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## TOPICS

Hate Crime Legislation; State Fairs; shop versus store versus department store; relative to versus related to; Down Under

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## GLOSSARY

**hate crime** – violent illegal actions that happen because of intolerance towards a member of a gender, racial, religious, or social group

\* This school will not tolerate any student committing any kind of hate crime against anyone in this school.

**prejudice** – intolerance towards a member of a gender, racial, religious, or social group

\* Why are you so prejudiced against foreigners?

**criminal offense** – a crime that can be punished under the law; an illegal action or type of behavior

\* It is a criminal offense to leave young children at home alone without someone to care for them.

**sexual orientation** – whether a person is sexually attracted to a person of his or her gender, or the opposite gender; heterosexual or homosexual; liking people of the opposite sex (a man liking a woman; a woman liking a man) or liking people of the same sex (a man liking a man; a woman liking a woman)

\* Our church welcomes people of any sexual orientation, because we believe in accepting every person as he or she is.

**brutality** – a very cruel or harsh attack that hurts another person very badly

\* Leo stopped watching the evening news, because he didn't want to see the reports on the war and hear about the many acts of brutality.

**to trigger** – to cause something to happen; to initiate something

\* Do you know what triggered her decision to quit her job and move to Alaska?



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**state fair** – a fun competitive, educational, and recreational event within a state, normally occurring in the summer months and including many displays

\* I can't wait for this year's state fair so I can go on the rides and eat the great food!

**livestock** – animals kept and raised on a farm or ranch, such as horses, cows, goats, pigs, and sheep

\* If we buy more cows and other livestock, we'll need a lot more land.

**ride** – amusement ride, often where people sit or stand inside a cart while it goes very quickly up and down and around and around

\* June is only nine years old and is too short to go on that scary ride.

**funhouse** – a temporary building that people walk through that has things inside to excite, surprise, amuse, and frighten people

\* Let's go into the funhouse and look at ourselves in those funny mirrors.

**ribbon** – a small, long, colored piece of fabric, often tied with a fancy knot, used as a prize

\* At the piano recital, the best student performer will win a blue ribbon.

**textile** – products created by using one's hands or a machine, and thread or fabric, such as sewing, knitting, and weaving

\* This Native American tribe is known for making colorful textiles and baskets.

**shop** – a small business that sells items to customers; a department in a larger store that sells a special kind of goods or services; a business that makes or repairs goods or machinery

\* Let's stop in the card shop on the way home to buy a birthday card for Mom.

**store** – a business that sells a variety of things, and may or may not specialize in one type of item, such as clothing or food

\* Are there any clothing stores in town that sells business suits?

**department store** – a store that has separate sections or small areas for selling a variety of things, such as cosmetics, men's and women's clothing, and furniture

\* George did all of his holiday shopping at the department store, buying perfume for his mother, a sweater for his sister, and a flower vase for his aunt.



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**relative to** – the way something is as compared to something else; in connection with or compared to something else

\* Repairing this TV won't cost very much relative to what it would cost to buy a new one.

**related to** – connected to something through a known link or characteristic

\* Can you please get me all of the files related to this customer's account?

**Down Under** – an informal way to refer to the country of Australia and sometimes New Zealand

\* Leandro lives Down Under with his new wife, and we hope to visit them both when we go to Asia this summer.

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### WHAT INSIDERS KNOW

#### The Great Brinks Robbery of 1950

People talk or joke about “robbing” (stealing from) a bank so they'll have enough money and won't have to work anymore. In 1950, that's just what a group of 11 men did. Instead of a bank, though, they decided to rob the Brinks “headquarters” (main office). Brinks is a large and well-known private American security company in Boston, Massachusetts, known for transporting a lot of money and valuable things, such as money for banks.

These 11 men did “meticulous” (very careful and with a lot of detail) planning for 18 months, and their robbery was successful. They stole 1.2 million dollars in “cash” (paper and coin money) and 1.5 million dollars in checks and “securities” (paper showing ownership of stocks and bonds). In 1950, this was the biggest “heist” (robbery) in American history.

The plan was perfect and everything “went off without a hitch” (was completed without any problems). The police spent years trying to find out who committed the robbery. It seemed as though the 11 robbers had “gotten away with” (escaped without being discovered) this “audacious” (taking great risk) robbery.

However, one of the members of the group began to complain that he had been “cheated” (not given what one is owed) out of his share of the money. Someone



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tried to kill him to keep him quiet. When that happened, the robber decided to talk to the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI), the highest police force in the country. By 1957, most of the robbers had been “arrested” (formally taken by the police because they are believed to have committed a crime) and “sentenced to” (given the punishment of) life in prison. The robber who talked to the police only received a sentence of four years in jail. However, despite catching most of the robbers, most of the stolen money was never found. That money is still missing today.



