

The Sporting Spirit by George Orwell

In The Sporting Spirit by George Orwell we have the theme of pride, nationalism, jealousy, hatred and passion. Taken from his Shooting an Elephant collection the reader realises after reading the essay that Orwell may be exploring the theme of pride and nationalism. Orwell argues that the sport played by either side may not necessarily be of the utmost importance. Be it football, boxing or cricket. The driving factor is not to be beaten by another nationality as by doing so one may lose face. It is also possible that Orwell is suggesting that sport is taken far too seriously. Particularly in urban areas where individuals may not have an outlet for their energies. The fact that the Arsenal team is mentioned by the Russians as being an all-England team is also interesting as it highlights for the reader the fact that Arsenal do not wish to be beaten by a foreign team. Hence using the best player's available to them from other teams. Likewise it is as though the element of fun has been taken out of playing sport with those who attend sporting events trying their best to disrupt the opposition.

Orwell also argues that there is an element of savagery among those who attend sporting events. Something which some critics might suggest is an example of excessive pride for one's own team. The Olympic Games held in Germany in 1936 are also placed under a spotlight by Orwell. With many historians looking upon the Games as being a propaganda event for Hitler and Nazism in general. Again the fun that one may have playing football or any other sport on the local green is no longer. Orwell also suggests that sport has become a big business and as such the owners of teams dictate what happens. Again no longer is sport seen as being a fun thing to participate in. Those who play football for example are mere pawns of the owners of the football club. As too are the fans who pay the ticket price to watch the game. Orwell's introduction of boxing as an example to back up his point is also significant as he views those who box against someone of a different colour as being purveyors of white supremacy. When a white boxer wins. It proves in their eyes that the white race is far superior to the black race. Boxing in particular appears to bring out jealousy and hatred among those who watch it.

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It may also be a case that Orwell is suggesting that individuals have misplaced loyalty or pride to their teams or favourite sportsmen. They are after all only playing a game. Even if that game is taken very seriously by all concerned. In Orwell's world it is better to put the fun back in sport and not have the emotional involvement that comes at sporting events. To not be concerned about who should win or who should lose or what the meaning of winning might be for those at the event. The motivation being to not lose face to a foreign team as there is a matter of national pride at stake. In some people's eyes it is better to cheat and win than lose with dignity. People don't remember who came second or who lost. In life it is only the winners who are remembered and who have bragging rights for the time being.

EUPHEMISM

A Euphemism is a polite inoffensive expression, words or phrases replaced for one considered offensive or hurtful that contrarily might be considered bitter, blunt or unpleasant to hear. In short, the term euphemism refers to courteous, unintended expression which is the substitution of an agreeable or inoffensive expression that replaces words and phrases considered harsh and disrespectful or which suggest something unpleasant.

Possibly there is no other word in English for which there are more euphemisms than for the verb "to die." When someone dies, we say he passed away, passed on or simply passed, he is in a better place now, gone on to his heavenly reward or as the doctor may have said just as the patient breathed his last breath.

Few examples:

Collateral damage instead of accidental deaths
Use the rest room instead of go to the bathroom
Between jobs instead of unemployed
Domestic engineer instead of maid

Types of Euphemisms

To Soften an Expression - Some euphemisms are used to make a blunt or obnoxious truth seem less hard.

Examples:

Differently abled instead of handicapped or disabled
Relocation center instead of prison camp
Letting someone go instead of firing someone
On the streets instead of homeless

Euphemisms to be Polite - Some euphemisms are used to take the place of words or phrases one might not want to say in polite circle.

Examples:

Adult beverages instead of beer or liquor
Big-boned instead of heavy or overweight
Vertically-challenged instead of short
Economical with the truth instead of liar
Between jobs instead of unemployed

Euphemisms to be Impolite - Euphemisms are intentionally a callous or insensitive way of saying something. These euphemisms are usually used when being sarcastic or trying to make light of a serious subject or make it seem less serious.

