

Governing with Words

Rather than considering political discussions and rhetoric as symbolic, inconsequential forms of politics, *Governing with Words* conceptualizes them as forms of government action that can shape institutions and societal norms. Daniel Q. Gillion refers to this theory as “discursive governance.” Federal politicians’ statements that address racial and ethnic minority concerns aid the passage of minority public policies and improve individual lifestyle behaviors. Unfortunately, most of the American public continues to disapprove of politicians’ rhetoric that highlights race. The book argues that addressing racial and ethnic inequality continues to be a tug-of-war between avoiding the backlash of the majority in this nation while advocating for minority interests. Even though this paradox looms over politicians’ discussions of race, race-conscious political speech viewed in its entirety is the mechanism by which marginalized groups find a place in the democratic process. Such race-conscious discussions, the book argues, have ramifications both within and outside of government.

Daniel Q. Gillion is the Presidential Associate Professor at the University of Pennsylvania. He was also a Ford Foundation Fellow and a Robert Wood Johnson Health Policy Scholar at Harvard University. Professor Gillion’s first book, *The Political Power of Protest*, was the winner of the Best Book Award from the Race, Ethnicity, and Politics Section of the American Political Science Association. His research has been published in the academic journals *Electoral Studies* and the *Journal of Politics*, as well as in the edited volumes of *The Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior*.

Governing with Words

*The Political Dialogue on Race, Public Policy,
and Inequality in America*

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