

# S M E A R

*Every worn-out ism. Political tools in the box.*

TERMS THAT A DECEPTIVE MEDIA (and anyone lost to the deception) MIGHT (incorrectly) USE:

'Racist,' 'sexist,' 'transphobic,' 'homophobic,' 'white-supremacist,' 'far-right extremist' 'domestic terrorist,' 'anti-vaxxer,' 'conspiracy theorist,' 'spreader of misinformation,' 'climate denier,' 'anti-science,' 'anti-Semitic,' etc., etc., etc.

These are real things. Which makes it all the more important not to use these same words to label other things, people, and behaviours- that are really *not* these things. Because when we start using these kinds of words as throw-away insults, as slurs, merely as tools to demonise and ostracise (rather than to denote an actual, factual reality), we detract from the power of these words to label the kinds of people or behaviours that actually warrant them. Yes, these are real things. But they are also cynical smears that stand in glaring contrast to the reality most of the time. And it's getting worse, and getting tiresome. The smears in the media are glaringly obvious to anyone with eyes open. But they continue- because they work- on people with eyes shut, who refuse to see deeper than the surface stories they are told.

When real, these things might be unacceptable. But too often they are not real at all. Just a political tool. A governance mechanism. Just convenient labels to discredit certain voices and perspectives. To control a narrative. People see it now. It is obvious when you have families waving placards for freedom and yet being labelled a 'national security threat' (is freedom a threat to the nation?). Smears of freedom. And when somebody with an inquiring mind exercises their right to ask further questions about something (the answers to which may even be of great benefit to the wider society) is derided as a 'conspiracy theorist.' It is a tool to squash debate. To limit possibility. To gloss over the fact that there might actually be some good to further open discussion- and something more to learn. Some information right there- but being (strategically?) omitted. Why?

Well, a certain desired course of events may be more difficult to take (to justify taking) if all the information were on the table. And so political truths are selective. But take the selection offered- or risk being smeared. Certain people might not want you to know certain things about their dastardly plan to 'take over the world!' They might want you to know a little about it- to have a vague idea- to help *imagine it into existence*, but not know too much. Not know the dark under-workings behind the glossy show-brochure or presentation.

A case in point: 'The Great Reset' has been considered 'a conspiracy theory' (after all- it is a subject of discussion amidst 'conspiracy theorists,' so it must be...)- even though the organisation that promotes it (WEF) details it all on their own website. I suppose it is a conspiracy- but not amidst tin-foil hats in their basements as we're lead to believe. That's all smokescreen and diversion. Instead, at the 'highest' (in terms of worldly artifice of power) levels. It is not the fault of those who point it out. It is not their wrongdoing. But

the mischaracterisations are pervasive. And deliberate. They clear away the resistance.

Carefully chosen words, misused, direct people's mental representation and perceptual experience. Away from certain ideas, towards others. Away from certain kinds of people, towards others. Herded towards specific outcomes. Of course, if the task is to turn people against each other, whatever way you can, then these words are great for that purpose too. Divide and rule. They are the verbal bullets and guns of a war that sets every difference against every other difference. The fuel to the fire, the fan to the flames of discontent and warring factions of a divided humanity. In a war that does not stop until everyone has been forced into the same little corner of anti-possibility replicated everywhere- because every unique perspective has been derided as heresy. And deviation from the norm can scarcely even be uttered, let alone accommodated.

Falsely labelled with something bad-sounding. Not because it *is* 'racist' or 'sexist' or whatever it's falsely labelled as- but because it has been labelled and publicised as such. And people believe the lie. The mud has been slung, and it sticks. Repeated often enough, the lie becomes 'the truth.' Politicians riding roughshod over freedom- leveraging words beyond their meaning- doing whatever they can to do whatever they want, and squashing opposition with defamation campaigns. Vilifying individuals, or groups of individuals. And encouraging the population to invest in the lie, enact the vilification, and socially police it. Words used falsely, to delegitimise. People's brains hacked and hijacked. Shaping worlds.

