When Definitions Change, Take Heed

I used to wonder why George Orwell was so obsessed with language.

I would discuss this with a good friend who shared the concern for preserving the meaning of words. Definitions change, meanings change, and new words emerge to take the place of the old. So what?

I think I get it now.

It's not that definitions shouldn't change, or that we should pass laws to try to force people to keep a language pure. It's more about how they change.

There's an organic process of linguistic evolution taking place all the time. Then there are sudden changes pushed in concert by people with agendas. That is not inherently bad, but it is something to pay close attention to.

To work, it must either be organic, or be pushed by a large and influential chunk of the literati. The former provides interesting insight about cultural norms and beliefs, the latter about powerful interests.

When powerful interests suddenly and successfully redefine common words without any change in the facts that would warrant it, rest assured it is not a coincidence or for convenience. It is to change your mind. It is to gain control over the bounds of acceptable *thought*, not just speech. Orwell understood this.

In the last year, a number of common definitions changed overnight. You can see before and after shots in popular dictionaries. Things like "Immunity", "Vaccination", "Case", and "Infected" have been redefined, sometimes in ways logically contradictory to the previous definition.

No mention has been made of new studies or information that revealed the old definition to be wrong or the new right. They were changed not with intention to better reflect the facts, but with intention to disallow certain thoughts perceived by those making the changes to be a threat to their political agenda.

Such changes are a warning flare. It means people are being corralled and controlled far beyond what they realize. Shifting the bounds of allowable thought is the necessary groundwork for turning people into serfs or slaves.

Pay attention.