## **COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT**

You're listening to ESL Podcast's English Café number 249.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast's English Café episode 249. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

Visit our website at [eslpod.com](http://eslpod.com). If you do, you can download this episode's Learning Guide, an 8- to 10-page guide we provide for all of our current episodes that will help you improve your English even faster. You can also take a look at our ESL Podcast Store, with additional courses in English, and our ESL Podcast Blog, where each week we provide additional assistance in understanding American culture.

On this Café we're going to begin by talking about a rather serious topic of hate crimes. Then, we'll then move on to something a little funner – a little lighter, talking about the activities, the traditions, and the events that happen at state fairs. And, as always, we'll answer a few of your questions. Let's get started.

This Café begins with a discussion of hate crimes. "Hate crimes" are violent illegal actions that happen because of a person's prejudice or intolerance toward someone of a different gender (or sex), racial group, religious, or social group. "Prejudice" is when you have a negative, unreasonable opinion or feeling about someone without thinking about it, without even knowing that person. For example, some people have a prejudice against people who are a different skin color. They think that because they are a certain skin color they have certain characteristics. These beliefs are not very realistic, and if someone has them and they are violent, they can sometimes lead to these hate crimes, where someone is attacked just for being different than the person and someone the person doesn't like.

Probably the most recognizable hate crimes in recent history would be Nazi Germany's treatment of Jews in Europe, the ethnic cleansing in Bosnia, and here in the United States the killing of African Americans. Within the United States, in fact, the most frequently reported hate crimes are against blacks, or African Americans in the U.S., although they also take place against members of other groups.



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Within the United States – in some states, that is, as well as at the national or federal level – a hate crime is a “criminal offense,” a crime that can be punished under law. The person who commits, or does this hate crime can be given an additional punishment if the crime was motivated – if the crime had its origin, its reason in this sort of hatred or prejudice toward another group. When we say a “criminal offense” we mean a crime, something against the law. Hate crime laws are typically related to someone’s race, religion, their national origin (meaning where they are from, if they are an immigrant), their sex, their “sexual orientation” (whether they are straight or gay), and any disability they may have. A disability would be, for example, not having the use of your legs or not being able to hear.

One case that led to further hate crime legislation was the case here in Los Angeles – a famous case of a man by the name of Rodney King. King was a victim of police brutality in Los Angeles by the Los Angeles Police Department, which we call here the LAPD (its initials), back in 1991. This crime took place the very first year I came to Los Angeles. “Brutality” is very cruel or harsh treatment, or a cruel attack on someone that hurts someone very badly. What happened in the Rodney King case is that the LAPD had tried to stop King’s car – his vehicle, but King didn’t stop; he kept going. This led to what we call a high-speed chase, where the police are driving after someone who is trying to escape from them. We have these all the time in Los Angeles for some reason. When King finally stopped his car, he was beaten – he was hit by the short sticks that police officers usually have; we call them batons (batons). Unfortunately for the police, somebody was filming – videotaping what was happening, and that video became public. The LAPD has made a lot of changes in the last 20 years after the Rodney King incident.

Another case that triggered hate crime legislation in the United States was the case of Matthew Shepard. “To trigger” something means to start something, to cause something to happen; we might also say to initiate something. A young man named Matthew Shepard was a victim of a hate crime that took place in 1998 in the state of Wyoming, which is in the western part of the U.S. Matthew Shepard was a college student, and he was thought by many of the people he knew to be gay – to be homosexual. Because these other students didn’t like him being gay, they eventually murdered – they killed Matthew Shepard. The people who killed him were punished for their crimes, but there weren’t any hate crime laws at that time. In 2009, last year, the United States created the Matthew Shepard Act, which is a new law expands, or broadens hate crime legislation to include crimes against, among other groups, homosexuals.



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Although it sounds like everyone would agree to hate crime legislation – agree that it is a good idea, in fact there are many people who are opposed to hate crime legislation. The reason is that hate crime legislation requires that you understand the motivation – the reason why someone committed a crime. Now, if you commit a crime, say you murder someone or you hit someone and hurt them, you can be arrested for hitting or killing that person. If you did it intentionally (if you planned it ahead of time) you would be charged with (you would be accused of) what we would call first-degree murder. If it was an accident, then you would be tried for manslaughter, which is when you kill someone but it wasn't your intention or purpose. However, hate crime legislation goes to, or tries to determine the motivation – why someone killed someone else. This is a much more difficult thing to do. Some people say that if you are arrested for murder you should be punished for murdering someone regardless of the reason why you did it, that there should not be special additional punishment due to your motivation. So again, although there are people who are against it, most states, in fact, have hate crime legislation, as does the national government in the U.S.

