

The War of Words - Brennan

文字战争

The power of language to influence one's view of reality is profound. In many instances, the most significant factor determining how an object will be perceived is not the object itself, but the words employed to characterize it. Operating through the lenses of contrasting linguistic symbols, two persons looking at the same phenomenon are likely to see with sharply divergent observations. Words can also act as a force for justice or a weapon of repression, an instrument of enlightenment or a source of darkness.

语言的确能够深刻地影响人类对现实之看法。在许多情况下，确定某人如何看东西或事情的因素，并不是那个东西本身所显现的特征，而是描述它之用词。就像用两个不同的透镜看东西，两个人观察同一现象，呈现不同的描述且不时对同样东西会有分歧的看法。语言能带来正义或是被用来当作欺压别人的工具，并且语言能协助人类开创光明也可能成为黑暗的根源。

Disparaging designations may inflict greater damage than physical blows and foster a climate of leading to violence. Although they do not always result in violence, it is invariably an essential component of any large-scale oppression: discrimination, segregation, enslavement, or annihilation.

有时，轻蔑的标签带来之伤害比身体上的打击伤害更大。而且这种词语能够促成对抗气氛而导致真正的暴力。虽然这种轻蔑话不一定会导致暴力，但任何一种强大压迫如种族歧视、种族隔离、奴役、歼灭等无不包含轻蔑的词语。

The annals of inhumanity are replete with an endless litany of disparaging expressions. The demeaning labels manufactured may become so pervasive that they constitute a *war of words*. Linguistic reduction of victims to an insignificant, despicable, or dangerous level helps stimulate the kind of destructive thinking that leads ultimately to destructive actions. The victims are cast in such a negative or inconsequential light that whatever is done to them, no matter how horrendous, is considered perfectly justifiable.

历史上充满无数的歼灭词语。这种贬低对方之用语，是"文字战争"的导火线。藉词语制造贬损人到无足轻重或低贱的地位，这样挑拨一个人或一个种族是危险的，这种刺激将导致伤害性的行为。受害者被看不起，甚至无论他们经受如何可恶的冤屈，都被认为是理所当然的。

A universal set of dehumanizing designations keeps recurring whoever the victims and whatever the period of their victimization. Much of this name-calling can be placed under eight categories:

无论受害者是谁，也无论他们何时，被冤屈多久，每次都有一些夺人性的标签。这个辱骂的话大致可分成如下列八个类别：

deficient human ("stupid," "defective," "inferior," "potential life," "lives not worth living")
less than human
animal or beast
parasitic creature ("parasite," "vermin," "lice")
infectious disease ("plague," "epidemic," "infection")
inanimate object ("thing," "property," "material," "merchandise")
waste product ("trash," "rubbish," "debris,")
not a person (socially, psychologically, or legally).

贬抑人("愚笨", "不完美", "下等", "潜在的生命", "不值得的生命")
不值得被称为"人"
动物或野兽
寄生生物("寄生虫", "蠹虫", "虱")
传染病("瘟疫", "流行病", "感染")
没生命的事物("东西", "财产", "材料", "商品")
废品("垃圾", "废物", "货色")
根本不是人(在社会上, 心理上, 还是法律上)

This classification of linguistic devaluation furnishes a comprehensive framework for exploring the pervasiveness of defamatory rhetoric and its devastating effects on a diverse spectrum of victims. One of the most remarkable features of anti-life rhetoric is the sheer consistency and stability underlying the denigrating concepts that engulf a wide variety of people rendered expendable. While the range of victims has fluctuated down through the years, the semantic assaults against them have remained stubbornly constant.

这种轻蔑话的分类方式让人了解诽谤性修辞的猖獗和它对各个受害者的毁灭性作用。反生命修辞最惊人的特点之一便是它能使诋毁的观念又一致又持久, 而使各种各样人被认为可消耗的。虽经历多年有不同种族为受害者, 仍然对人们攻击的言词却未曾改变。

Any war, semantic or otherwise, requires an identifiable enemy upon whom to impose the derogatory labels. At one time or another almost every group imaginable -- racial, ethnic, religious, age, and social group -- has suffered the consequences of linguistic abuse, ranging from discrimination to outright annihilation.

