All Kinds of Free

Martin Snyder

VP Engineering

Agenda

- **Vocabulary**
- FOSS
- Psychology
- Controversy / Abuse
- Worthy of Mention
- Epilog

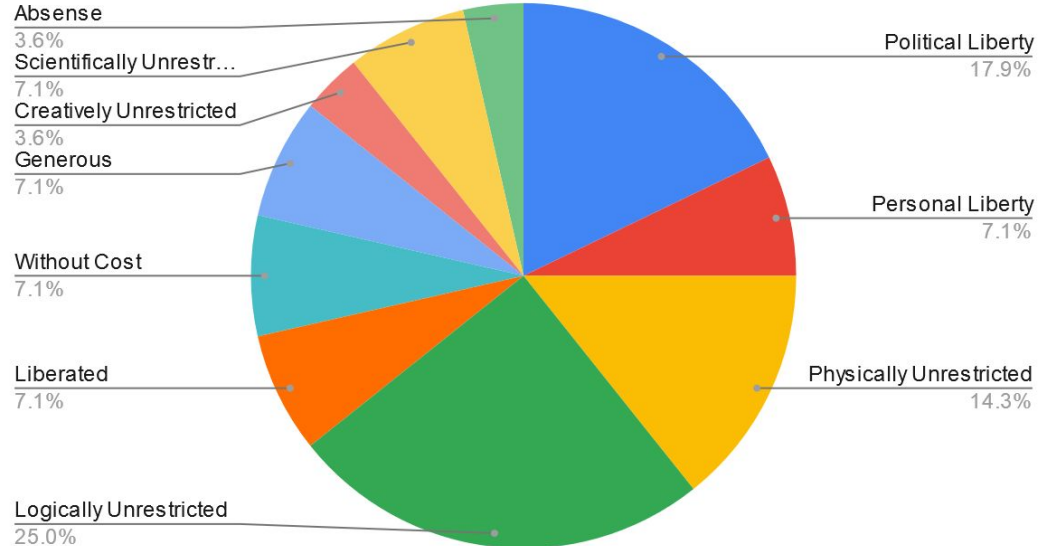# Free

Dictionary.com lists 43 meanings

#5 - exempt from external authority, interference, restriction, etc., as a person or one's will, thought, choice, action, etc.; independent; unrestricted.

