

Zombie: 6 Lexemes

- 1. In the West Indies and Southern U.S. states, a soul-less corpse revived by witch-craft, formerly a kind of snake-deity in voodoo cults, deriving from W. Africa and Haitian creole
- Entry into English (quotes from the OED): **1819 R.**
SOUTHEY *Hist. Brazil* III. xxxi. 24 Zombi, the title whereby he [chief of Brazilian natives] was called, is the name for the Deity, in the Angolan tongue... NZambi is the word for Deity.

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- 2. A dull, apathetic, or slow-witted person (a type of semantic generalization from the first lexeme)
- So, a conversion-type derivation, the first of a series of neologisms in English based on the original lexeme, around 1936 **1957** J. BRAINE *Room at Top* i. 17 To Charles and me it was always Dead Dufton and the councillors and chief officials and anyone we didn't approve of were called zombies.

[/zombie/N]



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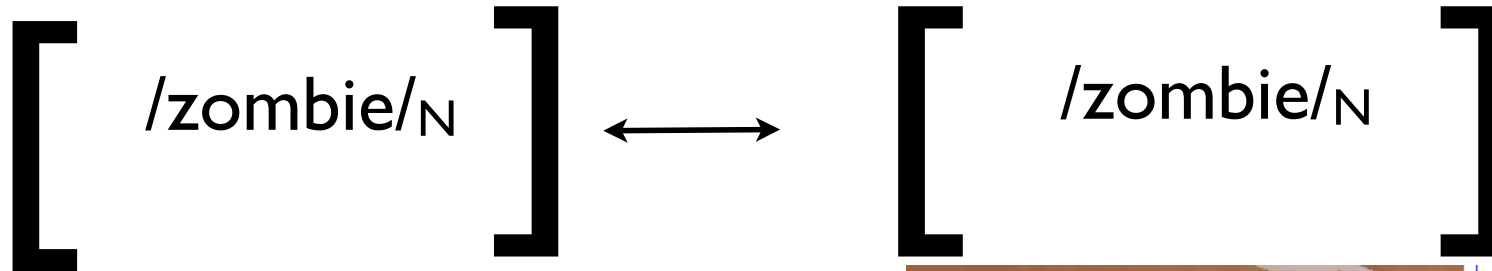


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- 3. (Canadian English) In WWII, a nickname applied to drafted soldiers who served home defense only.
- **1943** *Daily Express* 16 Sept. 4/1 The Canadian Government is reducing its 'Home Guard' army... These troops were jocularly dubbed 'Zombies', after the Voodoo cult which insists that dead men can be made to walk and act as if they were alive. **1946** [see [OLD MAN](#) 1a]. **1953** D. M. LE BOURDAIS *Nation of North* 245 The first men were drafted for service... Contemptuously referred to as 'zombies', they were never taken seriously by the military authorities.

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- 4. An alcoholic drink (rum, liquer, fruit juice)
- **1942** M. K. RAWLINGS *Cross Creek* xvii. 221 There is a passion fruit liqueur that is the primary ingredient..of that marvelous..drink, the Zombie.



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- 5. An attribute: zombie-like, zombiesque, zombified
- This is another case of derivation--a denominal adjective via suffixation or compounding

[/zombie/N]



[/zombie-like/ADJ]



do you note any resemblance?

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- 6. A computer that another person has secretly gotten control of
- Another derivation--a denominal noun, again via conversion
- **1999** *Infoworld Daily News* (Nexis) 9 Dec., The hackers are gaining control of as many as thousands of vulnerable zombie computers in order to magnify and direct their full-scale assault against a single victim from all directions.

