



# STUDY GUIDE

## CONTROL THE WORDS, CONTROL THE CULTURE

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**KEY TERMS:** semantics  
leftist language

discriminate  
definition

euphemism  
culture

**NOTE-TAKING COLUMN:** Complete this section during the video. Include definitions and key terms.

**CUE COLUMN:** Complete this section after the video.

Why do words exist?

Why are words so important?

What is the sole purpose of a euphemism?

In what ways do words correlate to culture?

What might happen if you use the 'wrong words?'

## DISCUSSION & REVIEW QUESTIONS:

- Towards the beginning of the video, Mr. Knowles asks, “Why does it matter whether we call someone who breaks the law to enter the country an “illegal alien” or a “undocumented immigrant”? What’s the difference between a Christmas tree and a “holiday tree?” How would you answer Mr. Knowles’ questions? Would you be willing to publicly use the term ‘illegal alien?’ Why or why not?
- Mr. Knowles goes on to explain that, “It is just semantics, but “semantics” means the meaning of words. Words exist so that we might discriminate one thing from another. Without words we have chaos... Words shape how we think; they color how we view the world.” Do you agree with Mr. Knowles’ premise of why words exist? Why or why not? What do you think Mr. Knowles means when stating that we have ‘chaos’ without words? Explain.
- Amidst the myriad of examples Mr. Knowles gives of the left controlling language, he points out that, “In the name of ‘diversity’ the left enforces intellectual conformity. It censors opposing views in the name of ‘tolerance.’ And it labels all non-left views ‘hate speech.’ Why do you think that the left does this? Explain. Do you consider such tactics by the left to be hypocritical? Why or why not?
- “All this manipulation of language has paid off for the left: because whoever controls the words controls the culture. Don’t believe me? Just try using plain language instead of the Left’s politically correct jargon. But be careful. Use “the wrong words” and you might lose your job, your home and your reputation.” What, exactly, is the ‘culture’ that Mr. Knowles is referring to? Do you agree with Mr. Knowles conclusion that ‘whoever controls the words controls the culture?’ Why or why not? What are some examples of someone losing their job after using the ‘wrong words?’ Who do you think should be the arbiter of what words are ‘right’ and which words are ‘wrong?’ Explain.
- Towards the end of the video, Mr. Knowles states that, “The culture war is largely a war of words. Right now, the Left is winning. You can see the consequences everywhere: in politics, in education, in media. It’s time to fight back. We should not cede another syllable.” What is the ‘culture war’ that Mr. Knowles refers to? Why do you think that he believes the left is ‘winning’ the culture war? What specific consequences might he be referring to (of the left winning the culture war)? What do you think he means, both specifically and more broadly, by admonishing viewers to ‘not cede another syllable?’ Explain.

## EXTEND THE LEARNING:

### CASE STUDY: Gender Pronouns

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the article “New California law allows jail time for using wrong gender pronoun, sponsor denies that would happen,” then answer the questions that follow.

- What does the legislation signed by Governor Brown on October 4, 2017 do? What was Senator Weiner’s position on the subject? What could health care workers potentially be punished for? What could their criminal punishments be? How did Senator Weiner’s office characterize the law? Who is Greg Burt, and what point did he make about the law?
- Do you think that Senator Weiner’s position that the spirit of the law, rather than the letter of the law, will be enforced is a valid position to take? Why or why not? Do you agree with this law? Why or why not? Do you think that this law sets a negative precedent, in terms of a ‘slippery slope’ towards the government controlling more and more of our speech (thus taking away more and more of our freedoms and rights)? Explain.
- Do you think that this article supports the main point of the video? If not, why not? If so, in which specific points in the article support the main point of the video?



# QUIZ

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**1. Why are the Left masters of words?**

- a. Because they're first and foremost linguists.
- b. Because most Leftists were on a debate team.
- c. Because they know that words matter.
- d. Because they are more highly educated than the Right.

**2. The culture war is largely \_\_\_\_\_.**

- a. a war of words
- b. fought in Europe
- c. an underground movement
- d. responsible for the rise of home prices

**3. When Barack Obama became president, George Bush's war in Afghanistan suddenly transformed into \_\_\_\_\_.**

- a. a "nuclear arms race"
- b. an "unprecedented alliance"
- c. an "overseas contingency operation"
- d. the "war in Kabul"

**4. What are soft words selected to sugarcoat harsh realities so as to make those harsh realities easier for us to swallow?**

- a. hyperbole
- b. dysphemisms
- c. vocabulary
- d. euphemisms

**5. The Left labels a small segment of non-left views "hate speech."**

- a. True
- b. False



# QUIZ - ANSWER KEY

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<http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2017/10/09/new-california-law-allows-jail-time-for-using-wrong-gender-pronoun-sponsor-denies-that-would-happen.html>

October 9th, 2017

## **New California law allows jail time for using wrong gender pronoun, sponsor denies that would happen**



By Brooke Singman, Fox News

Democratic California Gov. Jerry Brown signed legislation on October 4, 2017 that would punish health care workers with fine, and potential jail time, if they decline to use a senior transgender patient's "preferred name or pronouns." The bill was sponsored by California State Sen. Scott Wiener. (AP)

California health care workers who "willfully and repeatedly" decline to use a senior transgender patient's "preferred name or pronouns" could face punishments ranging from a fine to jail time under a newly signed law.

California Gov. Jerry Brown signed the legislation last week.

The sponsor, Democratic state Sen. Scott Wiener, has argued adamantly that nobody is going to be criminally prosecuted for using the wrong pronoun.

"It's just more scare tactics by people who oppose all LGBT civil rights and protections," he said in a statement last month.

But the language seemingly allows for the possibility, however remote.

The bill itself is aimed at protecting transgender and other LGBT individuals in hospitals, retirement homes and assisted living facilities. The bill would ensure those facilities accommodate transgender people and their needs, including letting them decide which gender-specific bathroom they prefer to use.

"It shall be unlawful for a long-term care facility or facility staff to take any of the following actions wholly or partially on the basis of a person's actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) status," the bill reads.

### **Bill proposes punishment for not using preferred pronouns**

Among the unlawful actions are "willfully and repeatedly" failing to use a transgender person's "preferred name or pronouns" after he or she is "clearly informed of the preferred name or pronouns."

The law states that if provisions are violated, the violator could be punished by a fine “not to exceed one thousand dollars” or “by imprisonment in the county jail for a period not to exceed one year,” or both.

Wiener's office noted that violations for residential care facilities under existing law rarely resulted in criminal charges, especially for minor violations. Criminal penalties are meant more for violations that expose a patient to risk of death or serious harm, his office said.

Wiener's office noted that the law “does not create any new criminal provisions,” but rather creates “new rights within an existing structure.”

One opponent of the law, the California Family Council's Greg Burt, slammed the measure when the bill was in its early stages.

“How can you believe in free speech, but think the government can compel people to use certain pronouns when talking to others?” he said to the California Assembly Judiciary Committee in August, according to CBN News.

Brooke Singman is a Politics Reporter for Fox News. Follow her on Twitter at [@brookefoxnews](https://twitter.com/brookefoxnews).