The Myth of PC

I'm disappointed. For years, as I was a young cub in the world of college, graduate school and early career, I knew all the tech terms.

I started college with an Olympia electric typewriter and graduated the proud owner of a PC. A Personal Computer. Only now those once proud initials have been taken over by an insidious, dark meaning. Nowadays, PC is the slur politicians throw at each other when they want to put each other down.

"I'm not PC like that guy over there!"
"PC has gotten out of control!"
"I'll do away with PC if I'm elected."

As we all know, these initials now stand for Political Correctness, but I'm here to tell you that this new, dark PC is nothing but smoke and mirrors that has none of the positive practicality of a personal computer. This PC is a myth.

Now, let's ask, what does someone mean when they accuse another person of being politically correct? In a word, they mean that someone is over sensitive, that they can't take a joke, that they take themselves too seriously, that they are just self-righteous busy-bodies.

Baloney.

The more I listen to people who complain about PC, the more I realize that what they mean by PC is what my mama used to call Politeness. Mom was a big one for telling us, "If you can't say anything nice, then don't say anything at all." She also said, "Engage your brain before you engage your mouth."

When I see people complain about PC - or proudly proclaim that they are not PC - they go on to use the most vile terms to describe entire groups of people, they insult people's looks (especially women), they mock religious observances, they declare the utter uselessness of anyone who does not see the world as they do.

In short, they are rude and obnoxious - and proud of it.

I keep wondering if they didn't have mothers to teach them better. If I had talked to or about even my worst enemy the way some of these folks do, Mom would have washed my mouth out with soap. Later, Dad would have his say.

The thing is, PC doesn't exist the way some of these pundits would have. The annual to-do about "Merry Christmas" is a good example. Nobody told anyone they couldn't say "Merry Christmas," but each year the hue and cry rises anew about the PC police ruining Christmas. For the record, if I know someone isn't Christian, I won't force my religious greetings on them. Because that's the polite thing to do.

In the same way, I hear of the outrages of the schools going all PC with kids, demanding they no longer say the Pledge, suspending them for wearing a shirt with an American flag, giving them detention for pointing an imaginary gun (their finger). And so on. The Pledge thing is total bunk - they still say it pretty much everywhere. The shirt? Only if there's a dress code that doesn't allow t-shirts with images (having nothing to do with the flag, mind you).

Most every time, the trouble people get in for not being "politically correct" is because they are rude or disruptive. Observing the online conversations of many who complain, I see where they get it.

It's interesting that the rise in complaints about political correctness coincide with the rise of the Internet. The more anonymous people can be, the less need they feel for politeness.

But politeness, especially to those with whom we most vehemently disagree, is essential to a healthy society. Taking the feelings of others into consideration is the glue that holds us together. Unless you want to make everyone disappear whom you don't like, getting along with them is important. And if you DO want to get rid of all of "them", then I would suggest a trip to your local mental health facility.

In a way, I suppose the rise of PC does have something to do with the rise of PCs. The difference is that personal computers are a real thing. Political correctness isn't.