#11 - provided without, or not subject to, a charge or payment

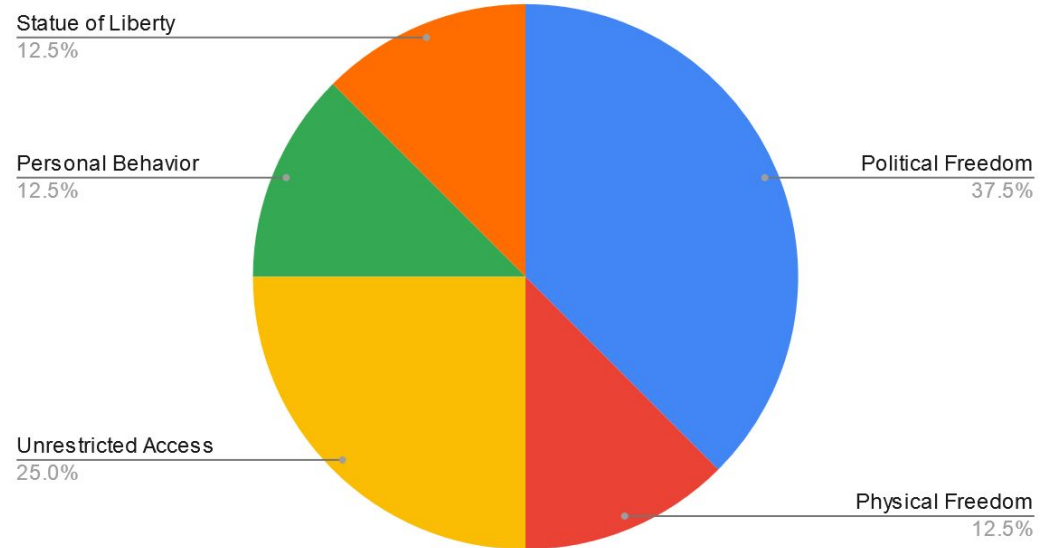**Count of Category**

Absense
3.6%

Scientifically Unrestr…
7.1%

Creatively Unrestricted
3.6%

Generous
7.1%

Without Cost
7.1%

Liberated
7.1%

Logically Unrestricted
25.0%

Political Liberty
17.9%

Personal Liberty
7.1%

Physically Unrestricted
14.3%

Liberty

Dictionary.com lists 8 meanings

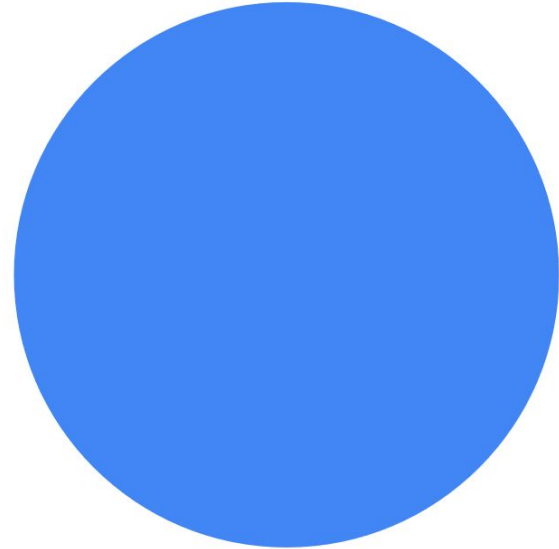#1 - freedom from arbitrary or despotic government or control

Count of Category

Statue of Liberty
12.5%

Personal Behavior
12.5%

Political Freedom
37.5%

Physical Freedom
12.5%

Unrestricted Access
25.0%

Gratis

Dictionary.com lists 2 meanings

#1 - without charge or payment; free

Count of Category

Included

Dictionary.com lists 3 meanings

#1 - being part of the whole; contained; covered

Count of Category

Physical
33.3%

Physical & Logical
33.3%

Botany
33.3%
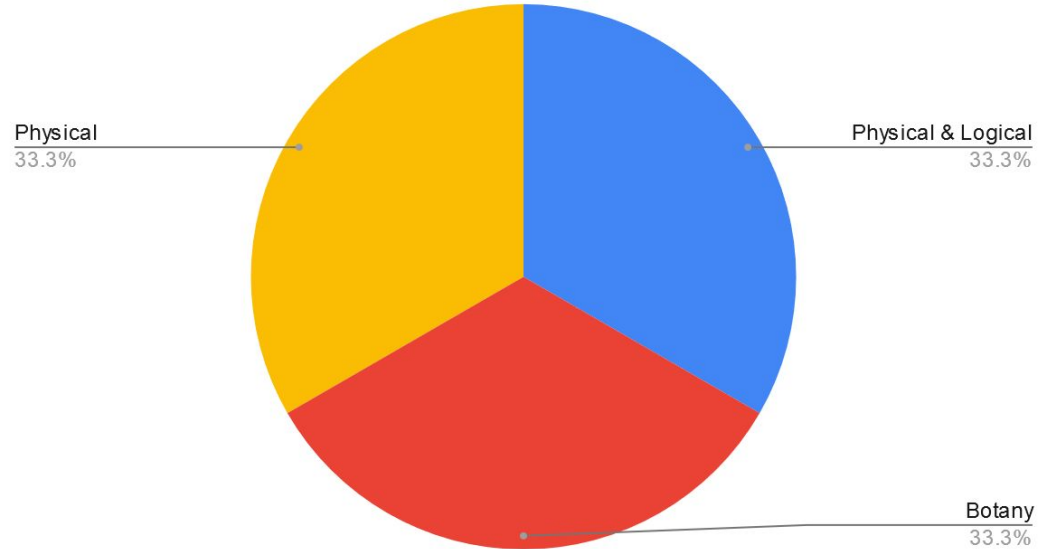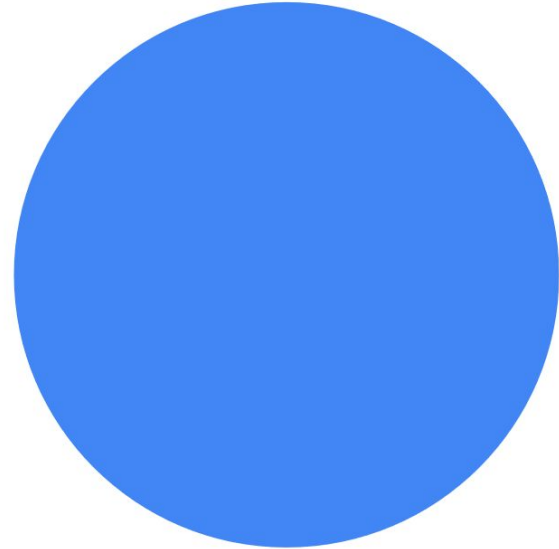
Barter

