

The Backlash

A Column for the Politically Incorrect

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SPEAKING "POLITICAL CORRECTESE"

Much confusion has occurred in the reading of our articles because of many complex terms that are used by the politically correct (e.g., ethnocentrism). This is understandable, nobody said the politically correct were coherent. The purpose of this article is to present definitions of some of these terms as given by the politically correct. They come from a glossary of terms distributed by Smith College (Massachusetts) for "orientation workshops" and from the Dictionary of Cautionary Words and Phrases (1989) which was distributed to several newspapers throughout the United States with the intent of promoting "politically correct journalism."

From Smith College Ableism: oppression of the differently abled by the temporarily abled.

Ageism: oppression of the young and the old by young adults and the middle-aged, in the belief that others are unable to take care of themselves.

Classism: oppression of the working and non-propertied classes by the upper and middle classes.

Ethnocentrism: oppression of cultures other than the dominant one in the belief that the dominant way of doing things is the superior way.

Heterosexism: oppression of those of a sexual orientation other than heterosexual.

Lookism: the belief that appearance is an indicator of a person's value; the construction of a standard for beauty/attractiveness; and oppression through stereotypes and generalizations of both those who do not fit that standard and those who do.

Nontraditional-Age Student: a person whose traditional undergraduate education was interrupted and who has made the decision to return and complete it.

Racism: the belief that one group of people are superior to another and therefore have the right to dominate.

Sexism: stereotyping of males and females on the basis of their gender; the oppression of women by society in the belief that gender is an indication of ability. [If anyone feels that we have committed any of these ism's in any of the "Backlash" columns, please write in and show how we did it.]

from Dictionary of Cautionary Words and Phrases

Barracuda: A negative generalization of persons without morals and/or ethical standards or judgments. Many times directed at forceful women. Do not use.

Beauty: Avoid descriptive terms of beauty when absolutely necessary. For instance, do not use "blond and blue-eyed" unless you would also use "brown-haired and brown-eyed" as a measure of attractiveness.

Beefcake: Objectionable when referring to male physical attractiveness.

Buxom: Offensive reference to a women's chest. Do not use. See "Woman."

Codger: Offensive reference to a senior citizen. See "Senior Citizens."

Coot: Offensive reference to senior citizen. See "Senior Citizens."

Dear: A term of endearment offensive to some. Usage such as "He was a dear man" or "She is a dear" should be avoided.

Dutch treat: To share the cost, as in a date. Implies that Dutch people are cheap.

Geezer: An objectionable reference to a senior citizen. Avoid using. See "Senior Citizens."

Illegal Alien: Often used to refer to Mexicans and Latin Americans believed to be in the United States without visas; the preferred term is undocumented worker or undocumented resident.

Impotent: A clinical term referring to male sexual dysfunction. Not proper when used to stereotype or characterize males.

Ivan: A common and offensive substitute for a Soviet person.