

## Did you mean “throw the baby out with the Bathwater”?

It was the first of the early morning reprieves from the stifling temperatures we all endured in mid July. The dogs and I spent a half an hour walking around the place basking in the refreshing 55 degrees. Now I was doing the commute from my foothill paradise to Watt and 80 when I heard Getty of “Armstrong and Getty” (like they need my plug), say, “I remember when I used to go to Borders and sit and read books for an hour or two cause I didn’t have air conditioning in my apartment. That’s when I was in college and I was ‘poor’”.

It was another of those words that make visuals swirl in my mind and force me to talk out loud. ‘Poor’? Give me a break! You were just broke! Hell, we all know what that feels like, but please don’t use trigger words to exaggerate reality. I didn’t imagine desperation in your life. Did you see no future in your life? I’ve been broke all over the place, but I never, ever considered myself poor. Mom and I, (mom’s 89 but I tell everyone she’s 90 just to tick her off) were just reminiscing about my childhood the other day, again saying how thankful she was that my grandmother had helped raise me, which allowed her to work. We laughed and laughed when I jokingly brought up the word ‘allowance’. Dude!, the only new clothes for school each fall were the clothes I bought with money from my part time jobs. If it weren’t for George Chan, a family friend, who gifted me his fishing car, (a 39 Chevy coupe) back in 60’s, I would have been walking till I was drafted. And I still say I wasn’t poor. I was just broke. Think about how other words get foisted upon you to truly depict other than reality.

No, let’s go a step further and talk about valuable words that have been discarded. (maybe with the best of intentions, but discarded) Start with words like discrimination and prejudice. Why did we reach the point where just the thought of using one of those words causes many to pause and try to not think it. For the sake of past indiscretions, discarding words in entirety makes for vast social changes, and not necessarily all good ones. How can we dare to invalidate the ability to discriminate between right and wrong , or deem prejudice for good over bad to be unimportant.

I really love the way ‘respect ‘ entered this arena. I’m sure you’ve heard ad infinitum “everybody deserves respect”. Sorry Tex, you’re wrong. Some people deserve no respect! And the only reason they continue to thrive is that others have allowed themselves to be trod upon without reaction for fear they would be deemed politically wrong.

So this is why I value English and attempt to be grammatically understood. (Note I don't say grammatically correct, just understood) Words are communication. I'm privileged to have become a dinosaur, and the things I've learned must be conveyed in order for my world to exist. I'm not one of those that accepts that history repeats itself. That only happens when we choose to forget.

If you honestly stand for something, you don't allow the ability to convey that to others to be tread upon. Don't be afraid to use some of those old 'throwaway' words to let people know who you are and where you stand. It forces others to understand you better, and trust me, they need to know what's on our minds. ("They" being the qualified experts of course!) Standing for something means much less when you can't communicate it, and being forced to use a language that doesn't truly express your passion because of its slang inspired evolution won't let anyone know who you are. And I want to know who you are!

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