文字战争或任何一种战争必有可识别的, 接受贬抑称呼的对像。在历史上, 差不多每个种族、族群、宗教、年龄、社会, 都有受过词语辱骂之后果, 包括被歧视和被全面歼灭。

Among the most extensively oppressed on record are: fetuses, people with disabilities, *women, those exterminated in the Nazi Holocaust* (primarily Jews, but also Gypsies, Germans with disabilities, Poles, and "asocials"), *the targets of Soviet tyranny, African Americans* (especially enslaved blacks in the antebellum American South), and *Native Americans* (Indians).

历史上，最被压迫的组群包括：胎儿、得残障者、妇女、德国纳粹党大屠杀之受害者(大部分是犹太人，但也有吉普赛人、德国的得残障者、波兰人、和"不合群的人")、苏联暴政之受害者、黑人(特别是在美国南部，美国内战前)、和印第安人。

Playing with Words: The Psychology of the Big Lie

A feature common to any war of words against whatever victims is the falsehood of the designations concocted. They often constitute grotesque distortions of reality itself, reality in these instances being the innate humanity of those who are reviled. They are also part of an elaborate game of verbal corruption.

玩文字游戏：大谎言之心理

任何词语战争，无论受害者是谁，这些战争都有虚假的标签这个共同特点。这些标签不时将现实歪曲。词语所叙述的"现实"是被辱骂的根本是人。这些称呼可被认为是"让词语腐败"精心游戏之部分。

Their absurdity notwithstanding, derogatory stereotypes are readily transformed into the accepted "truth" when they are heard over and over again. The successful waging of semantic warfare does not rely solely on the sheer number of epithets conjured up, but frequently on the extent of their usage. A few key designations of denigration, continually intoned, like any persistent slogan, are apt to have a significant impact. This is in line with the psychology of "the big lie" so tenaciously advanced by Adolf Hitler in *Mein Kampf*: if the lies are repeated often enough they will be embraced. Those who have control of language also have control of thought, and eventually semantic corruption leads to the adulteration of thought itself.

贬抑之词陈腔滥调不但荒唐，听的越多，越容易被人接受而误认为是"事实"。文字战争之成功不光凭藉想出来的侮辱话的数量，而也靠侮辱话用量。就像任何持续用的口号，多次重复说几个关键的抹黑之称呼，想必会对众人有重大影响。这个观念与希特勒在*Mein Kampf*(我的奋斗)里那么顽强地推进之"大谎言"心理一致：经常地重复一些谎言，成为信条。谁控制语言，谁亦控制想法，而词语腐败早晚会导致想法之搀假。

An editorial which appeared in the September 1970 edition of *California Medicine* contains a revealing statement on lying in the service of killing. The editorial proposes a linguistic strategy of *semantic gymnastics* -- "avoidance of the scientific fact, which everyone really knows, that human life begins at conception" and separation of "the idea of abortion from the idea of killing" -- as essential for obtaining widespread acceptance of not only abortion, but also euthanasia.

1970年出版的加利福尼亚医学期刊中之一篇社论，提到一个关于用谎言来推动杀害生命是可接受的声明。社论提出"词语体操"的策略："避免承认每个人都真正知道‘人生从受孕时开始’的科学事实”和规定“堕胎和杀害生命是不相干的”。社论倡导这

种词语体操，对达到普遍人不仅接受堕胎也接受安乐死，是必不可少的。

Semantic gymnastics is an exceedingly apt term because it connotes the severe twisting and distorting of language necessary to deny fundamental *scientific facts*, which include the facts that human life exists before birth and that abortion kills human lives in the womb. Likening these denials to a "schizophrenic sort of deception" is considered so extreme that they are placed in the same league as a major mental disorder. However, what is admittedly a strategy comparable to pathological lying is actually endorsed as an appropriate way to promote abortion.