Now let's move on to a lighter, a more fun topic, and that would be state fairs.

A "state fair" (fair) is an event where people come together usually for about a week, sometimes less sometimes more, that are all from the same state. Remember, we have 50 states in the United States. A state fair is typically held – it typically takes place one time during each year.

Now, what happens at the state fair? Well, there are often recreational, fun things for kids to do; there are educational events; and there are often competitions: competitive events, games, contests. Now the original purpose of a state fair was to allow the farmers in a state to come together and to have competitions. It also allowed them to sell the things that they had made or the animals that they had to people who wanted to buy them, so it was very much what we would call an agricultural event.

States that have a lot of agriculture, states like my home state Minnesota, have very large state fairs. They usually have permanent areas, an entire area or part of the city where the state fair is held. That's true in Minnesota. Minnesota has the largest state fair in the United States. But every state has its own state fair; sometimes states have more than one, but normally just one state fair.



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Now, state fairs have become larger and are for almost anyone who wants to go, there are things that would interest them. However, most state fairs have livestock competitions. “Livestock” (livestock – one word) are animals, such as horses, cows, goats, pigs, and sheep that you will find on a farm. As I say, originally state fairs were created to showcase, or to show off the livestock in competitions and find people who would want to buy the animals, and still today in many state fairs, especially in agricultural states – states that have a lot of farms, you will be able to go and you can see cows, and you can see horses, and you can see sheep, and so forth.

Now, as I say, state fairs have more than just the livestock competitions. If you go to a state fair you will usually find what we call “rides” (rides), sometimes they’re called amusement rides. These would include things like roller coasters, which are little trains that go up and down very fast; Ferris wheels, which are large wheels that have seats on them and you go around up in the air on this huge wheel. There are merry-go-rounds, which are for younger children. You don’t go up and down in the air; you go around and around in a circle. Usually there are plastic horses that the young children sit on. State fairs often have something called a “funhouse” (one word), where you can walk in can see some scary things or exciting things. Often, there are mirrors on the wall that make you look different, and so forth. I like the mirrors that make me look thinner so that I don’t look so fat! There are also many games and prizes that you can win.

State fairs are also famous for the food – the particular kind of food that you can find. Again, part of this depends on the state where you go, but it’s common for state fairs to sell popular food such as hot dogs. One thing that’s very popular is something called a corn dog, which is basically a hot dog that is put into what we would call a batter (batter), which is sort of what you make cake out of, and then it’s put into hot oil, and then you eat the whole thing. It’s very good! The hot dog is on a stick, and you eat it off of the stick. Every state fair has its own special kinds of food. Other kinds of food that you would find at a state fair would include popsicles, which is frozen, flavored water on a stick; cotton candy, which is a very light, sticky, fluffy sweet that you can eat. Also, it comes sort of on a stick. Usually there are lots of unhealthy food that you can buy at a state fair, but they taste very good!

State fairs also have competitions to find who can cook the best food – the best cake, for example, the best pie. When you enter these competitions, the awards that are given are called ribbons, and there are different colored ribbons that tell you whether it is first-place, second-place, third-place. So if you have a





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competition for, say, the best pie. Well, the person who wins the competition, who has the best pie, gets a ribbon, which is basically a long, colored piece of material – fabric, usually it has a round top on it. It look kind of like a medal, but it's not made of metal. The top prize, then, is called the blue ribbon. If you win second place you get a red ribbon. If you win third place you get a yellow ribbon, and there are different colors for the other finishing places – those who are fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, and so forth. So, that expression, “blue ribbon” is sometimes used in other contexts, and if you hear it, it means something that is of high quality, something that would be in first place in a competition.

State fairs also sometimes have competitions for local artwork. They have competitions for photographs and paintings, sculptures. In Minnesota, we have a competition for the best butter sculpture, that's a sculpture made out of a big piece of butter. That's because Minnesota has a lot of cows and it produces a lot of butter. There are also competitions for textile. “Textiles” are things that you create by sewing, by knitting, or by weaving. It's a kind of product of putting together certain kinds of materials.

