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# Newspeak

You may remember this word from when you read Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. It is an altered form of regular English designed and controlled by the state in order to suppress free thought, individualism, and happiness. Those who do not adhere or use Newspeak are guilty of **thoughtcrime**. Thoughtcrime describes a person’s politically unorthodox thoughts. Other Newspeak words are **crimethink** and **wrongthink** which together with thoughtcrime describe the intellectual actions of a person who entertains and holds politically unacceptable thoughts.

In our real world there is a similar concept and it is called being **politically correct**, often referred to as PC. It is the use of a word deemed to be politically incorrect, exactly the same definition of crimething and wrongthink. Whether proponents and adherers of PC do not realize is that this is a form of Newspeak because it does suppress free thought and free speech, which in turn suppresses individualism because they are more worried about what others think as opposed to what the actual original meaning of a word is. I personally think that PC, being politically correct, is exactly like Newspeak.

There are numerous examples in both English and Japanese, probably in any language where these days there are people who condemn the use of certain words and expressions which not too long ago were accepted, because now those words and expressions are deemed inappropriate or worse. The first such word that comes to my mind is the word **homeless**. It used to mean someone who lost their home, such as because of a disaster; not because they decided to just walk away and live on the streets. Today homeless is used to describe **vagrants** and **bums**; individuals who choose not to maintain a home but to live instead on the streets. True, they are “without a home”, but as a result of choices made by them to live that way.

It seems a pity to me that words with perfectly clear meanings are being denounced and replaced with words that are deemed more acceptable. By whom? Who are these arbiters of “proper speech”, of being “politically correct” in speech and thought? Whoever they are, I have no respect for them because they are no better than those in Orwell’s dystopia who promote Newspeak.