所以"词语体操"这个名词极度适当，便是因为它隐含意思是，就像体操手之身体会拳曲，若是想否认根本科学事实，要歪曲词语。这些事实之二是诞生前之生命已是生命，亦堕胎杀人于子宫内。加州医学期刊之社论把这些否认比作"精神分裂症型之欺骗"，就表示这个想法偏激得比得上很严重的精神错乱。说也奇怪，虽然人承认这种否认类似病态性的谎言，但这个策略仍然被认为是合适的堕胎合理化之方式。

Ever since 1970, the policy of semantic gymnastics has been propagated so often and with such fervor that it has become deeply embedded in the public consciousness. What once had been "the scientific fact, which everyone really knows, that human life begins at conception" has been -- through countless repetitions -- obscured and reduced to the suspect level of an outmoded, sectarian bias. Because of the power of "the big lie," no longer does everyone know that human life begins at conception.

自1970年起，词语体操之政策将这么经常强烈的宣传而且已经深深地留于大众的意识。曾经是"每个人都真正知道‘人生从受孕时开始’的科学事实”，透过无数次重复而混淆和改变成老式，派别性可疑的偏见。由于“大谎言”的影响，有些人不再知道生命是从受孕开始的。

The *California Medicine* editorial did not confine its vocabulary of duplicity to aborted humans, but envisioned other victims as well: "Medicine's role with respect to changing attitudes toward abortion may well be a prototype of what is to occur. . . . One may anticipate further development of these roles as the problems of birth control and birth selection are extended inevitably to death selection and death control."

加利福尼亚医学期刊里出版之社论的口是心非词语不但包含受堕胎之人，也谈到其他受害者：“医学在改变对于堕胎之态度方面，也许可以成为将来会发生事件之模范... 也许期待医学的这些角色会进一步地发展，同时，‘生育控制’（避孕）和‘生育淘汰’将更为广泛甚至包含‘死亡淘汰’和‘死亡控制’。

Therefore, if semantic gymnastics can be used to deny the humanity of those not yet born, they can also be employed to deny the humanity of those who are born. If semantic gymnastics can be invoked to call abortion something other than killing, they can be relied upon to cover up the destructive nature of euthanasia. Helped along by the enormous inroads made by "the big lie" in the promotion of abortion, euthanasia proponents are resorting to the same kind of linguistic distortions to justify getting rid of undesired humans after birth.

因此，若是可用词语体操来否认还没出生的人是人是人这个现实，那么也可以用词语体操否认已出生的人是人。如果可以用词语体操这个方法把堕胎跟杀害视为不同一件事，那么也可以依靠它们掩盖安乐死之伤害本质。“大谎言”对宣传堕胎有巨大进展，而帮助安乐死之拥护者采取同样的曲解词语方法也为丢掉诞生后将不受欢迎的人行为而辩护。

Prestigious Players

The extreme lies and deceptions emanating from this deadly serious game of verbal engineering and manipulation take on enhanced credibility when its most influential players are highly regarded individuals. In the early 1970s, an actor who looked distinguished and sounded authoritative was coached to give a lecture on "The Application of Mathematical Game Theory to Physical Education" to groups of professionals and educators. He was presented as Dr. Myron L. Fox of the Albert Einstein University and dressed up with a fictitious but impressive curriculum vitae. Dr. Fox was instructed "to present his topic and conduct his question-and-answer period with an excessive use of double talk, neologisms, nonsequiturs, and contradictory statements. All this was to be interspersed with parenthetical humor and meaningless references to unrelated topics." Afterward, questionnaires were administered to evaluate his talk. Some typical responses were as follows: "Excellent presentation, enjoyed listening. Has warm manner. Good flow . . . Lively examples . . . Extremely articulate . . . Good analysis of subject . . . Knowledgeable." Not a single person in the well-educated audiences detected that the authoritative lecturer was a phony!

有名望游戏员

当最显要也是很受尊敬的人玩这个非常严重的词语工程和曲解语言游戏，从游戏发出之极端谎言跟欺骗便得到更多可信度。在1970年代初期，有人辅导一位看起来很卓著和听起来很博学之演员，让他向给一群专家跟教育家做一次关于“胜算理论对体育的应用”的演讲。他被介绍为爱因斯坦大学的Myron L. Fox博士，有著虚构但令人钦佩的履历表。Fox博士被吩咐“演讲他的题目和进行问答期间时，要大量使用故弄玄虚、新词、不根据前提的推理、矛盾等说法。还要采用插句幽默和无意义无关话题的参考，来点缀他的讲演。”后来，听众用调查表评估他的谈话。典型答覆如下：“优秀演讲，喜欢听。有温暖的举止。讲得流畅...生动的例子...极端有口才...主题分析得好...无所不晓。”在这些受高等教育听众中，没有人发现这个卓著的讲师是骗子！

