

TRKLDWN

poetics

the TRKLDWN is a poetic form that requires writers to explore their social position as it was, or might have been, during Ronald Reagan's presidency (1980-88). Throughout this era, bureaucrats across the political spectrum revived, refined, and relentlessly tested neoliberal economic policies and socially conservative philosophies.

the TRKLDWN places writers in a bureaucratic process wherein their identities (e.g., age, race, sex) and socioeconomic context (e.g., formal education, geography, employment) are evaluated against US Census Bureau and US Department of Commerce metrics to determine the quantity and variety of words the writer is allowed (or *deserves*) to access.

attention to the following procedural requirements is essential:

- **a TRKLDWN consists of 4 to 8 unmetered lines**
- **demographics --of the TRKLDWN writer-- determine if/when the poem utilizes “uncommon vocabulary”**
 - “Uncommon vocabulary” is defined as words outside the [Oxford English Corpus](#) list of ‘Most Frequently Used English Words’
- **although the writer has unlimited use of ‘Most Frequent’ words in the common “word bank”, they are initially allotted only 10 uncommon vocabulary words**
- **TRKLDWN bureaucrat utilizes 10 Data Tables. at each Data Table, the writer must choose to either gain access to 1 uncommon word OR choose to revoke usage of 1 uncommon word.**
 - the writer makes the decision to gain or revoke an uncommon word, based on where they did/would have situated themselves-- in the 1980's-- within a given Data Table
 - Examples: after reflecting on all ten data tables, a writer can potentially gain access to ten additional uncommon words. this would produce a "TRKLDWN-20" (a TRKLDWN with 20 uncommon words).
 - Alternately, after reflecting, the writer may choose to revoke 4 of their originally allotted “uncommon” words. this would result in a "TRKLDWN-6" (a TRKLDWN with six uncommon words).
- **throughout the TRKLDWN, length (e.g., letter count, word count) of each subsequent line must decrease**
 - specifically, a 10%-15% "tax cut" on opening line length is suggested. (*Multiply opening line length by 0.10 to 0.15*).
 - Examples: A 12-word opening line suggests a 2-word decrease in subsequent lines. An 8-word opening line suggests a 1-word decrease in subsequent lines.
- **a TRKLDWN must utilize the [1980 & 1984 Democratic/Republican party platform preambles](#) for inspiration, themes, critiques, epigraphs, etc.**

this packet contains necessary documents for creating a TRKLDWN: the common "word banks", an Application for Access to “Uncommon” Words worksheet, US Census Data Tables, US Dept of Commerce Data Tables, and excerpts from Democratic & Republican party platform preambles.

- Saleem Hue Penny

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Word Bank #1: The 100 Most Frequently Used English Words

(source: [English for Students](#))

1. The	21. This	41. So	61. Person	81. Back
2. Be	22. But	42. Up	62. Into	82. After
3. To	23. His	43. Out	63. Year	83. Use
4. Of	24. By	44. If	64. Your	84. Two
5. And	25. From	45. About	65. Good	85. How
6. A	26. They	46. Who	66. Some	86. Our
7. In	27. We	47. Get	67. Could	87. Work
8. That	28. Say	48. Which	68. Them	88. First
9. Have	29. Her	49. Go	69. See	89. Well
10. I	30. She	50. Me	70. Other	90. Way
11. It	31. Or	51. When	71. Than	91. Even
12. For	32. An	52. Make	72. Then	92. New
13. Not	33. Will	53. Can	73. Now	93. Want
14. On	34. My	54. Like	74. Look	94. Because
15. With	35. One	55. Time	75. Only	95. Any
16. He	36. All	56. No	76. Come	96. These
17. As	37. Would	57. Just	77. Its	97. Give
18. You	38. There	58. Him	78. Over	98. Day
19. Do	39. Their	59. Know	79. Think	99. Most
20. At	40. What	60. Take	80. Also	100. Us

Word Bank #2: The 25 Most Frequently Used Nouns, Verbs, and Adjectives

(source: [English for Students](#))

