

Connotation & Political Language

A word's dictionary definition is called its DENOTATION. A word's CONNOTATION consists of its emotional associations, the emotions you feel or think of when you hear or read the word. Connotatively neutral words have few if any of these, so they're commonly used to inform, explain, or clarify.

The connotations of some words, however, are so powerful that they **overwhelm all denotations**. Because these politically charged words can limit or destroy rational discussion and debate, they're often used in persuasion. If sufficiently incendiary, demagogues use them to propagandize uncritical minds.

What are some incendiary words?

