

## **Uncool People**

### **Transcription by Evernote**

Uncool people are often given names and labels to insult them and to distinguish them from cool people. Sadly, these labels have often been used interchangeably. That must stop. These labels have very specific meanings, and nuances. Thus, it is a major disservice to use these labels interchangeably and thus haphazardly.

Four labels that have been used to insult uncool people have been Dorks, dweebs, nerds, and geeks. The term dork is probably the most general of all these labels. It is the broadest in meaning. In some ways, it's generic. A dork is someone who is not cool [as it has been used in society]. The person has certain qualities which make him or her not dug by the cool people [Common Knowledge]. Dorks may wear dirty shirts with stupid motifs on them. They like to make noises in the back of the class [Common Knowledge]. They have odd senses of humor. They are annoying [Common Knowledge]. They may be class clowns, but they're so over the top that the cool people don't like it. The cool people goof off, most definitely, but dorks go further.

I asked this woman about her truck. She said, "You are a dork." You wouldn't want to date a dork, that's for sure. You may talk to a dork, but not too much, lest you be pegged for associating with one. Dorks, by their very nature, are not attractive to the opposite sex [Common Knowledge].

The category dweeb is not used nearly as much as the category dork. It is actually fairly rare, though I believe one time it had at least a period of popularity.

The pirate radio station, Voice of Laryngitis, had this parody skit of Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood, but instead it was Mr. Huxley's Neighborhood. Mr. Huxley's neighborhood was a much more raw and rough neighborhood than Mr. Rogers'. Mr. Huxley upset some of the neighborhood people. One of them got so frustrated with Huxley that he threw a brick in his window and in his squeaky voice called him "a dweeb." Huxley, instead of feeling bothered by that, made fun of the dude. He said, "that person needs to learn how to cuss." He went on making fun of how that person called him a dweeb, suggesting that a dweeb is a lame insult. Ironically, the person who threw the brick and called Mr. Huxley a dweeb is really a dweeb.

Dweebs have weird voices. Voices that are grating to listen to. Dweebs are in many ways like dorks, but they're more dorky than your run-of-the-mill dork. They are extra dorky. Don't hang around them. If you're really brave, talk to a dork for a little while. But don't you dare talk to a dweeb.

The third category, nerd, is the broadest, is the most specific of all. The term nerd has a very nuanced connotation. Even so, people use the term nerd inappropriately. Someone was telling me about these people who made fun of some kids who studied a lot. The

people who studied a lot became successful and the people who made fun of them did not. So the person said, "Who's a nerd now?"

The person who became successful is still a nerd. The other people are not nerds. They may be losers, but they're not nerds. Thus, oftentimes, nerds are those who are really, really smart [Common Knowledge].

Some cool people are smart and even get good grades, but they don't live intellectual 24-7. The cool people may get good grades so they can get into good colleges so they can get lots of money [like described in the Dead Kennedys' song "Terminal Preppie", but they don't like the intellectual for the sake of liking the intellectual.

People use nerd and dork interchangeably sometimes, which is quite sad. The irony here is that one symbol of nerddom which the show *Saved by the Bell* used a lot: The pocket protector is something dorks would never wear. Why? Because dorks don't wear shirts with pockets. They wear rags, old dirty shirts. Thus, there's no need for a pocket protector.

The television show *Saved by the Bell* had a field day making fun of nerds. It characterized nerds in certain ways. It also made nerds into caricatures. Nerds on *Saved by the Bell* had certain mannerisms and stereotypical looks. These nerds often wore black rimmed glasses, sometimes with tape in the middle. They talked in a snorty way. They loved the intellectual. On that show, the nerds

loved The cool people didn't like the nerds. The nerds got really good grades, because they were so smart.

One of the main characters, Screech, was interesting because essentially he is a hybrid between nerds and dorks. He had some characteristics of dorks and also some characteristics of nerds. He was intellectual, he liked chess, but he also made stupid comments that the cool people didn't like. These comments aggravated and irritated people. It would annoy people.

Steve Urkel is a great example of a nerd. The show Family Matters has portrayed nerds well. Steve Urkel, like Screech, likes a woman who definitely does not reciprocate because each are nerds. Steve Urkel is very intellectual. He has sinus problems. Cool people don't ever have sinus problems. He wears his pants hiked up really high. often with the shirt tucked in. Cool people wouldn't do something like that.

The film, Revenge of the Nerds, also is another great example of fiction portraying nerds. Back in the day, I remember seeing these masterpieces of contemporary cinema. And as I recall, The film used the term nerd to describe both nerds and dorks. Our society needs to get away from that. You can call people nerds and you can call people dorks, but don't you dare call nerds dorks or dorks nerds.

People have told me, "You look like you would be good with computers." Or, if people are more charitable, people

may say, “you seem like a computer type.” What essentially these people are saying is that I am a nerd.

I am not especially knowledgeable about computers. Back in the day, I did enjoy computers. I found lots of satisfaction in computer programming, every other computer activity I got my hands on, it seemed. In high school, I took computer programming class, and it made sense to me.

