

# Goodbye to 'hate'

Hate has had a long run, but it's time to retire the word and all its forms: hater, hater, hateful, hate group, hate speech, and so on. Any usefulness of "hate" has been undermined by its overuse and misuse. It does not mean anything now, and its use only incites more animosity.

It's a classic retelling of the boy who cried wolf. If every instance of insensitivity is labeled hate, then how do we decipher between real hatred from exaggerated hatred? A person that does not like your outfit is not hater. A person that posts an article on Facebook that you disagree with is not full of hatred. A person from the other political party is not a hater.

We need to expand our vocabulary and use more appropriate and less incendiary words as the situation merits: rude, unkind, insensitive and the like. Reserve hate for truly vile acts. Wade Page's shooting rampage at a Sikh temple that killed six people is clearly a hateful act. Better yet, only use hate to describe actions, such as hating murder, and avoid using hate for a specific person or even a group of people. Still better, throw the word into the dustbin of useless words, avoiding it altogether.

The problem has been exacerbated by a news industry that values sensational stories over substance. Additionally, watch groups and anti-defamation societies, though founded with good intentions, are more interested in drawing attention to their own organization than addressing intolerance, and together with the media, they often turn gaffes and out-of-context statements into hate speech, resulting in protests, condemnation, heated rhetoric, and (you guessed it) more hatred.

The sad story of Floyd Lee Corkins reveals the dangers of the name game. He recently entered the offices of the Family Research Council, yelled "I don't like your politics," and then opened fire on the security guard. He somehow believed that shooting an innocent person was an appropriate way to express his displeasure with the Family Research Council, labeled a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center.

As a nation, we need to turn down the rhetoric. Labeling something hateful, doing a hateful action, or increasing hate awareness are not going to diminish hate. More often than not, a vicious circle of increasing hate ensues from these actions. It's time for society to collectively kick hate to the side. The answer is much simpler. Return hatred with love; that is the only true remedy.