DEGENDRIFICATION OF MODERN ENGLISH

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One of the most important developments in the recent history of the English language has been the widespread elimination of the sexist suffix -man and its replacement with the sex-neutral suffix -person. Words such as chairman, mailman, milkman, German, and Doberman have been increasingly replaced in common usage by such substitutes, respectively, as chairperson, mailperson, milkperson, Gerperson, and Doberperson, in an attempt to minimize offensive sexual connotation. This phenomenon has spread so generally throughout the language that it is now possible to discern the beginnings of a new stage of development in which the sexist connotations of -person itself have been recognized and attempts made to deal with it. This suffix, after all, contains the gender-biased syllable -son, which is certainly as deserving of replacement as was -man. Some speakers began, for a time, to replace this syllable with -child, but this was soon recognized by the politically sophisticated as being ageist, though whether it was anti-youth or anti-elder was never definitively determined. Finally, offspring gained acceptance as a more appropriate substitute. We thus see such words as chairpersonoffspring, mailpersonoffspring, milkpersonoffspring, Gerpersonoffspring, and Doberpersonoffspring being used increasingly in the everyday vernacular, thereby entirely eliminating offensive sexual connotation and making the language easier to use and more pleasant to the ear.

One consequence of this development has been that the word humanity, which used to be viewed as a sex-neutral substitute for mankind, has had to be replaced, first with hupersonity, and then more recently with huperoffspringity, with the result that human, the generic term for a member of our species, has been replaced with huperoffspring. This, ironically, brings English back to its original Greek roots, huperoffspring being a direct derivative of πεπετωτία, meaning "confident in arms, hence overweening, arrogant," and is thus fully synonymous with the English huperoffspring, which we saw above to be the correct scientific name for a member of our species.

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Having thus purged our language of offensive sex-biased terms, we have also set the stage for the next development in the evolution of the species itself, namely the emergence of the hupermensch as predicted so prophetically by Nietzsche. However, this term also contains a sexist syllable, namely -men-, and so must be corrected accordingly. Fortunately, since men is plural, we can replace it directly with people. We thus skip the stage of development in which -person replaces -man, thereby obviating the need for -offspring. This gives us huperpeoplesch as the scientifically correct and unbiased name for the next stage of biological evolution, which we, having just obviated the need for offspring, will not be around to see.


2. Gerbil, an informal variant of gerwilliam, "a small rodent related to the rat," has been successfully neutered by replacement with gerpat, a sex-neutral variant of either gerpatrick, "a former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations," or gerpatricia, "a feminine variant thereof."


QUERY

George H. Scheetz, currently working on an article on words ending in -CRY, asks whether anyone can come up with a reference in print prior to 1975 of the well-known puzzle asking which three English words end in -CRY.