It seems that often, in the political world, a country (or a leader- it doesn't really matter the scale we're talking at...) will accuse another country (or leader) of doing exactly what they themselves are doing. Classic. The pot calling the kettle black. But then, certain topics are more off-limits- because those topics are too close to the bone- and would risk exposing hypocrisy. Would risk shining a light where one would not be welcome. And so a contrasting technique is where politicians safely accuse people of being the things that they themselves couldn't possibly be accused of, because they are 'the opposite thing,' or a safe distance away from the accusation. This is perhaps why the top-down-imposed global political spectrum that veers heavily to the communist-style collectivised left, does not dish out many smears of 'far left.' You just don't hear it on the news. It's always 'far right' that's the smear. Surely either extreme is undesirable to a balanced perspective. Couldn't they be used equally as a smear of the kind of extreme society that is not of benefit to the people? But cries of 'far left' could more easily be turned back on governments that are collectivising society and turning ideals for living into a kind of hive.

If, however, the task is not to manipulate and engage in political chicanery, but to accurately understand reality, then we need to stop bandying about these words as though they were no more than insults- as if they had no underlying meaning. Because when the underlying meaning is lost, we can no longer call these things anything that everything else is not also called. We can no longer meaningfully call them what they are. We lose our bearings. The historical significance fades. The future unhinged. For example: 'Nazi.' People on each side of the political spectrum might sling this word over the ideological fence at the other side. You hear it all the time. Disagreement? Fling the shit.

Sure, we each might have our ideas about where the most 'Nazi-like' behaviour is coming from. But leaving that aside for now, when the word is increasingly used not to describe

an actual National Socialist, but just comes to mean something like 'abhorrent person,' where does that leave our capacity for identifying actual Nazis? It's all conflated. We degrade or erode the terms we use to the point where they no longer mean anything- when we don't use them properly. And before we know it, it's just angry sounds coming out of mouths with no meaning. No significance. Other than an indicator of people's own discontent and unease. The externalised discomfort at other people's divergence from our own perspectives. Missiles of externally-projected angst. No definitional accuracy.

How can we get a grip on reality when we're misusing words like this? Words are how we label reality- how we 'grip' on to it- and they are what reality (at least *our reality*, as we live it...) is informed by. We are educated with words, we think with words, we express ourselves with words. And yet how far we can go off track- creating false realities out of words falsely-used- and used as weapons- rather than tools to help us understand. We string sentences of illusion together with misused terms- and we create worlds of illusion like this too. We can't continue to be untruthful like this, and hope to live in a world of truth. Of course, those who spin lies will likely have a completely different set of concerns.

The extent to which it goes is quite remarkable. Even a black person can be called a 'white supremacist' now. That is, if their views don't fit the (apparently, ostensibly 'non-racist,' or even so-called 'anti-racist') ideals of the prevailing narrative of 'what black people are supposed to believe' (which sounds quite racist, if you ask anyone sane). And if somebody else is sufficiently determined to discredit them. It's ridiculous. (That is- need it be said- so long as said person is not actually espousing views of racial supremacy). And (presuming they're not) it's just a way to keep people pegged to limitation. To groupthink. (This group or that- or the group as an apparent whole). To not examining reality outside the norms they are held by- and told to believe in. Trump supporter? Automatic 'racist.' (Inferred moral: 'So don't be a Trump supporter'). Things have become so reductionist. Maybe that's what happens when the world gets complex. We try to reduce it down to size- to something graspable... tangible... to be 'for' or 'against.'

Yes, call the thing the thing. But when it's not the thing, it's just disingenuous bullshit. Which is all that seems to be left of the traditional media (perhaps there was never more to it). Only narratives crumbling, and attempting desperately to prop themselves back up. (Or those behind the narratives doing just that. Damage control). And people can smell it. Misused verbiage. Falsely ascribed wording. For a purpose. To demonise. To ostracise. To divide. To maintain existing illusions and realities of power. And to eliminate anything and everything that stands in the way of an agenda that's been heavily invested in. All because we don't call things by their right names. And instead of seeking to understand underlying motivations and realities, we more readily siphon off alternative ways of looking at the world as something to be maligned. We misname things. We live the misnomers. We elevate our misgivings to ideals and live in false assumptions. But there is a very simple solution. As Confucius is purported to have said: "The beginning of wisdom is to call things by their proper name." Unfortunately, systems of lies (and those upholding them) will have a built-in aversion to doing just that.

~Nathan Godolphin,

12/02/22.