'Toxic' is Oxford's word of the year. No, we're not gaslighting you

Oxford Dictionaries has chosen "toxic" as its international word of the year, selecting it from a short list that included such politically inflected *contenders* as "gaslighting," "incel" and "techlash."

contender 竞争者

Katherine Connor Martin, the company's head of U.S. dictionaries, said there had been a marked *uptick* of interest in the word on its website over the past year. But the word was chosen less for statistical reasons, she said, than for the sheer variety of contexts in which it has *proliferated*, from conversations about environmental poisons to *laments* about today's poisonous political discourse to the #MeToo movement, with its calling out of "toxic *masculinity*."

uptick 上涨 proliferate 增殖;扩散

lament 挽歌;恸哭;哀悼 masculinity 男性气概

Oxford's word of the year is chosen to reflect "the *ethos*, mood or *preoccupations*" of a particular year, but also to highlight that English is always changing. Last year's winner was "youthquake." In 2016, it was "post-truth."

ethos 社会思潮 preoccupation 全神贯注; 当务之急

"Toxic" derives from the Greek "toxikon pharmakon," meaning "poison for arrows." The current entry in the online Oxford English Dictionary dates its earliest known printed occurrence to 1664.

Other words on the short list highlight different ways words emerge or evolve. While "toxic" is an old and very common word that has expanded in usage, "incel" — short for "involuntarily celibate" — is an example of jargon used by a limited group that suddenly enters widespread usage. And then there's "techlash," defined as "a strong and widespread negative reaction to the growing power and influence of large technology companies, particularly those based in Silicon Valley."

involuntarily 非自愿地;偶然地 celibate 独身者;禁欲的