



# **The Superior Person's Field Guide to Deceitful, Deceptive and Downright Dangerous Language**

*Peter Bowler*

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In his Superior Person's Book of Words and its two sequels, the incorrigible Peter Bowler did his best to spread confusion throughout the English-speaking world by encouraging his trusting readers to use obscure, sometimes preposterous, words for no other purpose than to impress (or conveniently befuddle) their peers. But he recently experienced a "Road to Damascus" conversion. Confronted by the damage being inflicted on his beloved Mother Tongue by the pretentious, euphemistic, obfuscatory, and self-aggrandizing cant now running amok in our military, corporate, and academic arenas, he is mounting a one-man campaign to return us to sanity.

The Superior Person's Field Guide is a call for the return to simple, straightforward words that say what they mean and mean what they say. Most of us know that "downsizing" means that you're about to be fired, but have you ever heard its business-speak cousins "offshoreable" or "cash-flow episode"?

With his customary wit and clear-sightedness, Bowler cuts a swath through the thickets of popular jargon, casting daylight on such linguistic deformities as "interrogate with prejudice" (that is, torture) and "unforeseen geological event" (a mining disaster). Impatient with euphemism, he examines ugly specimens forced into bloom in the interests of political correctness "waitperson," "developmentally challenged" designed to help the squeamish avoid direct confrontation with the simple facts of sex and disability. Here are circumlocutions that make the disagreeable seem agreeable, the unacceptable acceptable, and here is Peter Bowler, as always, trying to set the record, and the English language, straight.

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