[Dictionary.com](#) lists 5 meanings

#1 - to trade by exchange of commodities rather than by the use of money

Count of Category

White Elephant

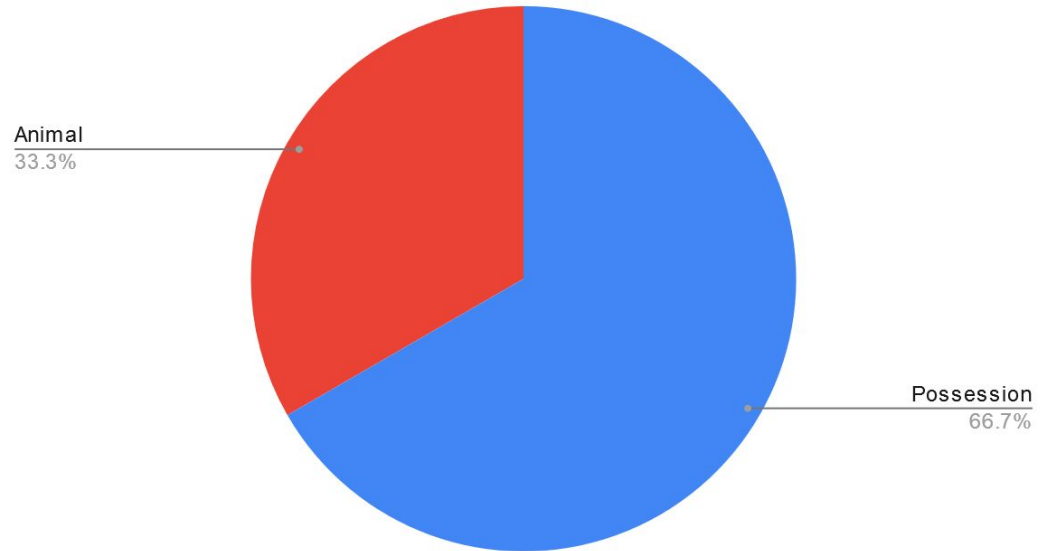Dictionary.com lists 3 meanings

#2 - a possession entailing great expense out of proportion to its usefulness or value to the owner
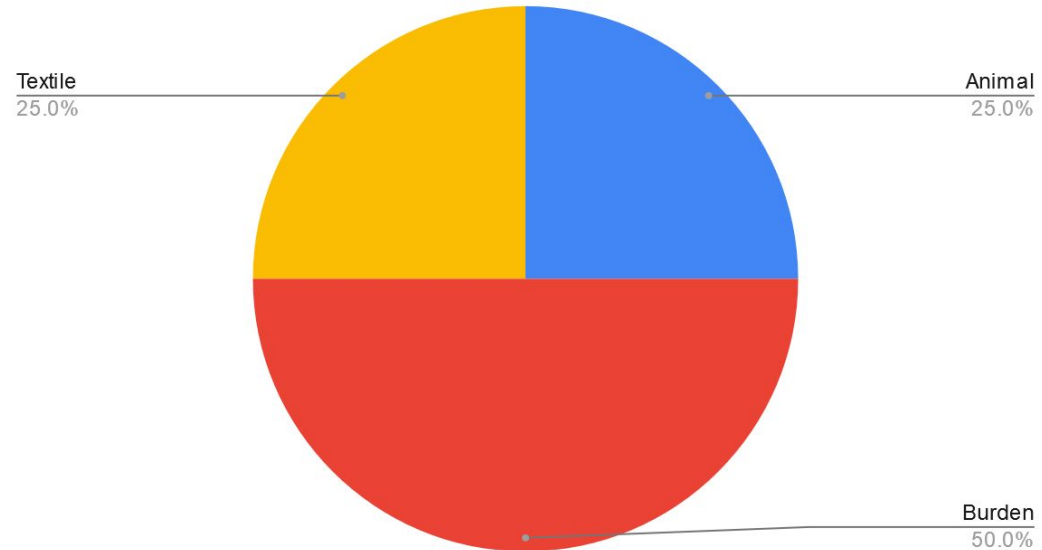
Count of Category

Animal
33.3%

Possession
66.7%

Albatross

Dictionary.com lists 4 meanings

#3 - something burdensome that
impedes action or progress

Count of Category

Textile
25.0%

Animal
25.0%

Burden
50.0%

Some Kinds of Free

Usage	Meaning/Clarification
Free as in Speech	Liberty
Free as in Beer	Gratis
Free as in Refill	Included
Free as in Training	Barter
Free as in Puppy	White Elephant
Free as in Mattress	Financial Albatross

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Free Software Definition

"Free software" means software that respects users' freedom and community. Roughly, it means that the users have the freedom to run, copy, distribute, study, change and improve the software. Thus, "free software" is a matter of liberty, not price. **To understand the concept, you should think of "free" as in "free speech," not as in "free beer".** We sometimes call it "libre software," borrowing the French or Spanish word for "free" as in freedom, to show we do not mean the software is gratis.

