

Call for Papers

"Brave New Word": The Violence of Language in the U. S.

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*Brave New Word* is not a misspelling of the title of Aldous Huxley's best-known novel. Rather, it is a sentence that aims at stressing the relevance of the substantive *word* – that is a *gallant* and *original* word – while at the same time suggesting, thanks to an obvious assonance, the dystopian substance of its message. While implicitly alluding to the power of words, that sentence calls also attention upon its polysemous nature—it echoes the central role attributed to the word both by the old Christian tradition ("In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God"; John 1:1), and by the Puritan rhetoric at the dawn of the New World, and the modern era. Because of the leading international role that the United States has been enjoying for over a century, and of the radical position that its newly elected Administration has chosen to express verbally and factually on a number of critical social issues, *Costellazioni* invites proposals for contributions in view of the monographic section of its 35th issue (February 2028) devoted to the subject: "The Violence of Language in the U. S."

In his *Logica della decisione*, philosopher Felice Cimatti asserts that violence is inherent to language because of the control it exerts upon the world; but what happens when the "natural" violence of the language gets in touch with an impoverished cultural and linguistic context, in which verbal violence is consciously pursued and practiced? What happens when that linguistic violence becomes an integral part of the language of politics, and is systematically used against political opponents and recognizable parts of the population? What happens, to use a recent example, when the newly elected President of the U. S. officially proclaims that starting with today, "there are only two genders, male and female"? What happens, finally, when linguistic violence ends up being manipulated by sophisticated AI instruments? It is precisely when the violence of the language used by the ruling class openly violates the constitutional guarantees, threatening the people's rights, that the intelligentsia of a nation is called upon to speak out loud in defense of the foundations of the democratic system, as prescribed by the Constitution.

On the subjects illustrated above, we would like to open a multi-disciplinary debate open to scholars operating in a variety of research fields, such as, but not limited to:

- American Literature and Culture
- American History
- Politics (American and Global)
- Linguistics
- Sociology of Communications
- Contemporary Social Science.

Proposals concerned with related subjects and/or approaches are equally welcomed.

Single essays (in English) should not exceed 40,000 characters, including abstract, notes and bibliography. Deadline for the submission of titles and abstracts for the present call: March 10, 2025; notification to authors: April 28. Delivery of final texts to the editor: September 28, 2026.