

Words Poorly Used #101 — Criteria

Many people confuse criteria with filters, others dispense with criteria altogether. Criteria actually are critical thinking stations in determining truth. They are existential, distinguishing the “is” from the “isn’t,” and the “may be.” The world underestimated Hurricane Harvey because the presumptive category-system of predicting a storm’s impact measured the wrong things, and/or not enough of the right things. It turns out that most of the government measures are filters strictly for size and speed and direction that may answer over-the-ocean questions but hardly address any on-land questions other than a single point of when plus where. How many systems askew of true criteria do we maintain?

— Kilgore Forelle