Perpetrate vs. Perpetuate

Because of their similar spellings and pronounciations, the words perpetrate and perpetuate often get mixed up by writers despite having different definitions and uses. This post will try to help you identify these differences in order to use these terms properly.

The word perpetrate is used as a verb meaning "to bring about or carry out something, such as a crime or deception" or "to produce, perform, or execute something likened to a crime." Among its conjugations are perpetrates, perpetrated, and perpetrating.

Utilities Knew About Climate Change In 1968 and Perpetrated An 'Ongoing Deception,' Report Says
The Weather Channel

Cyber bullying: easy to perpetrate, hard to stop
Sydney Morning Herald

Media allowed Theranos to perpetrate a 'scam': Sam Waksal
CNBC

On the other hand, the term perpetuate is used as a verb meaning "to make something, typically an undesirable situation or an unfounded belief, continue indefinitely" but may also mean "to preserve something valued from oblivion or extinction." Its conjugations include perpetuates, perpetuated, and perpetuating.

How sexist Hong Kong adverts perpetuate gender stereotypes...
South China Morning Post

Jacob Lacey's commitment helps perpetuate Notre Dame's surge in defensive line recruiting
Notre Dame Insider

Evictions perpetuate Baltimore's cycle of poverty
Baltimore Sun

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Now that you have learned about the differences between the words perpetrate and perpetuate you will be able to use them properly in your writing and avoid mixing them up. Remember that some criminals perpetrate terrorist attacks while other people perpetuate these acts by promoting hatred among different races and gender.