
There’s been a lot of talk about the separation of power between the Church and the state. The issue isn’t young either. It has been around for a while now. It came about in 19th century Britain at the same time the proposal of the disestablishment of the Church of England came about. The disestablishment would remove the Anglican Church as state Church of England, Ireland and Wales. The arguments gave birth to the longest word in the dictionary: antidisestablishmentarianism.

Let’s take a look at the word in a more technical manor. A morpheme is the smallest syntactical unit of a word. How many morphemes would antidisestablishmentarianism have? The answer is 6. “Anti-,” “dis,” “establish,” “ment,” “arian,” and “ism.” Packed with 28 letters and 12 syllables, “antidisestablishmentarianism” will be tough to beat as the longest word with a definition.

I’m Riley with the word story of antidisestablishmentarianism, here on KEOM’s Wondrous Words. If you’d like to hear this, or any of the other Wondrous Words from the past week, just log on to w-w-w dot k-e-o-m dot f-m to find our podcasts.

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