NOUNS	VERBS	ADJECTIVES
1 Time	1 Be	1 Good
2 Person	2 Have	2 New
3 Year	3 Do	3 First
4 Way	4 Say	4 Last
5 Day	5 Get	5 Long
6 Thing	6 Make	6 Great
7 Man	7 Go	7 Little
8 World	8 Know	8 Own
9 Life	9 Take	9 Other
10 Hand	10 See	10 Old
11 Part	11 Come	11 Right
12 Child	12 Think	12 Big
13 Eye	13 Look	13 High
14 Woman	14 Want	14 Different
15 Place	15 Give	15 Small
16 Work	16 Use	16 Large
17 Week	17 Find	17 Next
18 Case	18 Tell	18 Early
19 Point	19 Ask	19 Young
20 Government	20 Work	20 Important
21 Company	21 Seem	21 Few
22 Number	22 Feel	22 Public
23 Group	23 Try	23 Bad
24 Problem	24 Leave	24 Same
25 Fact	25 Call	25 Able

Application for Access to “Uncommon” Words

Table 3. Poverty Status of People, by Age, Race, and Hispanic Origin

Gain 1 Uncommon Word ?

Revoke 1 Uncommon Word ?

...& Why (optional)? _____

Table 7. Poverty of People by Sex

Gain 1 Uncommon Word ?

Revoke 1 Uncommon Word ?

...& Why (optional)? _____

Table 21. Number of Poor and Poverty Rate by State

Gain 1 Uncommon Word ?

Revoke 1 Uncommon Word ?

...& Why (optional)? _____

No. 161 Public and Private Health Care Coverage, By Family Income and Age

Gain 1 Uncommon Word ?

Revoke 1 Uncommon Word ?

...& Why (optional)? _____

No. 118 Death Rates from Accidents and Violence (per 100,000 population)

Gain 1 Uncommon Word ?

Revoke 1 Uncommon Word ?

...& Why (optional)? _____

No. 194 Persons with Activity Limitation, by Selected Chronic Conditions

Gain 1 Uncommon Word ?

Revoke 1 Uncommon Word ?

...& Why (optional)? _____

No. 643 Persons not in the Labor Force, Job Desire and Reasons for not Seeking Work, by Sex and Race

Gain 1 Uncommon Word ?

Revoke 1 Uncommon Word ?

...& Why (optional)? _____

No. 648 Main Reasons for Working More Than One Job, by Race and Sex

Gain 1 Uncommon Word ?

Revoke 1 Uncommon Word ?

...& Why (optional)? _____

No. 335 Federal Prisoners Under Sentence, by Offense and Race

Gain 1 Uncommon Word ?

Revoke 1 Uncommon Word ?

...& Why (optional)? _____

No. 338 Prisoners Under Sentence of Death

Gain 1 Uncommon Word ?

Revoke 1 Uncommon Word ?

...& Why (optional)? _____

Total Allotment of Uncommon Words for this TRKLDWN: _____

Table 3. Poverty Status of People by Age, Race, and Hispanic Origin

(Population in thousands. Population as of March of the following year. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see <<https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsmar20.pdf>>)

White, Not Hispanic

Year	Under 18 years			18 to 64 years			65 years and over		
	All people under 18 years								
	Total	Below poverty		Total	Below poverty		Total	Below poverty	
		Number	Percent		Number	Percent		Number	Percent
1980	46,578	5,510	11.8	111,460	7,990	7.2	21,760	2,865	13.2

Black

Year	Under 18 years			18 to 64 years			65 years and over		
	All people under 18 years								
	Total	Below poverty		Total	Below poverty		Total	Below poverty	
		Number	Percent		Number	Percent		Number	Percent
1980	9,368	3,961	42.3	14,987	3,835	25.6	2,054	783	38.1

Asian and Pacific Islander

Year	Under 18 years			18 to 64 years			65 years and over		
	All people under 18 years								
	Total	Below poverty		Total	Below poverty		Total	Below poverty	
		Number	Percent		Number	Percent		Number	Percent
1987	1,937	455	23.5	4,010	510	12.7	375	56	15.0

Hispanic (any race)

Year	Under 18 years			18 to 64 years			65 years and over		
	All people under 18 years								
	Total	Below poverty		Total	Below poverty		Total	Below poverty	
		Number	Percent		Number	Percent		Number	Percent
1980	5,276	1,749	33.2	7,740	1,563	20.2	582	179	30.8

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 1960 to 2020 Annual Social and Economic Supplements (CPS ASEC).

