

# Some History Behind the term "WOKE"

Tracing its roots back to a Black American folk and blues singer named Huddie William Ledbetter, better known by his stage name as "Lead Belly," the colloquial term "WOKE" was incorporated into a song he named "Scottsboro Boys." Lead Belly's song characterized the racist judicial system faced by the Scottsboro Boys during his visit with them as they were on trial and falsely accused of raping a White woman in the state of Alabama. As a result of Lead Belly's encounter with the young men and realizing the extraordinary adversity they had endured, he used his music to warn the broader African American populace about the White racial injustices directed at Black people across the American South. Hence the term "woke," meaning to stay alert and to be careful while traveling across the South. In modern-day times, "woke" has developed new meanings for Black people and other races that aspire to its sympathetic and positive objectives. "Woke" means to identify social and economic inequalities and to take stern actions against them. "Woke" means to take a strong stand against racism, gender biases, infringements on women's rights, biases against sexual orientation, and so forth. Despite its criticisms by the extreme political right, "woke" has always been a vernacular and term of endearment for Black people to protect their own best interests. Moreover, "woke" has now been adopted by people and activists in various parts of the world as a call to action (CTA) to carry out good deeds in their own respective communities.

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