   Annotations on A Modest Proposal for Acceptable Terminology with Git
           draft-wood-term-modest-proposal-annotations-00

Abstract

   This document provides annotations on "A Modest Proposal for
   Acceptable Terminology with Git", particularly noting relevant quotes
   from, and references to, the works and life of George Orwell.

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1. Introduction to Annotations and to A Modest Proposal

Notes on "A Modest Proposal for Acceptable Terminology with Git"
[MODEST] are given here. Quotes from original texts are given in
approximately the same positions as the text alluding to them in that
document. Quotes without a source, particularly those citing Part
and Chapter, are from George Orwell's "Nineteen Eighty-Four: A Novel"
("1984") [NOV].

[MODEST] is published on the first of April, April Fools' Day, a
traditional time for the IETF to issue jests to reassure itself that
it still possesses something akin to a sense of humour. Using the
title _A Modest Proposal_ to warn of impending satire is a
longstanding tradition that began with the title of Jonathan Swift's
cookery recipes [SWIFT].

The very interested reader can consult many useful Wikipedia pages.

The Umbrella Corporation is the ultimate cause of all events in the
Resident Evil franchise. Not to be confused with the Umbrella
Academy, the ultimate cause of all events in that other franchise.

2. Discouraged Terminology

To understand recursion, you must first understand recursion.

3. Constraining Use of Undesirable Terminology

'git' is an insult in British variants of English, not used in polite
language. That it is now the name of a software tool used for
maintaining the Linux kernel is perhaps unsurprising, given Linus
Torvalds' creation of git as a result of displeasure with the actions
of Andrew Tridgell [GIT]. The choice of name may suggest that git
was never intended for widespread use, or for marketing broadly in
git-based cloud services such as GitHub.

4. Replacing Use of Unwanted Terminology

George Orwell's "Nineteen Eighty-Four" is concerned with controlling
human behaviour and with revising and rewriting the past, and with
changing language to achieve those ends. And with committees.

P3S6 _He had won the victory over himself._ -- the penultimate
sentence. Victory Mansions. Victory Square. Victory Gin. Victory
coffee. Victory cigarettes. Victory is entirely on-brand. Winning!

5. Beyond Legacy Terminology

"Thought leadership" is not an Orwellian term.

Aldous Huxley wrote "Brave New World". He also taught Eric Blair
French at Eton. Blair went on to teach in Hayes and in Uxbridge.
Later, Huxley wrote to Blair on which of the fictions of "Brave New
World" or "Nineteen Eighty-Four" he thought was more dystopian and as
likely to come to pass -- his own [HUX].

Eton has also moulded twenty British prime ministers, including the
current incumbent of the office. Those twenty men all went on to
create and rule their own actual real dystopias, showing, as ever,
that those who can't do, teach.

P3C2 _But I tell you, Winston, that reality is not external. Reality
exists in the human mind, and nowhere else._ -- O'Brien.

_One cannot change this all in a moment, but one can at least change
one's own habits, and from time to time one can even, if one jeers
loudly enough, send some worn-out and useless phrase -- some
jackboot, Achilles' heel, hotbed, melting pot, acid test, veritable
inferno or other lump of verbal refuse -- into the dustbin where it
belongs._ [ENG]

ALL ANIMALS ARE EQUAL BUT SOME ANIMALS ARE MORE EQUAL THAN OTHERS
Chapter X [FARM].

_After much thought Snowball declared that the Seven Commandments
could in effect be reduced to a single maxim, namely: "Four legs
good, two legs bad."_ Chapter III [FARM].

_Dying metaphors [..] there is a huge dump of worn-out metaphors
which have lost all evocative power and are merely used because they
save people the trouble of inventing phrases for themselves._ [ENG].

_TCP implementations should follow a general principle of robustness:
be conservative in what you do, be liberal in what you accept from
others._ Postel's Principle is now over forty years old, and ready
for an update in reworked language appropriate for modern society.

Don't think of an elephant [THINK]. Good cognitive linguistics.

