

Weird and Funny Words

Hank Malone

It is a good time in American history to go back to roots, to “get down,” to forget speeches and lectures and concentrate on The Word.

The smallest practical unit of language is the word. Music is beyond language.

Without the word you can't make a political speech. Without the word you can't have nauseating ideological wars. Without the word you have to touch each other. Without the word you can't quite call yourself human. Without the word we would all probably be happier, but less “human.” So who wants to be human if you can be happier being something else?

What does it mean to be “human?” Does “human” mean anything at all, or is it just part of the great game of words that seems to muddle everything, that becomes part of a Speech that ends in the subtle plotting of someone's Death?

Maybe “humanity” is a hype, a bloody fang-mouthed deception and flattery. Being “human” is supposed to mean that talking bipeds are something special in the living Universe. Do you believe it? Is it all a vast chemical accident? Maybe nothing in words is true. Maybe human language is a game of weird evolutionary self-consolation and vanity, a veneer that barely prevents some of us from eating one another on the way to Death.

What would the human world be like without words?

Few of us ask many questions about words. Words seem to lead us toward so many dead-ends. Everybody seems to prefer the consoling “music” of propaganda, the “melodies” of rhetoric, the wild emotion of the “rap.” Everyone wants words that make them feel good and that make them “do something,” like liberate a country, or hang someone.

The words has not suddenly become more imprecise; it has become definitively irrelevant. No one any longer listens for the sharply-defined outlines of a reason or a plan. People seek pleasure in the tongue itself; the actual palate, the pharynx, the windpipe, the esophagus, and the stream of militant personality.

Communication is now a kind of militant musical form where everyone and everything is reduced to simple categories: friend or foe, oppressor or victim, winner or loser. Words have been “liberated” by mind-clearing politics.

Words now enable us to make machines that take us to other planetary bodies, but do words have anything to do with human satisfactions? It doesn't seem so.

Words seem to make life complicated, at least “big words” do. Who needs it, fuck words...right?

Let's reduce the language to about 30 words, maybe less. Here is the new English language: “What's happening?”, “nothing man,” “groovy,” “beautiful,” “kill that motherfucker!”...“Pig bastard fascist cocksucker,” “workers and students,” “freeky,” “wow, outta sight!”, “got some dope?”, “yeah,” “thanx,” “I love you baby,” “Let's fuck here in the street,” “what's to eat,” “later.” By eliminating all the other words life will probably become much simpler, less complicated and happier, right?

Here are some words I found in Webster's New World Dictionary that we could eliminate right away, first thing, but hear them before you destroy them. There's humor and wonder in some of these words.

ADIPOCENE—a fatty or waxy substance produced in decomposing dead bodies exposed to moisture.

BLEB—sound produced in forming a bubble with the lips.

CALLIPYGIAN—having shapely buttocks.
DING-BAT—a stone, stick, or other object suitable for throwing.
COMPREMIA—blood poisoning resulting from the absorption of fecal matter.
AESTIVATE—to spend the summer in a dormant condition.
CASTOREUM—a strong-smelling, oily substance obtained from the sexual glands of a beaver, used as a stimulant.
BARBER'S ITCH—an infectious inflammation of the hair follicles of the face and neck, so-called because it can be contracted in unsanitary barbershops.
BEESTING—the first milk of a cow after having a calf.
BLINKARD—a person who chronically blinks his eyes.
BUBO—an inflamed swelling of the armpit or groin.
BLUNGER—a person who blunges, who mixes clay with water.
DISEMBOSOM—to reveal, as in revealing a secret; to unbosom oneself.
BOYCOTT—Captain Boycott, land agent ostracized by his neighbors during the Land League agitation in Ireland in 1880.
COPROLITE—fossilized excrement of animals.
DOODLE-BUG—from the notion that it emerges from the ground when one calls “doodle,” the larva of the lion ant.
COSMOLINE—a heavy grease used in most cosmetics and especially as a protective coating for military firearms.
DEFENESTRATION—a throwing or being thrown out of a window.
DEFLUXION—a flow or discharge, as from the nose.
COOEE—a long shrill call made by Australian aborigines and Bushmen to attract attention.
DEVIL'S TATTOO—a drumming; the reference may be to the feet of a hanged person.
DICK TEST—named after an American physician who devised it, a skin test for determining susceptibility or immunity to scarlet fever.

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