

# Vocabulary in the Law

*An introduction to English  
legal terminology*

# Alison Riley

## Lingua inglese giuridica

- Link to course textbook:
- *Legal English and the Common Law*  
(Alison Riley, Cedam, 2a edizione 2012)

Chapter 1.1.2 (pages 9-11)

# Vocabulary in the law

party

act

bill

claim

damage, damages

doctrine

Equity

find, finding

guilty

judge, judicial, judiciary

to provide, provision

Royal Assent

# Legal definitions

- Use your textbook to consult the definitions of the terms above in the slides that follow
- «**Glossary, Riley**» indicates the  
**GLOSSARY OF LAW TERMS**  
(pages 467-477)  
in your course textbook by Alison Riley:  
*Legal English and the Common Law* (2a ed. 2012)

# ACT

- ***Textbook Glossary, Riley***
- ***Act of Parliament, n. + prep. + n.*** An Act of Parliament is a statute: a law enacted by the UK legislature, the Queen in Parliament; it is primary legislation, a principal source of law that has priority over other sources/ *the Terrorism Act 2000* / legge (del Parlamento) / (Chapters 1.3, 2)

# ACT Example

- See Fixed-Term Parliaments Act 2011

[www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk)

For introduction to the Act:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/14/introduction>

OR:

In your Book, see Terrorism Act 2000 (page 16)

# BILL

«Documento, nota, certificato, titolo, fattura, conto in genere.»

«Disegno o progetto di legge in genere.»

Source:

**De Franchis**

## *Glossary, Riley*

- **Bill, n.** A Bill is a proposal of **law** presented to Parliament for discussion and approval. A Bill becomes an **Act** when it receives **Royal Assent** / *to introduce a Bill* / Disegno o progetto di legge / A **bill of rights** is a constitutional charter of human rights / the **Bill of Rights 1689** is a historic source of the British constitution / (Chapter 2)

# BILL Example

- See

[www.parliament.uk](http://www.parliament.uk) (bills and legislation)

For Referendum (European Union) Bill HL follow:  
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldbills/018/2011018.htm>

# CLAIM

## *Glossary, Riley*

- A **claim**, *n.* is a demand for a remedy to a civil court; the claim is presented in a document called a **claim form**, *n.+ n.* / *the plaintiff's claim is based on the tort of negligence, a claim for damages for personal injury* / *Attore; istanza, ricorso; cf. atto di citazione* / (Chapters 5, 5.2, 6)

# DAMAGE

**Damage, n. (singular)**

Damage indicates the loss (harm, injury) suffered as a consequence of a **tort** or **breach of contract** / *The primary function of the law of torts is to compensate victims for damage suffered / Danno/ (Chapter 5.2, 6)*

# DAMAGES

**Damages, n. (plural)**

Damages are monetary compensation that a civil **defendant** is ordered to pay to the **claimant** as reparation for **damage** caused by a **tort** or **breach of contract**. / *the claimant seeks damages for negligence / Risarcimento / (Chapters 5.2, 6)*

# DOCTRINE

«...questo termine non indica la dottrina...»

«...indica una regola giurisprudenziale, detta anche *rule*, dedotta da una serie di decisioni su una data materia.»

**De Franchis**

- **Doctrine**, *n.* A basic principle of the legal system / *the doctrine of binding precedent / the doctrine of Parliamentary sovereignty / Cf. the Italian term *dottrina* often indicates *scholarly writings/authoritative writings* by jurists (Chapters 1, 2)*
- **Glossary, Riley**

# EQUITY

«Termine ambiguo e intraducibile ... un insieme di regole giurisprudenziali che trova la sua fonte originaria nelle decisioni della Chancery Court...»

«...la dicotomia tra *common law* e *equity* è intrinseca al sistema delle fonti in qualsiasi ordinamento che si ispiri al diritto inglese...»

**De Franchis**

**Equity, n.** Equity is a special area of English law, first created by the Lord Chancellor and the Court of Chancery; it consists of rules and **remedies** that supplement the **common law**, when this is necessary for justice in a particular case / *equitable remedies are discretionary in nature* / (Chapter 5)

**Glossary, Riley**

# COMMON LAW

**Common Law**, *adj. + n.*

The common law is the body of legal rules established in decided cases, created and developed by the English superior courts; a common law legal system is one based on this body of law.

Glossary, Riley

# TO FIND, FINDING

**Finding, n. to find, vb.** A finding is a conclusion, a determination of fact or law arrived at by a judge or jury during the decision-making process / *findings of fact, the judge found that the defendant did not intend to... the accused are found not guilty and are discharged / accertamento dei fatti o del diritto / (Chapters 1.2, 2.4.2, 4, 5, 6)*

# GUILTY

**Guilty**, *adj.* opposite, **not guilty** / A person is **guilty** of a crime if he has committed it / *guilty mind, the accused pleaded not guilty, the defendant was found guilty of murder and sentenced to life imprisonment / colpevole /*  
**guilt**, *n.*, colpevolezza / (Chapter 4)



# GUILTY Example

LOS ANGELES Nov. 7, 2011

“Michael Jackson's doctor Conrad Murray **has been found guilty of** involuntary manslaughter in the death of the singer who had been proclaimed the king of pop.”

[www.abcnews.go.com](http://www.abcnews.go.com) for video from the court

- <http://abcnews.go.com/US/michael-jacksons-doctor-guilty/story?id=14880567>

# JUDGE, JUDICIAL, JUDICIARY

- **Judge, n.** A judge is a state official with power to examine and decide disputes in legal proceedings, a member of the **judiciary** / *In the adversarial system the judge is an independent umpire who decides which of the two contesting parties will win / Giudice, magistrato.*

Glossary (2012), Riley

**Judicial, a.** Of or relating to courts of law or the administration of justice or the office of a judge.

**Judiciary, n.** The judiciary is a collective term for all judges.

Glossary, *English for Law* (1991) Riley

# **Justices** of the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom **Example**



# TO PROVIDE, PROVISION

- **Provide** *vb.* To provide + for/that means to regulate by **law**, to establish a legal **provision** or **rule** / *the Scotland Act 1998 provides for changes in the constitution, the provisions of the law of contract / disporre, disciplinare, prevedere, n. disposizione / (Chapters 2, 6)*

Glossary, Riley

# ROYAL ASSENT

- **Royal Assent**, *adj.+ n.* The **Royal Assent** is the final step in the UK legislative procedure; it indicates the formal assent (*assenso*, *consenso*) of the British monarch to a proposal of law: the Royal Assent transforms a bill into an Act / *Acts generally come into force on the day of Royal Assent* / Non equivale alla *promulgazione* (promulgation, *vb.* to promulgate), not part of UK legislative procedure (Chapter 2.2

Riley, Glossary

# ROYAL ASSENT Example

[www.parliament.uk](http://www.parliament.uk)



## ***Further study using your textbook***

- 1.1.2 Vocabulary in the Law: dictionary use and examples in context (pages 9-11)
- 1.2 Reading, vocabulary and context: *Long Walk to Freedom* (pages 12-14)
- Begin your Personal Terminology System for the course (page 14)