Prominent personages with impeccable credentials also play an important role in the successful imposition of language intended to denigrate human beings considered discardable. Contrary to popular belief, although despicable language is often primarily associated with crazed individuals or mobs in the streets, it is far more likely to emanate from highly educated, respectable circles. Eminent people throughout history rank among the most steadfast purveyors of demeaning expressions. In *The Republic*, Plato's advocacy of infanticide (book 5) proceeded from a perception of handicapped children as "inferior creatures." Louis Agassiz, founder of the Museum of Natural History at Harvard University and a leading nineteenth-century scientist, called black people a "degraded and degenerate race." One of America's greatest historians, Francis Parkman (1823-93), associated Indians

with "leeches" and "contagions."

有著无懈可击履历著的显要名人,对成功地宣扬想要诋毁被认为可丢掉之人的这种言论的帮助也很大。相对于普遍人相信的,虽然可鄙的词语经常跟发疯之人或街头暴民有关联,然而这种词语则是大半从受高等教育可敬之圈子发出的。于历史上,在最坚定不移地拥护侮辱说法的人中,有不少受尊重者。在"共和国"(第五书)里,柏拉图用残障的孩子是"下等的生物"看法来提倡杀害婴孩。创建哈佛大学自然历史博物馆及重要19世纪科学家路易斯Agassiz,则标签黑人为"人格降低的和堕落的族群"。美国最伟大史学家之一Francis Parkman (1823-1893)将印第安人跟"水蛭"和"传染原"形成关联。

Such revelations are not intended to detract from the monumental achievements of these individuals, but to show that even *they* became agents of the prevailing rhetoric. In the hands of revered individuals, the degrading concepts were endowed with enormous credibility. This in turn greatly enhanced their acceptance and facilitated the appalling actions taken against those at the receiving end of the disparaging terminology.

这种揭示并不是想要减损这些人的巨大成就,而是说明连他们都为占优势修辞代理。在受人尊敬者手中的诋毁概念便获得极大的可信度。接下来,这个极大地提高观念之接受和促进反对那些被贬低词语表示的人的骇性行动。

The successful waging of semantic warfare on the contemporary unwanted unborn can likewise be largely attributed to the heavy participation of influential and respectable individuals and organizations. The 1970 *California Medicine* editorial advocating a policy of semantic gymnastics to justify the dehumanization and destruction of unborn humans put it this way: "The very considerable semantic gymnastics which are required to rationalize abortion as anything but taking a human life would be ludicrous if they were not often put forth under *socially impeccable auspices* [italics mine]." Nevertheless, the statement continues, "this schizophrenic sort of subterfuge is necessary" to obtain widespread approval of abortion.

同样,用词语来对抗当代被遗弃的尚未出世者之成功,可被归因于显要和受尊敬的人跟组织的深度参与。那篇1970年主张用词语体操辩解夺取未诞生者的人性而将他们消灭之加利福尼亚医学期刊里的社论这样描写:"除非它们经常被放在**社会无缺点的赞助**之下[本作者加斜体字],合理化‘堕胎跟杀害人是不同’这个看法需要的非常客观的词语体操便是荒唐可笑的"。陈述再说,然而,为了获得堕胎普遍接受,"这种精神分裂症性之托辞是必要的"

In other words, under the ordinary standards of honest discourse it would be ridiculous ("ludicrous") to maintain that the life taken in abortion is something other than human. However, according to one of the sacrosanct tenets of semantic gymnastics, such an outlandish canard ("this schizophrenic sort of subterfuge") is elevated to the status of an incontestable truth when disseminated by prestigious individuals and institutions ("under socially impeccable auspices").

换句话说,在一般诚实谈论的标准下主张堕胎杀害生命不是人的立场,便是滑稽("荒唐可笑的")。但是,根据词语体操当中一个不可侵犯的原则,这么怪异的谬传("这种精神分裂症性之托辞"),被有名望的人和机构散播("在社会无缺点的赞助之下")便被提升成无可置疑之真相。

Similarly, the extensive involvement of prominent people and groups is playing a major role in the proliferation of linguistic assaults against vulnerable human lives after birth.

