

MAVERICK:

Originally a maverick was an unbranded cow; it later came to refer to anyone who kept himself or herself apart from the herd – an individualist. The word maverick is of eponymous origin, coming from the name of Texas lawyer Samuel A Maverick. In 1845 he reluctantly became a rancher when he acquired a herd of cattle in payment for a debt. He was too involved in other activities to pay much attention to ranching. In 1855 he sold his ranch to a man named Beauregard, and the contract specifically included all unbranded cattle on the property – it seems Mr Maverick's hired hands had been as careless as their boss. Thus Beauregard's cowboys claimed every unbranded animal they came across as a maverick. However, all the neighbouring ranchers did the same, and pretty soon every unbranded animal in the west was called a maverick. From this the word was quickly extended to every non-conformist man or woman who stood out from the herd.

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