Table 7. Poverty of People by Sex

(Population in thousands. Population as of March of the following year. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see <<https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsmar20.pdf>>)

Year	Male						Female					
	18 to 64			65 and over			18 to 64			65 and over		
	Total	Below poverty		Total	Below poverty		Total	Below poverty		Total	Below poverty	
		Number	Percent		Number	Percent		Number	Percent		Number	Percent
1980	66,768	5,288	7.9	10,108	1,102	10.9	70,659	8,570	12.1	14,578	2,769	19.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 1960 to 2020 Annual Social and Economic Supplements (CPS ASEC).

Footnotes are available at <www.census.gov/topics/income-poverty/poverty/guidance/poverty-footnotes/cps-historic-footnotes.html>.

Table 21. Number of Poor and Poverty Rate by State

1980 (Population in thousands. Population as of March of the following year.)

STATE	Total	Below poverty	Percent
Alabama	3,831	810	21.2
Alaska	379	36	9.6
Arizona	2,774	354	12.8
Arkansas	2,249	484	21.5
California	23,748	2,619	11.0
Colorado	2,869	247	8.6
Connecticut	3,090	255	8.3
Delaware	578	68	11.8
District of Columbia	626	131	20.9
Florida	10,100	1,692	16.7
Georgia	5,243	727	13.9
Hawaii	954	81	8.5
Idaho	934	138	14.7
Illinois	11,259	1,386	12.3
Indiana	5,490	645	11.8

Iowa	2,868	311	10.8
Kansas	2,286	215	9.4
Kentucky	3,641	701	19.3
Louisiana	4,273	868	20.3
Maine	1,077	158	14.6
Maryland	4,104	389	9.5
Massachusetts	5,725	542	9.5
Michigan	9,227	1,194	12.9
Minnesota	3,920	342	8.7
Mississippi	2,429	591	24.3
Missouri	4,800	625	13.0
Montana	774	102	13.2
Nebraska	1,532	199	13.0
Nevada	840	70	8.3
New Hampshire	907	63	7.0
New Jersey	7,316	659	9.0
New Mexico	1,304	268	20.6
New York	17,321	2,391	13.8
North Carolina	5,836	877	15.0
North Dakota	640	99	15.5
Ohio	10,630	1,046	9.8
Oklahoma	2,916	406	13.9
Oregon	2,684	309	11.5
Pennsylvania	11,665	1,142	9.8
Rhode Island	911	97	10.7
South Carolina	3,174	534	16.8
South Dakota	677	127	18.8
Tennessee	4,519	884	19.6
Texas	14,326	2,247	15.7

Utah	1,488	148	10.0
Vermont	520	62	12.0
Virginia	5,204	647	12.4
Washington	4,223	538	12.7
West Virginia	1,952	297	15.2
Wisconsin	4,724	403	8.5
Wyoming	468	49	10.4

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 1960 to 2020 Annual Social and Economic Supplements (CPS ASEC).

No. 161 Public and Private Health Care Coverage, By Family Income and Age

Age	Percent Without coverage
Under 6 years	13.9%
6 - 18 years	11.2%
19-24 years	20.5%
25-44 years	9.3%
45-64 years	7.6%
65 years and over	1.0%

No. 118 Death Rates from Accidents and Violence (per 100,000 population)

Sex, Cause of Death	White death rate	Black death rate
Male Total	97.7	147.9
Motor vehicle accidents	36.2	32.7
All non-motor vehicle accidents	32.1	45.7
Homicide	9.2	58.7
Suicide	20.2	10.8
Female Total	38.2	42.6
Motor vehicle accidents	13.1	9.7
All non-motor vehicle accidents	15.4	17.2
Homicide	2.9	13.0
Suicide	6.9	2.8

No. 194 Persons with Activity Limitation, by Selected Chronic Conditions*(Heart conditions, arthritis and rheumatism, hypertension without heart involvement, impairment of back/spine, impairment of lower extremities and hips)*

	Percent of all persons with Activity Limitation
Age: Under 45 years	6.9%
Age: 45-64 years	24.1%
Age: 65 years and over	46.0%
Family Income: Less than \$6,000	28.7%
Family Income: \$6,000 and over	12.1%
Race: White	14.6%
Race: Black	15.6%

No. 643 Persons not in the Labor Force--Job Desire and Reasons for not Seeking Work, by Sex and Race*(In thousands of persons 16 years old and over. Annual averages of quarterly data)*