同样,著名人和小组广泛介入,对扩散使用词语来攻击已出世而脆弱的人们,有很大的作用。

Ideological Foundations of Scorn

Semantic warfare does not ordinarily burst upon the scene accidentally. It is not a spontaneous or chaotic episode, but a deliberate and unremitting phenomenon with elaborate systems of concepts, beliefs, and myths.

轻蔑的思想基础

文字战争一般不会偶然地出现。这不是一种自发或混乱的事件,而是一种故意和不间断的,而且跟随著错综复杂的观念、信仰和虚构的制度。

The dogma of male supremacy -- a set of beliefs that maintains men are stronger, smarter, better, and more important than women -- has often functioned as a precondition for the torrent of degrading images and despicable actions imposed upon female members of the human race. Although not all violence against women can be attributed to a patriarchal mindset, the ideology of male superiority is so deeply ingrained in numerous societies and cultures that it has had a profound influence on how men view and treat women. Historically and currently, an overwhelming preponderance of violence against women has been male-induced. And many perpetrators believe that their status as males entitles them to exploit the minds and bodies of women in any way they wish.

从以前到现在,男性至上之"教条"(即,认定男人比妇女更强壮、更聪明、更美好和更重要之看法)经常起作用连发的贬低女性的形像和对她们做可鄙的行的先决条件。虽然不是所有对妇女暴力可被归因于重男轻女看法,但在许多社会和文化里,男性至上思系那么深地根深蒂固,便深刻地影响男人对女人的看法和对待。于历史上和当前,绝大多数对女人的暴力是男人做的。并且,许多冒犯者认为,因为他们是男性,所以便有随便剥削妇女的身心之权力。

Today the quality-of-life ideology underpins many of the linguistic assaults directed against vulnerable individuals throughout all stages of the human life cycle. According to the quality-of-life ethic propounded in the *California Medicine* editorial of 1970, "it will become necessary and acceptable to place relative rather than absolute values on such things as human lives." The article asserts, "the very considerable semantic gymnastics required to

rationalize abortion as anything but the taking of a human life" are "necessary because while a new ethic [the quality of life] is being accepted the old one [the sanctity of life] has not yet been rejected."

今天，于人生命周期中用词语来攻击易受攻击的人被"生活品质"思想体系巩固。根据加利福尼亚医学期刊于1970出版社论提议的生活品质观念，"不用绝对而用相对标准评价人类生命的价值，会变得必要的和可接受的"。文章又写："合理化‘堕胎跟杀害人是不同’这个看法需要的非常客观的词语体操"是"必要的，因为虽然新观念(生活品质)开始被接受了，但旧的(生命的神圣)未被拒绝"。

All of these ideologies, whatever their idealistic and benevolent guises, share an essential ingredient -- they are based on an elitist definition of the human race. And it is this deplorable notion that underlies the explosion of derogatory language directed against vulnerable populations today and in times past.

所有这些思想，无论它们理想主义和仁慈是假装什么，都有共同特点 -- 都是从歧视性的人类定义过来的。并且，巩固现在和从前被猖獗地用于对抗易受攻击团体的贬低词语，便是这个可鄙的概念。

Dehumanizing Language and its Humanizing Challengers

Historically, one of the main reasons for the decline in or termination of oppression against various people and groups has been the presence of individuals who, even during periods when the discrediting semantics predominated, refused to accept the prevailing norms of name-calling. The success of any genuine human rights movement rests in large part on the capacity of its proponents to forge positive, personalized, and exalted images of the victims as worthwhile human beings whose oppression can no longer be tolerated. Renaming formerly degraded individuals as legitimate human lives deserving of respect and esteem will not necessarily achieve a major change in their treatment. However, given sufficient societal and institutional support, positive labels -- like negative labels -- can effect a profound change in how people are perceived and therefore treated.

