



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on January 28, 2019

## Covington and Killing Conservative Dissent

Imagine if you could just disarm your adversaries. In political debate this could mean, as an example, striking from their lips words that could possibly sway others. Now consider that in the [recent media smearing](#) of the Covington Catholic High School boys, “Build the wall!” was treated like “hate speech.” The sporting of MAGA caps was practically framed as incitement to riot, with Congressman John Yarmuth (D-Ky.) actually [proposing](#) banning teens from wearing them.



It doesn't end there. In 1987, race hustler Jesse Jackson [led](#) hundreds of Stanford students in a chant of “Hey-hey, ho-ho, Western Civ. has got to go!” Back then they were talking about a course, but now the Left wants to make even the term verboten. Talking points synchronized, [no small number](#) of leftists now claim the term “Western Civilization” is a “dog whistle to white nationalists.” (Fox News video on this subject below.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zQjJZDyIF-w>

Leftist slogans and symbols are never divisive, of course. Hillary's “I'm With Her” could be a feminist dog whistle and Obama's “Forward” [appears a socialist one](#), but no one in the enemedia say so. Moreover, forgotten is that something is only “divisive” or “controversial” if at least one large group passionately embraces it while at least one other large group passionately opposes it. Leftists could easily render something they condemn as “divisive” not so by adopting it themselves — but they instead participate in the division.

Another way to eliminate (visible) division is that squelching of dissent. This is at least partially what the demonization of “Build that wall!” “MAGA” hats and utterances, and “Western Civilization” concerns. Powerful slogans and symbols are how you market your ideas; analogous to this, this is why businesses use jingles, slogans, and trademarks. Imagine how marketing might be hobbled if McDonald's, Geico, or Vaseline could no longer use, respectively, its golden arch; talking gecko; or, well, its name, Vaseline.

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The demonization in question is similar. Anything rhetorically effective for conservatives — anything that has influenced people or threatens to do so — is labeled hateful. Aside from what has been mentioned already, [“states' rights,”](#) [“religious liberty,”](#) [“law and order,”](#) “tough on crime,” and anything else that has won votes for the Right have also been deemed dog whistles. Overlooked is that “dog whistle” can be a dog whistle for the Left meaning “Warning! This contradicts our socialist agenda!”

Note that many Western (oops! What are we supposed to call them?) countries have actually criminalized some political commentary via “hate speech” laws; under them, for instance, criticizing Islam or homosexuality can bring punishment. Our First Amendment has thus far precluded such legislation here, but social prohibitions are a different matter. Part of their effect is to make people afraid to wear MAGA gear and, again, to utter anything that could rally the rightist troops and win



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converts. In this vein, some schools have also [prohibited students](#) from wearing apparel displaying the American flag.

But the Left has long engaged in language manipulation, and for good reason. As the old book *The Tyranny of Words* instructs, the side that defines the vocabulary of a debate wins the debate.

Nonetheless, while leftists steal the language like a pirate, conservatives echo them like their parrot. Conservative commentators will even use the liberal-disgorged euphemism “undocumented immigrant,” apparently oblivious to how this is like calling a rapist an undocumented husband.

Another good example is our “gender” benders. As I [wrote](#) in 2017, “Many today likely would agree with an Internet commenter I came across who, addressing the distinction between gender and sex, quite self-assuredly wrote, ‘Sex’ is what you do; ‘gender’ is what you are.’ In reality, though, ‘gender’ was rarely used vis-à-vis people until relatively recently. Rather, its definition was as presented in my 1975 edition *American Heritage School Dictionary*: ‘n. In grammar, one of a number of categories, such as masculine, feminine, and neuter, into which words are divided.’”

Why was “gender” co-opted? Well, would we now be having the Gender Wars and arguing about how many dozen “genders” there are if we hadn’t applied the term to humans in the first place? Remember, it was cemented in people’s minds that there are only two sexes. A different word was needed to advance the agenda.

(You can read my comprehensive exposition on language manipulation, “Tongues Twisted Left: Manipulating Minds by Managing Words,” [here](#).)

Of course, such language innovation is effected subtly, gradually, slickly, so that people don’t even realize they’re being manipulated. The demonization of effective conservative slogans and symbols is, however, as overt and “in your face” as American Indian activist Nathan Phillips was in Nick Sandmann’s [at the March for Life](#).

Conservatives could combat this by doubling down and embracing what’s targeted even more passionately. Barring this, they’ll be relegated to discussing their ideas in a way so pointy-headed, dry, banal, indirect, and academic that no one would even be interested in listening — which is, of course, the whole idea.

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