S1C5 _'What I had really intended to say was that in your article I
noticed you had used two words which have become obsolete. But they
have only become so very recently. Have you seen the tenth edition
of the Newspeak Dictionary?'_ -- O'Brien.

P1C1 _The voice came from an oblong metal plaque like a dulled mirror
which formed part of the surface of the right-hand wall. Winston
turned a switch and the voice sank somewhat, though the words were
still distinguishable. The instrument (the telescreen, it was
called) could be dimmed, but there was no way of shutting it off
completely._ Today, we are must attend and appear engaged in video
conference calls. Your camera is off? What are you hiding?

P2C3 _'She was -- do you know the Newspeak word GOODTHINKFUL?
Meaning naturally orthodox, incapable of thinking a bad thought?'_ --
Winston Smith.

6. Supporting the IETF

P1C2 _Down in the street the wind flapped the torn poster to and fro,
and the word INGSOC fitfully appeared and vanished. Ingsoc. The
sacred principles of Ingsoc._

P1C1 _BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU_ As are Facebook, Google...

7. A Picture of the Future

P3C3 _'If you want a picture of the future, imagine a boot stamping
on a human face -- for ever.'_ -- O'Brien.

_Thus, for example, UNCOLD meant 'warm', while PLUSCOLD and
DOUBLEPLUSCOLD meant, respectively, 'very cold' and 'superlatively
cold'._ Appendix, The Principles of Newspeak.

P1C4 _times 3.12.83 reporting bb dayorder doubleplusungood refs
unpersons rewrite fullwise upsub antefiling_

"++ungood;" is a pun on doubleplusungood for programmers, coined in
2002 by Lloyd Wood and produced as a well-received T-shirt by Dave
Green of the Need To Know newsletter. That shirt has been sported by
computing luminaries, including Guido van Rossum and Aaron Swartz,
and has appeared at IETF meetings [SHIRT]. Francis Spufford read the
shirt, and coined the simpler _Plus Plus Ungood_ -- a new phrase for
a newer Newspeak. The rise of emoji was not anticipated.

P1C1 _The Thought Police would get him just the same. He had
committed -- would still have committed, even if he had never set pen
to paper -- the essential crime that contained all others in itself.
Thoughtcrime, they called it. Thoughtcrime was not a thing that
could be concealed for ever. You might dodge successfully for a
while, even for years, but sooner or later they were bound to get
you._ Rather like celebrity journalists, really.

P2C5 _During the Two Minutes Hate she always excelled all others in
shouting insults at Goldstein. Yet she had only the dimmest idea of
who Goldstein was and what doctrines he was supposed to represent._

P1C4 _When one knew that any document was due for destruction, or
even when one saw a scrap of waste paper lying about, it was an
automatic action to lift the flap of the nearest memory hole and drop
it in_

embrace, extend and extinguish -- Wikipedia summarizes Microsoft's
corporate strategy on standards and their convictions.

P1C3 _The past, he reflected, had not merely been altered, it had
been actually destroyed._

P1C5 _'It's a beautiful thing, the destruction of words.'_ -- Syme.

P3C2 _'We do not merely destroy our enemies, we change them. Do you
understand what I mean by that?'_ -- O'Brien.

P1C4 _The messages he had received referred to articles or news items
which for one reason or another it was thought necessary to alter,
or, as the official phrase had it, to rectify._

P1C1 _IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH_

P3C4 _If you want to keep a secret, you must also hide it from
yourself._

"Your Garden Made Perfect" (BBC Two) is a television programme that
uses virtual reality for its ideal purpose of reimagining back yards.

P1C8 _Statues, inscriptions, memorial stones, the names of streets --
anything that might throw light upon the past had been systematically
altered._

P2C5 _'Already we know almost literally nothing about the Revolution
and the years before the Revolution. Every record has been destroyed
or falsified, every book has been rewritten, every picture has been
repainted, every statue and street and building has been renamed,
every date has been altered. And that process is continuing day by
day and minute by minute. History has stopped. Nothing exists
except an endless present in which the Party is always right.'_ --
Winston Smith.