I suppose if I'm going to get stereotyped, it's better to be stereotyped as a nerd than a hippie. Ironically, I get stereotyped as bull. That's our world for you.

About 11 months ago, I began the study of Latin. For a while, Latin called out to me. I am ever so glad I started it. It has been a very satisfying experience. Studying Latin is a big part of my daily routine now. It is a labor of love. I'm so glad I have studied this language. That makes me a nerd.

As languages go, Latin is one of the nerdiest. Maybe if you want to travel abroad, which is pretty cool, you learn Spanish. But you don't study something just to study it. That is true nerdism. You only study something for some other end. As others have shown, that is exactly what is wrong with the way many people approach learning. But that's what makes nerds nerds.

One of my professors said, “in our society, we make fun of people who are smart.” That's why nerds have such bad raps.

For a little over a quarter of my freshman year of high school, I attended Lincoln High School in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. At the beginning of the year, either the drama class or the drama club or whatever put on this skit. A lot of people thought it was funny, but I thought it was pretty dumb. Part of the skit involved ripping on fresh men and fresh women while exalting seniors. The skit portrayed seniors as being really cool.

One part of the skit involved a dude who was definitely cool talking about how he wanted to use some whipped cream. While the Freshman character was portrayed as this nerd who loved trigonometry. There is some awful irony here. At Jefferson High School, where I attended the bulk of my high school experience, if you were super-duper smart and super advanced, you were able to take trigonometry your junior year of high school. People who were not quite as advanced, but also very smart, got to trigonometry senior year. But generally, the earliest you would take trigonometry was junior year. I remember hearing maybe one case of a really bright and gifted student who took trigonometry sophomore year. But I never heard of anyone taking it earlier. There's prerequisites you take before you get to trigonometry.

Thus, that skit had it all wrong. If anyone would be taking trigonometry, it would be the senior, not the freshman.

I have begun to study trigonometry. A couple months ago or so, I decided to start studying trigonometry just for the sake of doing it. How nerdy. The cool people are getting

drunk. I am studying trigonometry. what a nerd I am. I enjoy it. It's satisfying. It's intellectually stimulating.

One of my other main hobbies is reading. I love to read like almost nothing else. I find reading so relaxing and stimulating. I love non-fiction books. I love learning. Reading is definitely not cool. The cool people don't read [like society says]. They get drunk and watch sports [like society says].

You should stand in front of libraries and call everyone who goes in a nerd. After all, why would you even want to be at a library?

Like I said earlier, I have been called or at least considered a nerd because I seem to be inclined towards computers. Nerds really do like computers a lot [like the stereotype by society goes]. These days, since computers are so pervasive and widespread, even the cool people use them. But how the cool people use them is much different than how the nerds use them.

Nerds are interested in computers for computer's sake [like the trope goes]. Cool people use computers to check email, to play fantasy football, or maybe to check some sports scores. The nerds engage in computer programming, play video games, they are in chat rooms talking to people online. The cool people don't need to talk to people online because the cool people are liked and have many friends. When I'm online, one of my favorite

activities is to do online journaling. Cool people wouldn't want to write. How terrible it is to write.

The term geek is really not used much. I have not heard it used much except in one connotation. You hear the term computer geek. More appropriately, the term would be computer nerd, because the nuance of geek is something much different.

Like dorks and dweebs, geeks distinguish themselves from nerds by not being intellectual. That's why the term computer geek is really an oxymoron. Computer nerd may be redundant. But computer geek is an oxymoron. Geeks are ultra weird. You don't even want to be near them. You don't even want to interact with them for fear that you may be drawn into their peculiarity. Geeks are as strange as strange can be.

When I was in sixth, seventh, and part of eighth grade, I wrote a diary. I was hanging out with these two women. I showed them my diary. They got quite a kick out of it. They really got a kick out of the part where I called a bunch of kids I didn't like, geeks. I don't hear the term geek used by kids these days. It must not be involved. I would know, too, because I work in an elementary school.

The term geek comes to us from the circus [Common Knowledge]. Back in the day, geeks were circus acts [Common Knowledge]. As I recall, geeks bit the heads off of animals [Common Knowledge]. Disgusting, gross.

Although geeks today don't actually do that, they still have the same social stigma of people who would do that.

The well-loved metal artist Ozzy Osbourne did what geeks do. He bit the head off a bat, which made him forever notorious [Common Knowledge]. Ozzy Osbourne, even though he may have done something even geeks today don't do, he still is not a geek.

He is way cool, because he creates loud and fast music [which society says is cool]. He's a headbanger. Not so scenish that he doesn't appeal to popular people. His program, *The Osbournes*, which consequently I've never seen, seems to appeal to the cool kids in school.

Whatever you do, do not use these words carelessly. Each of these insults have very specific meanings. It is a carnal mistake to use these labels interchangeably. When you call someone a nerd, you better be referring to a true nerd. When you call someone a dork, you better be referring to a true dork.

Good evening.