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'Xen' and the Art of Nomenclature Maintenance

New Labels for Advocates of Open-Ended Immigration Policies

By Scip Garling

Words can be used as tools or as weapons. *Xenophobia*, for example, continues to be used as a weapon (see Roy Beck's article in the Spring 1992 issue of *THE SOCIAL CONTRACT*). To lighten the load on this overburdened word, I suggest some new terms for discussing immigration in America.

Before we meet these terms, a word to the linguistically squeamish: there is nothing wrong with creating new words. Words do not grow on trees; people make them up. *Xenophobia* is a made-up word from "phobia" — which is another made-up word. You will not find "phobia" in either a Latin dictionary or a Greek lexicon. It is a modern English word (with a Greek root and a Latin ending), invented within the last century by psychologists. If they can do it, so can we.

Many opponents of immigration reform pride themselves on being *xenophiles*, people with a fondness for the foreign. They may in fact be *xenomaniacs*, people with an obsessive devotion to the foreign. A xenophile is likely to perceive the good that a foreign culture or foreign person has to offer; a xenomaniac is unlikely to perceive anything else.

A xenomaniac might point out that xenophobia springs from insecurity: insecurity about one's safety. Likewise, xenomania stems from an insecurity: insecurity about one's worthiness. Such insecurity is certainly related to *dyspatriotism* (the belief that one's country is bad or wrong in any situation), *ethnoseverism* (the desire to cut oneself off from one's own culture), and *xenopathy* (overwhelming identification with foreigners).

"Xenophobia," to quote Louisa Parker of the

Federation for American Immigration Reform, "is the irrational fear of foreigners. There is a very rational fear of the impact of immigration — legal and illegal" (*USA Today*, July 15, 1993). What we need is a word to describe that rational, reasonable fear.

Fortunately, the ancients were thoughtful enough to make a distinction between having an irrational fear (*phobein*) and a rational one (*deidein*). From those verbs come the names of the two sons of the Greek war-god, Ares: Phobos and Deimos. The astronomically-inclined reader may recognize these as the names of the two moons of the planet Mars (and Mars is the Roman name for Ares, the war-god).

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So, if someone with an irrational fear of foreigners is a xenophobe, then someone with a rational fear is a *xenodeid*. Since xenodeidic concern usually focuses not on foreigners themselves but rather on their impact on society, we need a word to describe that impact. Try *xenotrauma*, the shocking effect of too much immigration on our societal systems.

The very use of roots like "philia," "phobia," and "mania" puts the immigration debate into

"Xendex" of Immigration Labels

<i>xenophobia</i>	(zen-o-FO-bee-yuh)	irrational fear of foreigners
<i>xenodeim</i>	(zen-o-DAME)	reasonable concern about immigration
<i>xenotrauma</i>	(zen-o-TRAW-muh)	shock of too much immigration
<i>xenophilia</i>	(zen-o-FEE-lee-yuh)	fondness for foreign things and people
<i>xenopathy</i>	(zen-AH-puh-thee)	overwhelming identification with foreigners
<i>xenomania</i>	(zen-o-MAY-knee-yuh)	irrational foreign attraction, with little regard to effect on one's own nation
<i>xenomels</i>	(ZEN-o-mels)	people interested in immigration
<i>xenosophs</i>	(ZEN-o-sawfs)	people prudent in immigration matters
<i>xenomores</i>	(ZEN-o-mores)	people reckless in immigration matters

Armed with these labels, an immigration reformer accused of *xenophobia* might well answer: "I'm not a *xenophobe*. I'm much too rational, and I don't hate foreigners. In fact, I'm really quite a *xenophile* when it comes to an appreciation of foreign cultures and peoples, although I don't go to extremes; I'm certainly no *xenomaniac*. Like many *xenomels*, my *xenodeim* about the effects of mass immigration on our society leaves me no choice but to be a *xenosoph* by seeking prudent levels of immigration."