Job Desire and Reason not in labor force	White	Black and other
<i>Total not in labor force: 59,425</i>	<i>Total White not in labor force: 51,486</i>	<i>Total Black not in labor force: 7,939</i>
Do not want job now (total)	47,337	6,555
In school	4,906	1,249
Ill or disabled	3,504	871
Keeping house	25,975	2,668
Retired	9,709	1,029
Want a job now, but not looking (total)	4,149	1,384
In school	1,070	396
Ill or disabled	527	213
Keeping house	976	261
Think cannot get a job	663	307
Other reasons	913	207

No. 648 Main Reasons for Working More Than One Job, by Race and Sex*(Persons 16 years and older. As of May)*

Reasons	White		Black	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
<i>Total (in 1,000s) (includes other reasons not shown separately in subsequent rows)</i>	2,990	1,410	220	139
Percent distribution				
Meet regular expenses	31.1	32.6	37.0	53.3
Pay off debts	6.7	7.2	10.9	6.7
Save for future	11.8	7.3	18.0	8.1
Get experience	8.5	6.7	6.2	1.5
Help friend or relative	3.2	6.6	1.4	1.5
Buy something special	7.6	10.9	1.4	9.6
Enjoy the work	18.8	16.1	10.9	12.6
Changed job	0.4	1.5	0.0	3.0

No. 335 Federal Prisoners Under Sentence, by Offense and Race*(These data pertain only to the Federal offender population housed in Federal institutions during or on the last day of the fiscal year ending Sept. 30)*

Offense	Offender: White Average sentence	Offender: Other Races Average sentence
Total offenses <i>(includes offenses not shown separately in subsequent rows)</i>	108.1 months	142.9 months
Drug laws	79.3 months	107.4 months
Juvenile delinquency	14.5 months	59.3 months
Larceny/theft	60.0 months	46.8 months
Counterfeiting	61.5 months	49.9 months
Fraud	50.9 months	36.7 months
Immigration	15.1 months	20.4 months
Firearms	58.5 months	52.4 months

No. 338 Prisoners Under Sentence of Death

(Excludes prisoners under sentence of death who remained within local correctional systems pending exhaustion of appellate process or who had not been committed to prison)

Characteristic	Number of persons
Total	714
White	427
Black and other	287
Completed school: 7 years or less	68
Completed school: 12 years	162
Completed school: more than 12 years	43
Marital status: married	229
Age: under 20 years	11
Age: 55 years and over	10

Excerpts from 1980 party platforms (D) and [R]

We must combine compassion with self-discipline. (D)

As a result of this legacy, despite our progress (D)

We will not run from these problems, nor will we fail (D)

And so this party looks to the future with determination and confidence (D)

We have been and we shall remain the party of all Americans (D)

America is adrift [R]

The hopes and aspirations of our people are being smothered. [R]

Divided, leaderless, unseeing, uncomprehending, they plod on [R]

We must pull ourselves together as a people before we slide irretrievably into the abyss [R]

Our foremost goal here at home is simple: economic growth and full employment without inflation [R]

Ultimately, those who practice strength and firmness truly guard the peace [R]

A defense of the individual against government was never more needed [R]

With God's help, let us now, together, make America great again; let us now, together, make a new beginning [R]

Excerpts from 1984 party platforms (D) and [R]

A fundamental choice awaits America—, a choice between two futures (D)

Our Party is built on a profound belief in America and Americans (D)

We believe in the dignity of the individual and the enormous potential of collective action (D)

We believe in building, not wrecking (D)

The trustees of a better future (D)

Choose between two diametrically opposed visions of what America should be. [R]

The spiritual and intellectual genius of the American people will create a better nation and maintain a just peace [R]

Creativity and growth are imperatives for a new era of opportunity for all. [R]

From freedom comes opportunity; from opportunity comes growth; from growth comes progress. [R]

It has been said that mercy must have a human heart and pity a human face. We agree [R]

Today we declare ourselves the Party of Hope—not for some but for all [R]

To help the poor without offering them a chance to escape poverty is ultimately to degrade us all. [R]

The divine command to help our neighbor is directed to each individual and not to a bureaucratic machine [R]

Not every problem cries out for a federal solution. [R]