夺取人性的词语和它赋予人性的挑战者

在历史上，减少和终止迫害各种人和团体的主要原因之一是即使在采用贬低词语猖獗期间仍拒绝接受普遍的辱骂准则。任一真正人权运动的成功真依靠拥护者用正面、个人性、和崇高意象来表示受害者是有价值的人而且对他们迫害是不再可被容忍的。改曾被贬低者是被认可的，应该被尊重和崇敬的生者，不一定会重大地改变他们受的对待。但，若是社会和协会提供之支持充足，正面用语 -- 像负面用语一样--人怎么被看成而对待，能够促成深刻的变化。

Two major authorities are usually cited to sustain the positive labels designed to counteract linguistic oppression -- the natural and supernatural orders of creation. According to the *natural law perspective*, all of the victims . . . share one thing in common: a human nature readily demonstrated by appeals to reason, logic, common sense, observation, and

scientific findings. The intrinsic value of the victims is based on the democratic, egalitarian principle that all human beings deserve equal protection under the law despite their status, condition, or stage of development. The *divine law tradition* endows human nature with the imprint of spirituality. It portrays all human beings -- including the most disabled and defenseless -- as individuals of inestimable worth since they are made in the image and likeness of God. References to Holy Scripture and other religious sources furnish the basis for proclaiming the sanctity of every human life.

最常被引用来支持那些想要抵消词语压迫的正面标签之二个主要的根源是自然的宇宙和超自然的宇宙两种角度。依照自然法则观点，所有受害者有一个共同特点：他们人类本性是很容易被求助于道理、逻辑、常识、观测、和科学研究结果证明的。受害者的固有价值在于民主及平等主义的原则，全人类不管他们的地位、状况、和生长阶段在，法律下都该一样的被公平保护。神性法则观点灌输给人类灵魂性。这个看法将每个人 -- 包含最残废和最不能自卫的 -- 描绘成有不可估量价值的个人，因为上帝照者自己的形像来造人类。宣称所有人的生命都是神圣的这陈述之依据包含经文和其他宗教方面的出处。

The secular and sacred foundations of terminology intended to offset massive victimization are often kept separate and distinct. Non-believers and individuals who do not wish to impose a religious viewpoint utilize language emphasizing the humanity of the victims. Others prefer to project a more exalted perception by highlighting the divine origin of all human beings. Still others see the human and divine as complementary levels of existence comprising a compelling cornerstone for challenging the dehumanizing rhetoric forged by perpetrators past and present. During the decades preceding the American Civil War many advocates of the abolition of slavery invoked both the natural and supernatural law in their efforts to raise public awareness regarding the true nature of black Americans and the unconscionable conditions that slavery imposed upon them. The defenders of other oppressed groups have done and are doing likewise.

想要抵销巨大迫害之词语经常被分成世俗性和宗教性两个不同而且分明的种类。不信宗教者和不想强加宗教观点的人会运用强调受害者之人类本性的说法。另外一些人宁愿用强调每个人从神之起源这角度而支持对人类更高尚的看法。仍有其他人认为人类本性和神圣本性是互补的，这个看法造成令人信服基础，而挑战从前和当今以夺取人性的说法。于美国南北战争的几十年之前，很多废止奴隶主张者诉求于自然法律和超自然法律而努力提高关于美国黑人之真本性和奴隶带给他们无理情况的民众意识。致力于保护其他受迫害团体的人，从前和现在做法都一样。

A remarkable strain of consistency permeates the language employed to highlight the human and spiritual nature of individuals and groups subjected to massive victimization. The contemporary opponents of abortion and euthanasia rely on the same range of positive expressions to defend the unwanted unborn and born of today that were used to defend Native Americans, African Americans, Soviet people, Jews, women, and other targets of past oppression. Down through the ages and up to the present the advocates of society's most vulnerable groups have thus drawn upon a common core of personalized designations for focusing on the intrinsic value, humanity, and divinity of those being made victims.

显著一致性的倾向深入那些被使用于强调受巨大迫害之人和团体的人类本性和灵魂本性之词语。当代堕胎和“安乐”死的对手凭藉被用过保护于印第安人、非裔美国人、苏联人、犹太人、妇女等曾受压迫者的正面的词句来保护现在之被遗弃的未诞生者和已诞生者。从古代至今天，社会上最易受攻击的团体之拥护者这样趁著共同个人化标签而证明受害者的固有价值、人类本性和神圣性。