

A fascinating issue arose during our recent Presidential election campaign, and continues today. Many good, ordinary people fell in love with the candidate who "talked just like they do." News Hour on PBS found two Texas cafes, one in a small town, the other in Austin. The customers were all Texans, all who apparently loved their state and their country, but their answers to the reporter's questions seemed to come from two different worlds.

The customers in the small town caf\351 all acknowledged voting for President Trump, and as of his first three weeks, were still enthusiastic. All were hard working farmers and small town residents, all of them white, sharing a love for traditional small town culture.

One comment met with universal approval: it was "refreshing" to have their leader speak just like they do. When asked what they meant by this, they liked his "plain talk," did not mind the vulgarity

(saying that many people in their town talked like that in private), and believed that despite his privileged wealthy life, his language showed that he understood how they felt. They all hated the lawyerly-like talk of most politicians, and found this particularly egregious with Hillary Clinton, whom they "did not trust."

They trusted that their President would bring back jobs, and even those who expressed doubt about this, were happy that he even talked about it. They were happy about the immigrant ban, liked his appointment of Jeff Sessions as Attorney General (insisting that he had no background as a racial bigot), and did not mind that most of the president's appointees were billionaires. They accepted his claim that successful people (billionaires) knew how to get things done.

The customers in the Austin (a college town) caf\351 were a diverse group of university types: sharing leftist values of cosmopolitanism, tolerance for differences, and language reflecting college education (with the exception of a handful of hippies). They answered the same questions that the reporter had asked in the small town, but the answers were completely different. They discussed what they considered the narcissism of President Trump, how he used language to inflame his followers, his harping on the size of his electoral win, and they were very critical of his appointments of people known for their dislike of the very departments that they would be charged with directing. These two groups could not have seen the world more differently.

We are indeed a divided nation, but it is important to remember that our rural population is one third of the whole, and shrinking, while the urban population is two thirds, and growing. We are not on the verge of a civil war.

Hitler was an expert at whipping up mobs with plain talk, vulgarity, and threats of revenge and extermination of "enemies of the state." Intellectuals were, of course, such enemies, as were city dwellers.

In 1952, an Egyptian military officer, Gamal Abdel Nasser, led a revolt that ended Egypt's monarchy and established a "republic." Nasser broke with tradition that leaders in Arab countries must show their education by speaking in classical Arabic. Instead, he used Egyptian Arabic, with its own slang, own terminology, and own street talk. The crowds went crazy with delight.

Iran's Islamic Revolution leader, Ayatollah Khomeini, who spoke a type of Farsi using unfamiliar Arabic terms as a religious scholar, chose instead to address his admiring hordes in the most vulgar, coarse sort of street Farsi. He talked about "punching the US in the jaw," and wiping out enemies "corrupting the earth" (people other than pious Shiite Muslims). intellectuals fled the country.

Yes, I am an educated elitist, and I dislike political "plain talk." But just to raise another issue, I don't like the coarseness of language that assaults us in many American movies and Cable TV dramas. The small town people are right to object to the vulgarity in popular entertainment, even though they don't mind it in their leader. The cosmopolitan elites want to protect vulgar speech in the arts, while detesting it in their politicians. I am equally appalled by both!

680 words

Dr. Laina Farhat-Holzman is a historian, lecturer, and author of God's Law or Man's

Law. You may contact her at Lfarhat102@aol.com or www.globalthink.net.