

Truthiness

A church sign stating, "Truthiness and Consequences", taken March 10, 2007, in [Cape Coral, Florida](#).

Truthiness is a word used by [Stephen Colbert](#). It was first used on [October 17, 2005](#) in the first [episode](#) of the [television show *The Colbert Report*](#). The word is used to describe something that feels [truthful](#). [Facts](#) and [logic](#) have nothing to do with truthiness. The truthiness of something is only [measured](#) by it [instinctively](#) feeling [correct](#).

The word was picked as the word of the year for 2005 by the [American Dialect Society](#) on [January 6, 2006](#).^[1] It was also selected by the [Merriam-Webster dictionary](#) on [December 10, 2006](#) as its 2006 Word of the Year.^[2] It beat the term *google* to get Word of the Year.

Colbert on Truthiness

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On the [October 5 2005](#) Colbert Report, Stephen Colbert has this to say about truthiness:^[3]

"I will speak to you in plain, simple [English](#). And that brings us to tonight's word: 'truthiness.' Now I'm sure some of the 'word [police](#),' the 'wordinistas' over at Webster's are gonna say, 'hey, that's not a word.' Well, anyone who knows me knows I'm no fan of dictionaries or reference books.

I don't trust [books](#). They're all [fact](#), no [heart](#). And that's exactly what's pulling our [country](#) apart today. 'Cause face it, folks; we are a [divided nation](#). Not between [Democrats](#) and [Republicans](#), or [conservatives](#) and [liberals](#), or tops and bottoms. No, we are divided between those who think with their [head](#), and those who know with their heart.

Consider [Harriet Miers](#). If you 'think' about Harriet Miers, of course her [nomination's](#) absurd. But the [president](#) didn't say he 'thought' about his [selection](#). He said this:

([video](#) clip of [President Bush](#);) 'I know her [heart](#).'

Notice how he said nothing about her [brain](#)? He didn't have to. He feels the truth about Harriet Miers.

And what about [Iraq](#)? If you think about it, maybe there are a few missing pieces to the [rationale](#) for [war](#). But doesn't taking [Saddam](#) out feel like the right thing?"

References

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1. [↑](#) ["Truthiness Voted 2005 Word of the Year by American Dialect Society"](#) (PDF). Retrieved 2006-06-04.
2. [↑](#) ["Merriam-Webster's Words of the Year 2006"](#). Merriam-Webster. Archived from [the original](#) on 2015-01-21. Retrieved 2006-12-08.
3. [↑](#) ["The Colbert Report: Videos: The Word \(Truthiness\)"](#). October 17, 2005. Archived from [the original](#) on 2007-02-10. Retrieved 2006-06-04.

Other websites

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The [Simple English Wiktionary](#) has a [definition](#) for: ***truthiness***.

- [Video feed of Stephen introducing "Truthiness" on *The Colbert Report* Archived 2007-03-11 at the Wayback Machine](#)
- ["Truthiness: a flash in the pan?" from Language Log](#)
- [Macmillan Dictionary on *truthiness* Archived 2006-03-23 at the Wayback Machine](#)
- [Global Language Monitor on Top Television Buzzwords Archived 2008-06-15 at the Wayback Machine](#)

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