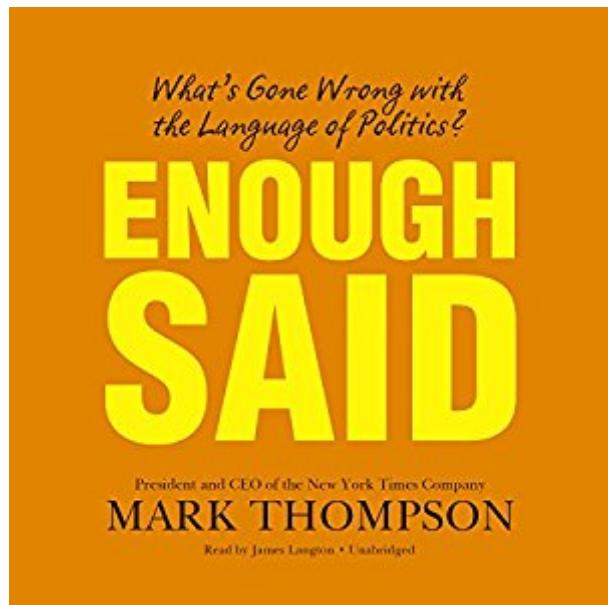


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# Enough Said: What's Gone Wrong With The Language Of Politics?



## Synopsis

There's a crisis of trust in politics across the Western world. Public anger is rising, and faith in conventional political leaders and parties is falling. Antipolitics, and the antipoliticians, have arrived. In *Enough Said*, president and CEO of the New York Times Company, Mark Thompson, argues that one of the most significant causes of the crisis is the way our public language has changed. *Enough Said* tells the story of how we got from the language of FDR and Churchill to that of Donald Trump. It forensically examines the public language we've been left with: compressed, immediate, sometimes brilliantly impactful but robbed of most of its explanatory power. It studies the rhetoric of Western leaders from Reagan and Thatcher to Berlusconi, Blair, and today's political elites on both sides of the Atlantic. And it charts how a changing public language has interacted with real-world events - Iraq, the financial crash, the United Kingdom's surprising "Brexit" from the European Union, immigration - and a mutual breakdown of trust between politicians and journalists, to leave ordinary citizens suspicious, bitter, and increasingly unwilling to believe anybody. Drawing from classical as well as contemporary examples and ranging across politics, business, science, technology, and the arts, *Enough Said* is a smart and shrewd look at the erosion of language by an author uniquely placed to measure its consequences.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Now that all of Mark's coworkers and brown-nosers have reviewed this book to "puff" it up....lets

start introducing reviews from the rest of America...those who live outside a left wing bubble of elites. This book lacks objectivity and rings with presuppositions against anyone who isn't a left wing pseudointellectual. Mark's overriding premise in this book is that politicians should use the "right" words. WHOSE "right" words Mark? Are you the one to decide which word is "right" and wrong? Should the NYT be the entity that decides Trump's use of the words "illegal immigrant" is wrong, and Hillary's "basket of deplorables" is right? Mark is rationally flawed, and he is supremely arrogant to cast himself as some kind of moral authority and judge over what is right and wrong in political discourse...especially when he is objectively BIASED towards the democratic party. If words matter so much Mark, then why doesn't your revolting newspaper start printing TRUTH rather than slanting stories to favor the democratic party? There is a reason most of America doesn't trust your paper anymore, because you exist in a little elitist bubble and you no longer represent objective journalism, you represent an agenda to get democrats elected. Your paper takes words out of context, it puts words in people's mouths, it leaves out stories on purpose simply because it might put a democrat in an unfavorable light...this is devolution of human progress Mark. Obviously words don't matter much mark, because your paper is a non-stop factory of slanted nonsense, using the wrong words to fabricate lies and mistruths posing as "objective journalism".

Public discourse has changed over time as language has changed -- but it has recently been changed by technology in ways no one could have predicted. When comments at a blog post are just as much part of the news we receive as articles in the New York Times and journalists get feedback and use it to update their articles faster than they could have written a well-crafted second draft... well, the audience is as much part of the discussion as the experts are. Some of the consequences of this truth are positive, but some are negative. Thompson looks at the ideas about rhetoric and political speech expressed by everyone from Plato to George Orwell and uses examples from Adolf Hitler to Donald Trump. He examines not only how we respond to political slogans, but also how political rhetoric affects our understanding of science, war, and the media itself. With extensive information from marketing and social media as well as political discussion and the news, he looks at the ways in which free speech and sincere disagreement are being threatened. The paradox of having unprecedented access to knowledge and at the same time having brand new ways to limit our exposure to people who disagree with us has led to people who cannot, as Thompson says, "distinguish at once between matters of fact and those of opinion, between grown-up political discourse and outright nonsense." Thompson recommends education, for ourselves and our children, and also for our audiences. He suggests that those of us who write

online (which is what I do for a living) and the organizations that provide the most respected news should take responsibility for our use of the language, and that those of us who consume news should take responsibility for critically examining what we hear and read.

This book came along at a time when public distrust is at a historical high. Political debate has been sensationalized, made shallow, trivial, frivolous, and less intelligent. I've had long discussions with friends attempting to decipher how and why this has happened. I'm reminded of a classic TV show from the 50's when Chester A. Riley looked at things going wrong around him and lamented "What a revolting development this is." Mark Thompson, in his book *Enough Said*, gives us answers as well as the history that has led to the crassness in our current rhetoric. Thompson goes all the way back to the Peloponnesian War and Thucydides citing that change in language was a major factor in Athens' decent from dysfunctional democracy through demagoguery into tyranny and anarchy. He said that people started to define things in any way they pleased. Then author wove this theme of "losing the true names of things" up to our current times. He cites Sarah Palin and her "death panels", Trump and his march towards the presidency via a campaign of Tweets. All rhetoric is designed for time and place " and above all, for a particular audience. The author asks the question "has the media dumbed down public discourse?" or has the public changed. Is it a combination of affluence and hedonism and current technology that had filled the heads of the public with entertainment 24/7 that has allowed them to become more shallow, less civic minded and less able to concentrate? Is it any wonder we see the crassness of speech, lies and ad hominem attacks that are now commonplace on the political stump? I loved every word of this book though I'll admit that I often pulled up my on-line dictionary to check out some of the academic and scholarly terms used by Mr. Thompson (BTW, thank you).

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