Examples:

Bit the dust instead of died
Blow chunks instead of vomited
Bit the farm instead of died

Retarded - mentally challenged
 Blind - visually challenged
 Crippled - differently abled
 Bald - follicularly challenged
 Poor - economically marginalized
 Fat - gravitationally challenged, overweight
 Lazy - motivationally deficient
 Beggar - panhandler, homeless person
 Coffin - casket
 Old age - golden age, golden years
 Confinement - detention
 Lawyer - attorney
 Sick - indisposed, ill, under the weather

Common Euphemisms in English

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Deaf, or hard of hearing | Aurally Challenged |
| • Fat | Horizontally challenged |
| • Short | Vertically challenged |
| • Stupid | Intellectually challenged |
| • Mentally ill | Mentally challenged |
| • Someone with disability | Differently abled |
| • Totally deaf | Hearing impaired |
| • Blind | Visually impaired |
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- **A Little Thin On Top** – it refers to baldness
 - **Categorical Inaccuracy**- instead of calling someone liar
 - **Correctional facility**- instead of prison
 - **Economical with the truth**- instead of liar
 - **Lost his marbles**- instead of suffer from mental illness
 - **Over the hill**- used for describing someone who is old
 - **Donning the fedora**- means stepping out of your fashion comfort zone
 - **Cloning the mammoth**- means making futile and risky efforts
 - **Sharing a blintz**- means sharing a mutually meaningful and enjoyable activity
 - **Staying on the tractor**- means enjoying your retired life
 - **Hand over the coals**- means to wait for longer period before complaining about the problem
 - **Joining the Vikings**- means making one last push in your career
 - **Fallen off the back of a lorry**- (Stolen)
 - **Lose your lunch**- (Vomit)
 - **Tired and over emotional**- (Drunk)

Euphemisms for "death"

- **Angels carried him away**
- **Bit the dust**

- **Breathed his last**
- **Called to Our Lord**
- **Cashed in his chips**
- **Climbed the stairway to heaven**
- **Debt we all must pay**
- **Deceased**
- **Deep Six**
- **Departed**
- **Entered eternal rest**
- **Faded away**
- **Flatlined**
- **He is in a better place**
- **He is no more**
- **Kicked the bucket**
- **Laid down his life**
- **He met an untimely end**
- **He met his maker**
- **Passed away**
- **Pass on**
- **He is resting in peace**
- **Succumbed to his injuries**
- **Turn to dust**
- **Went to the Happy Hunting Grounds**
- **Wearing a toe tag**

Interesting Euphemisms for “Idiot”

- **A beer short of a six pack**
- **A brick short of a load**
- **A few sandwiches short of a picnic**
- **All brawn and no brains**
- **Dumb as a door knob**
- **Dumb as a stump**
- **Dumber than a bag of rocks**
- **Dumber than a box of hair**
- **Elevator don't quiet make the top floor**
- **He's got a leak in his think-tank**
- **Isn't firing on all thrusters**
- **Infinite space between his ears**
- **Informationally deprived**
- **Intellectually challenged**
- **Landing on one engine**
- **Left hand threaded**
- **Lights not burning too bright**
- **Not the sharpest pencil in the box**
- **Not the sharpest tool in the shed**
- **One turbine short of an airplane**

- **Running about a quart low**
- **Running on empty**
- **Sharp as a bowling ball**
- **Silly sausage**
- **Strong like bear, smart like tractor**
- **The lights are on, but nobody is home.**
- **The wheel's spinning, but the hamster's dead**
- **Too dumb to pull his head in before he shuts the window**
- **Too many yards between the goal posts**

Euphemism in sentences:

He is always tired and emotional (drunk).

He is a special child (disabled or retarded).

You are becoming a little thin on top (bald).

Our teacher is in the family way (pregnant).

We do not hire mentally challenged (stupid) people.

Sam isn't buying a used car, he is purchasing a pre-enjoyed or pre-loved vehicle.

Dian's supervisor laid him off because he was unmotivated.

Politicians don't commit crimes, they make mistakes.

Defining inclusive language

When we define inclusive language, we aim for communication that avoids using words, expressions or assumptions that would unnecessarily exclude people. For the past few decades, there's been an increased awareness of language that excludes on the basis of gender. Whereas past generations may have been taught to use "he" as the default for a person, the latter half of the 20th century saw people looking to alternate "he" and "she" or to re-write to avoid identifying gender at all. More recently, there's been more awareness of a spectrum of gender identities and gender expression.

A definition of inclusive language, though, goes beyond merely gender. With inclusive language, we aim for communication that includes people, regardless of gender, language, culture, religion, race, ability, family structure, marital status, sexuality, origin and so on.