I mentioned earlier that the Minnesota State Fair is the largest state fair. In fact, when I was growing up there was a song for the state fair: *Our state fair, is the best state fair, don't miss it, don't even be late.*

Of course, I never missed it as a child. I lived only about a mile from the Minnesota State Fairgrounds. The state fair in Minnesota lasts for two weeks; usually it's the end of August and the first part of September. Typically, it ends on the national holiday called Labor Day, which is the first Monday in September. I would walk to the state fair, and I would go on the rides, I would go and look at the animals. They had a special section for farm equipment, things like tractors, and you could, as a child, climb up and pretend like you were riding one of these large tractors. There was educational information available, information about agriculture. Politicians would often go to the state fair to meet people and try to get elected. I remember meeting Hubert Humphrey, the great Senator and one time Vice President of the United States, back in the early 1970s as a child. I remember as a child, and as a teenager, and even as an adult going on some rides in the – what we called the Midway, which is where all the rides were in the state fair – in one area of the state fair. There were horse competitions. There were concerts every night. There were what we call drag racing, where cars race around in a circle. There was always something to do at the state fair. I often went more than one day.



Right now, the state fair continues to be popular. Last year, almost 1.8 million people went to the Minnesota State Fair. If you are ever in Minnesota at the end of August, I highly recommend it. Or, any state fair I think would be a good experience of American culture. And, most importantly, you would be able to eat a corn dog!

Now let's answer a few of your questions.

Our first question comes from Doan (Doan) in Vietnam. The question has to do with the words “shop,” “store,” and “department store.”

A “shop” is a small business that sells things, usually things that are related, some sort of special kind of thing or service. We have coffee shops that sell coffee, of course. You can go to a cheese shop that sells only cheese, and so forth. A “store” is a more general word. It could be a small shop; it could also be a larger place that sells a variety of things – not just cheese, not just coffee, but many different kinds of things. A “department store” is a large store that has separate sections for different kinds of things that it sells. So, a “department store” is usually used to describe a very big business that sells many different things, and is typically found in a shopping mall next to many other stores. Department stores in the United States include Macy's, Sears – I have to think because some of them are no longer around. I grew up working at a department store called Montgomery Wards, which is no longer in business. But there are many other department stores in the U.S.: Bloomingdales, Nordstroms, and others.

Hikari (Hikari) in Japan wants to know the difference between “relative to” and “related to.”

“Relative to” means in connection with something, having to do with something, comparing one thing to another. For example: “Philadelphia is close to New York City, relative to Los Angeles.” What we mean is that if we are comparing Philadelphia – or, as I used to say, and do still sometimes, *Philadelphia*, that's the wrong pronunciation – Philadelphia is, compared to Los Angeles, closer to New York City. Another example would be: “Relative to last year's winter, this year's winter has been very cold.” Comparing this winter with last winter – last year's winter, last year's winter was colder. That's what we're saying.



“Related to” means connected to something with a particular quality or a particular kind of connection. An example will make this simpler to understand: “Banking is related to accounting in the business world.” There’s a connection between banking and accounting. Notice we’re not comparing the two, as we do with the expression “relative to.” When we say “related to,” we’re merely connecting these two ideas. “Mice and rats are related in the rodent family of animals.” “My fear of dogs is related to being bitten by a dog when I was child.” That’s actually true; I was bitten by a dog when I was a child, and I believe I’ve hated dogs every since. Hmm, sounds like I should talk to a psychologist!

“Related to” has an additional meaning. It can also mean that you are someone’s relative: their brother, their sister, their grandfather, their uncle. I have many people related to me: my parents, my brothers and sisters, my cousins, my aunts and uncles, my grandparents, and so forth. Everyone, of course, is related to someone – otherwise you wouldn’t be here!

Finally Gustavo (Gustavo) in Uruguay wants to know the meaning of the expression “Down Under.” He saw a headline in the newspaper: “Obama Looks Down Under for Plan.”

“Down Under,” which is capitalized, is an informal way of referring to the country of Australia and sometimes New Zealand. As an adverb, it means the same thing. So, “Obama Looks Down Under” means he is looking or examining Australia and perhaps New Zealand for ideas for his plan. Nicole Kidman, the actress, is from Down Under. That is, she’s from one of those two countries; in her case, it’s Australia.

There was a famous song in the 1980s by an Australian group called Men at Work – that was the name of the group. The song was called “Down Under.” It was very popular in the United States and in Australia. In fact, at the end of the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games the band, Men at Work, performed this song. I only remember one line from it. The main line is: *Do you come from the land Down Under*. That’s all I remember. Not a great song in my opinion, but then again I’m not from Down Under!

If you’re from Down Under, or wherever you’re from, you can email us your questions. Our email is [eslpod@eslpod.com](mailto:eslpod@eslpod.com).

From Los Angeles, California, I’m Jeff McQuillan. Thank you for listening. Come back and listen to us next time on the English Café.



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