact that securing peace and social progress and the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms require the active participation, equality and development of women; and to acknowledge the contribution of women to the strengthening of international peace and security."

Source:
https://www.history.com/topics/holidays/womens-history-month

March 2020 Calendar

National Women's History Month
National Social Work Month

1-7 – Healring Awareness Week (US)

2 – Lent begins (Orthodox Christian)

3 – Hindi New Year (Hindu)

8 – International Women's Day

9 – Magha Puja Day (Buddhist)

10 – Purim (Judaism)

10 – Hola Mohalla (Sikh)

17 – St. Patrick's Day (Christian)

20 – National Cherry Blossom Festival (US)

20 – Ostara – Mabon (Wicca/Pagan)

21 – New Year (Baha'i/Zoroastrian)

25-31 – National Physicians Week (US)

28 – Khordad Sal (Zoroastrian)

31 – Cesar Chavez Day (California)

Happiness and Grief Change Depending What Language You're Speaking

The study of language can also be described as the study of reality. Human societies may be universally aware that the sun exists, and pretty much all languages have a word for it. But when it comes to less concrete or more conceptual experiences, language becomes trickier. Do we all differentiate—and see—the same colors, for example? And when it comes to emotions, things get even more complex. Most languages have a word for "love," but does that mean love is conceptually the same everywhere?

A new study from the University of Otago in Dunedin, New Zealand, has found some compelling evidence that emotional concepts are different for different language groups. Researchers studied which words in any given language were related semantically to other words in the same language, and then compared those groupings to each other. The groupings, they discovered, varied significantly.

In one example, Persian uses the word-form *ænduh* to express both the concepts of grief and regret. Meanwhile in the Sirkhi dialect of Dargwa, a language spoken in the Russian republic of Dagestan, the word-form *dard* expresses the concept of grief, but also that of anxiety. "Persian speakers may therefore understand 'grief' as an emotion more similar to 'regret,' whereas Dargwa speakers may understand 'grief' as more similar to 'anxiety,'" the researchers wrote in their paper, published in the journal Science this month. Perhaps unsurprisingly, languages from similar geographic regions were more likely to display connections between similar emotion words. Proximal societies have more opportunities for trade and other cross-cultural exchange, and more recent shared histories.

Many of the subtle differences are literally lost in translation, as the imperative for dictionaries to find translations erases the nuanced ways in which a culture uses a word and, perhaps, experiences the emotion. According to the study: *Emotion concepts had different patterns of association in different language families. For example, "anxiety" was closely related to "fear" among Tai-Kadai languages, but was more related to "grief" and "regret" amongst Austroasiatic languages. By contrast, "anger" was related to "envy" among Nakh-Daghestanian languages, but was more related to "hate," "bad," and "proud" among Austronesian languages. We interpret these findings to mean that emotion words vary in meaning across languages, even if they are often equated in translation dictionaries.*

A good example of this equation is the German word *Sehnsucht*. Google translate offers "nostalgia" as the direct translation. Other dictionaries come up with longing, yearning, pining, hankering, and desire. In fact, the researchers note, the word "refers to a strong desire for an alternative life and has no direct translation in English."

Links Across Languages

In order to make the comparisons, the researchers constructed what they call a "colexification database" that included word lists from 2,474 global languages. One major challenge, they wrote, was to ensure no false relationship between words were included, for example in cases where a word in a language is used to mean several different things. (The English word "like," which can mean "similar to" but also denote a positive feeling towards something, is a good example.) They also pointed out that the most widely spoken languages are also the best-documented. For this reason they used word lists rather than dictionaries, giving them access to more languages.

The existence of subtle differences doesn't mean human societies have wildly divergent experiences, the researchers note. For the most part, words with positive associations grouped together, and those with negative associations were also conceptually linked to one another. An interesting exception, the researchers wrote, was that some Austronesian languages colexified the concepts of pity and love. That implies those cultures conceptualize pity as more positive than others—or love as more negative.

New Staff Profile: Gursimran Singh

Gursimran is the new Punjabi, Hindi, and Urdu interpreter joining the UCDH Medical Interpreting Services team in 2020. He was born in India and came to the United States when he was three years old. Growing up, he spoke Punjabi at home and taught himself both Hindi and Urdu. Later on, he took some courses in college to increase his skills in the three languages.

Gursimran grew up an hour and a half away from Sacramento, in Modesto, California. After graduating high school in 2015, he moved to Sacramento to start school at UC Davis to pursue his goals of becoming a physician. Gursimran was part of the UC Davis College of Biological Sciences graduating class of 2019 in which he graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Neurobiology, Physiology, and Behavior.

During his undergraduate years, he was a member of a student run clinic which provided free health screenings to the underserved Indian population in Sacramento. He enjoyed being the bridge that transgressed the language barrier at these clinics which then led him to become a medical interpreter during his time off from school. In the future, Gursimran plans to attend Medical School and become a surgeon. He is thankful to be a part of the UCDH Medical Interpreting team because he gets to experience many different medical environments all while continuing to help the community. Outside of work, he enjoys working on cars and watching basketball, especially his favorite team, The Los Angeles Lakers.

Welcome onboard, Gursimran! We are happy to have you as a part of our diverse team!

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