P3C3 _'Power is in tearing human minds to pieces and putting them
together again in new shapes of your own choosing.'_ -- O'Brien.

P1C1 _[Newspeak was the official language of Oceania. For an account
of its structure and etymology see Appendix.]_ Now that computing
debates such as 'emacs or vi' and 'tabs or spaces' have been
resolved, correcting the language used should be straightforward.

P1C5 _'Don't you see that the whole aim of Newspeak is to narrow the
range of thought? In the end we shall make thoughtcrime literally
impossible, because there will be no words in which to express it.'_
-- Syme.

P3C2 _'It is impossible to see reality except by looking through the
eyes of the Party.'_ -- O'Brien.

8. Security Considerations

P1C3 _'Who controls the past,' ran the Party slogan, 'controls the
future: who controls the present controls the past.' And yet the
past, though of its nature alterable, never had been altered._

P1C1 _ FREEDOM IS SLAVERY_

Did Orwell actually shoot and kill an elephant? [BURMA]

Why a code revision tracking system designed to meet the specific
needs of developing and reviewing changes to the Linux kernel was
ever considered appropriate for shared editing text or standards lies
outside the scope of this document [RFC8874]. The IETF does not have
a strong history of inventing or of funding development of its own

fit-for-purpose documentation tools, but does co-opt and repurpose
popular tools from elsewhere. Value has been extracted from roff.

Wikipedia's pages are controlled and edited by the most persistent
Wikipedians, who are usually male, and so reflect male bias [BACK].
It is fair to say that history is written by Victor -- not Victoria.

9. IANA Considerations

P3C2 _'Do you remember,' he went on, 'writing in your diary, "Freedom
is the freedom to say that two plus two make four"?'_ -- O'Brien.

http://xml2rfc.tools.ietf.org/ re-renders acute and grave accents as
their base ASCII characters, and disallows wholly numerical reference
targets such as "[1984]", while internet-drafts are now being written
that describe correct Unicode emoji use -- without being able to use
emoji, which is a mixed blessing. Moving to UTF-8 is one careful
step [RFC7997]. Tools evolve the language that they convey. Choose
your tools well.

10. RFC Editor Considerations

P1C1 _It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking
thirteen._ -- the opening sentence.

There is an RFC Series Editor (RSE) function, but there has been no
fully appointed RFC Editor since 2019 [RFC]. There is arguably less
autonomy to counteract competing interests. Concern about imbalance
in power structures is warranted. Given its past [RFC8700], what is
the future of the Series? The RFC Editor would, one might think, be
the final authority on language used in RFCs... but that is outside
the immediate scope of this document. Do we need another Postel?

11. Acknowledgements and Address

P1C5 _'Or again, if you want a stronger version of "good", what sense
is there in having a whole string of vague useless words like
"excellent" and "splendid" and all the rest of them? "Plusgood"
covers the meaning, or "doubleplusgood" if you want something
stronger still.'_ -- Syme.

Orwell learned Spanish, among many other languages, and fought in the
Spanish Civil War. Earlier, he had lived with, and been unimpressed
by, Esperanto speakers. We could all do with a little more polish.

George Orwell was the pen-name, suggested in a letter to his literary
agent, of the man born and buried as Eric Arthur Blair. Blair was
not a loud speaker, even before being shot in the throat during

trench warfare. His voice was deemed "unattractive", but that did
not prevent a statue from being erected in his honour [BBC].

Without the protection of copyright, we will see more Orwell [COPY].

Re-education camps do not come from Orwell; the world that he
describes _is_ a re-education camp.

P3C5 _'The thing that is in Room 101 is the worst thing in the
world.'_ -- O'Brien. This was inspired by a basement room of the
British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) where Orwell had worked [BBC].

Oceania is one of three superstates competing to rule the world.

Editing these annotations did not require any git-derived mechanism.

12. References

12.1. Normative References

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