- The Free Software Foundation / gnu.org

GPL as a competitive advantage

"Proprietary software developers have the advantage of money; free software developers need to make advantages for each other. Using the ordinary GPL for a library gives free software developers an advantage over proprietary developers: a library that they can use, while proprietary developers cannot use it."

"Using the ordinary GPL is not advantageous for every library. There are reasons that can make it better to use the Lesser GPL in certain cases. The most common case is when a free library's features are readily available for proprietary software through other libraries."

- The Free Software Foundation / gnu.org

"Free" vs. Open Source

"The terms "free software" and "open source" stand for almost the same range of programs. However, they say deeply different things about those programs, based on different values. The free software movement campaigns for freedom for the users of computing; it is a movement for freedom and justice. By contrast, the open source idea values mainly practical advantage and does not campaign for principles. This is why we do not agree with open source, and do not use that term."

- Richard Stallman, Founder, Free Software Foundation

"Free" vs. Open Source (2)

"Pretty cool how open source successfully co-opted the free software movement to instead be about making it as easy as possible for corporations to extract value from the unpaid labour of programmers"

- Vaibhav Sagar

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"Free" Products

"If you are not paying for it, you're not the customer; you're the product being sold."

- [Andrew Lewis aka blue_beetle](#)

Loss Aversion

"Loss aversion implies that one who loses $100 will lose more satisfaction than another person will gain satisfaction from a $100 windfall."

- Wikipedia.org

"Free" vs. Paid Email

Service	Cost/year
Gmail (and similar)	$0
Fastmail	$50
ProtonMail	$48

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"Free" Abuse

[Man Allegedly Bilks E-trade, Schwab of $50,000 by Collecting Lots of Free 'Micro-Deposits'](#)

Maintainer Obligations

"There's no such thing as giving away software for free. Once you have users, time-consuming requests are inevitable. I've spent about 6 hours per week for the last 9 years just responding to requests about software I shared for free."

- Justin Searls

Maintainer Obligations (2)

"Chef (the company) was including a third-party software package that I owned. It was on my personal repository on GitHub and personal namespace on RubyGems."

"No OSI license or employment agreement requires me to continue to maintain code of my personal account(s). They are conflating code ownership (which they can argue they have) over code stewardship."

- Seth Vargo

License Limitations

"These open source projects enable any company to utilize this software on-premises or in the cloud, and build services around it."

"AWS has not copied anybody's software or services. A number of maintainers of open source projects build commercial companies around the open source project. A small set of outliers see it as a zero-sum game and want to be the only ones able to freely monetize managed services around these open source projects."

- Andi Gutmans, Vice President, AWS Analytics and ElastiCache

FOSS Project Components

- Source Code
- Patents
- Trademarks
- Communication / Social Media Accounts
- Mailing lists
- Domain Registration
- Deployment/Infrastructure Accounts
- Data and other assets not directly subject to FOSS license

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Hung Jury - https://hungjury.io

+

The Resistance

Jackbox Games

Hung Jury - Dependencies

Development Tools	Libraries	Runtime
Ubuntu Linux / WSL nvm / npm / sbt Scala / TypeScript / SASS Visual Studio Code IntelliJ IDEA Community	http4s / fs2 / cats rxjs create-react-app react	Heroku GitHub Pages Google Sheets Google Apps Script

Others Worthy of Mention

Premium offerings gratis for FOSS projects

- [Travis](#)
- [DataDog](#)
- [Snyk](#)
- [Jira](#)
- [Cloudflare](#)
- More at https://github.com/velikanov/opensource-candies

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Clarify for FOSS

- Open source is a development model
- Don't over commit

Final Thoughts

- Favor clarity over cleverness
- Repay generosity with adoption & advocacy
- Don't let others expand your meaning of free
- Call out bad-faith uses of "free"

Slides

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@MartinSnyder