Quick examples of inclusive language

Sometimes, simply changing one word for another can make the difference between inclusive and exclusive language. Examples: "It is man vs the environment" can just as easily be "It is humans vs the environment". Or "We come in peace for all mankind" would likely now be "We come in peace for all humankind", although humans or humanity could also be used. Similarly, using words such as "server" instead of "waiter" and "waitress" can avoid needless use of gender. Saying "parent" instead of "mom" may also help include more parents and family structures. But, as we note, gender inclusive examples are just one category of inclusive language.

Why use inclusive language?

Have you ever been worried you're using outdated words to describe people and groups? Are you concerned that it may impact your client and professional relationships, as well as your personal ones? Keeping up with inclusive language can sometimes feel like you're running on a hamster wheel towards something you'll never quite reach. Thankfully, we have some examples below that will help you approach the problem with a better understanding of why word choices are so critical to those relationships.

Inclusive language, sometimes disparaged as 'political correctness', is actually an attempt to address imbalance in written and spoken language. Instead of assuming your audience is all the same, inclusive language allows you to actively embrace diversity and the intersection of identities, and to avoid assumptions that could harm relationships before they even start.

Inclusive language is language that shows sensitivity, respect and open-mindedness toward individuals and groups through positive, accurate, equitable representation.

Examples of inclusive language

As awareness and education grow, some terms fall out of favour while others are revealed and/or recognized as offensive, exclusive, disrespectful, or privileged. Below are some examples of out of date language and how to navigate using more current inclusive language examples to make your clients, colleagues and friends feel included and welcome.

1. It's Man vs. The Environment

Better: Humans vs. The Environment

Why: This is a pretty straightforward one that is an easy shift to make. Sometimes, simply changing one word for another more encompassing one can make the difference between inclusive and exclusive language.

2. Waiter or Waitress

Better: Server

Why: Gendering a job needlessly is both unnecessary and cumbersome. Think police officer, mail carrier, chair – describe the work, not the gender.

4. Mom or Dad

Better: Parent, guardian or caregiver

Why: This list of terms helps to include more family structures such as grandparents as caregivers, same-sex parents, foster parents, etc.

2. We are all immigrants

Better: This country includes people from diverse backgrounds, heritages and experiences.

Why: Indigenous people did not immigrate. Also, some people were moved to countries through implied or direct force, threats, or non-voluntary means, such as kidnapping and slavery, taking refuge from a war in their home country, etc.

5 Okay boys and girls, gather your things!

Better: folks, everyone, children

Why: For the past few decades, there's been an increased awareness of language that excludes on the basis of gender. Whereas past generations may have been taught to use "he" as the default for a person, the latter half of the 20th century saw people looking to alternate "he" and "she" or to re-write to avoid identifying gender at all. More recently, there's been increased awareness of a spectrum of gender identities and gender expression. For example, resources like SOGI 123 are being used in BC and Alberta schools to promote student safety and inclusion. By avoiding use of the binary, you are including all people in your class.

6. On the warpath

Better: Angry and seeking retribution

Why: This language can demean Indigenous peoples and reinforce stereotypes. To quote Les Couchie of the Nipissing First Nation:

"This gave the public the idea that we were nothing more than a hostile and uncompromising warring people who always sought resolution through violent methods."

7. The elderly

Better: People who have trouble walking a short distance. Persons with dementia. Persons on fixed incomes.

Why: Be more specific. Focusing on the need avoids assuming that all people from an age group are as described. Not all people over 65 have dementia, for example.

8. Autistic person/Person with autism

One important thing to realize is that there is only one hard and fast rule around inclusive language. When in doubt about correct usage, the best course of action is always to ask the individual about their preference.

The two phrases above are examples of Identity-First and Person-First language. Tracy and I know many people with autism (including Tracy), and several of them prefer to be described as autistic people. Imagine the challenge we felt in crafting the previous sentence!

Person-first language was adopted to honour individuals as being more than the othering language that describes one of the identities that belong to them, such as disability or gender orientation. It was considered dehumanizing to put identity first, as it was seen as erasure of the individual.

More recently, Identity-first language has seen people reclaiming their identity by self-describing as belonging to a particular group. Rather than accept that words like disability are inherently negative, they want to reclaim them as simply an identity that is a positive part of their being, and a matter of pride to identify as such