

# The New Criterion

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## Another point for the language police

by Roger Kimball

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### **Another point for the language police**

[Posted 5:41 PM by *Roger Kimball*]

PC alert! A friend sent me this news story from the computer industry. As most computers users know, "master" and "slave" are terms commonly used to refer, respectively, to a computer at which one works and one to which one is connected. The "master" can transfer data to and from the "slave." But of course "master" and "slave" are terms from the deep, dark, inequitable, pre-Enlightenment era, so now we--those of us in the People's Republic of Los Angeles, anyway-- must abolish them in favor of . . . well, you know:

Los Angeles officials have asked that manufacturers, suppliers and contractors stop using the terms "master" and "slave" on computer equipment, saying such terms are unacceptable and offensive. . . .

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Dennis Tafoya, director of the affirmative action office, said in a separate memo that an "exhaustive search" had been undertaken to find all such labels and replace them with more "appropriate"

ones. A form was sent to all departments to identify equipment carrying the labels "master" and "slave" or any other offensive terms.

Ah, yes the "affirmative action" office. That's Newspeak for the politically correct bureaucracy. Read the whole sorry thing [here](#). Extra points if you can keep from laughing. Hey, what about the offensive habit of distinguishing between "male" plugs and "female" sockets: isn't that "offensive," too. Doesn't it reinforce some unfortunate . . . stereotypes? I hope that Mr.

Tafoya gets around to investigating that enormity soon. Evelyn Waugh, where are you?!

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**Roger Kimball** is Editor and Publisher of *The New Criterion* and President and Publisher of Encounter Books. His latest books include *The Critical Temper: Interventions from The New Criterion at 40* (Encounter Books) and *Where Next? Western Civilization at the Crossroads* (Encounter Books).