After accusers tried to sort out all the nuances of the suffixes, perhaps they would decide just to skip using "xen" words altogether.

emotional terms: loves, fears, madnesses. Perhaps it would be better to discuss the matter with more rational, intellectual terms. How much different the immigration debate seems when it is between *xenosophs* (those who are prudent in importing foreigners) and *xenomores* (those who are reckless). On the other hand, discussants could pride themselves on being *xenomels* (people who are concerned about immigration and how it affects them) from the Greek *melie*, "it concerns."

Xenomels would give thought to plans for limited immigration. But what could they call it? As immigration is not new, neither is the idea that it should be limited. So it should come as no surprise that the Greeks (the Spartans, specifically) had a word for it: *xenelasia*. [You may be wondering where the "o" is in the familiar prefix "xeno-" — in

Greek word-formation, the initial "e" of the base word "elasia" overrides the final "o" of the prefix "xeno-."]

With *xenelasia* as an operative term, the supporters of laws to limit immigration could be called *xenelasts*. Bills to limit immigration would, of course, be termed *xenelastis* — although that might be stretching it a bit!

Dennis Meadows, of *Limits to Growth* fame, once told me: "If your only tool is a hammer, everything looks like a nail." If *xenophobia* is the only tool for describing attitudes of concern about immigration, everyone will look like a *xenophobe*.

If we expand our tool kit and use some of these new words as our instruments, it may become easier to debate and build a better immigration policy. ■

Washington Notepad

By Roy Beck

Finally, An EPA Population Person

It was deep in the stacks of the federal Environmental Protection Agency's library where David Rejeski recently discovered his uniqueness as an EPA official. In an apparently revolutionary act, he checked out the report from the "Rockefeller Population Commission" and its volume of material on the linkage between population growth and the country's ability to meet its environmental goals.

At the librarian's desk, he made a remarkable finding: he was the first person at the EPA ever to check out the report released in 1972.

"I thought: this can't be true," said Rejeski, head of the EPA's fledgling Future Studies Unit. For years, environmentalists concerned about sustainability have pleaded for the EPA to have a population office or desk. Now, Rejeski has emerged as someone willing to use his EPA niche in something like that role.

His startling library anecdote is indicative of the way U.S. environmental policy has operated with near obliviousness to the population issues raised by the Rockefeller Commission. That joint presidential-congressional body conducted a two-year study at great expense and found no benefits to be had from future U.S. population growth. To those knowledgeable about the issue, it never seemed like the EPA was paying attention to the wealth of information gathered during the study. Rejeski's library experience seems to confirm that. The EPA has failed even to alert the public that each year's additional three million Americans adds to the costs and restrictions necessary to meet environmental goals. In the summer 1993 issue of **THE SOCIAL CONTRACT**, I recounted my unsuccessful Diogenes-like search over the previous year to find one EPA official able even to talk about population-environmental links. Obviously, none of the people with whom I talked in various headquarters offices knew enough to refer me to Rejeski.

"The unfortunate thing is that this place has a very high level of demographic ignorance and bliss," Rejeski told **THE SOCIAL CONTRACT** in a pre-Christmas interview. "There simply is no demographer around here. I'm not a demographer, but I'm learning fast to represent that point of view. There will be a roomful of economists. But without a demographer, you can't have an enlightened environmental policy."

Rejeski is quick to emphasize that he believes the EPA to be no worse on this score than most federal agencies: "Except for the Census Bureau, the agencies don't have demographic expertise. So the necessary questions don't get raised when making policies."

The EPA's Future Studies Unit was started three years ago to look at underlying pervasive changes in the society that could have major impact on the way the EPA does its work over the next 30 to 50 years.

Rejeski has decided no trend needs more attention during the coming year than that of demographic change. He said about 80 percent of his unit's budget next year will be on demographics. That's not saying a lot, however, since the unit has only a three-member staff.

Nonetheless, it means that at least one small part of the federal government finally will be looking at ramifications of the Census Bureau's announcement in December of 1992 that this country's population will be more than 80 million higher in 2050 than had previously been thought.

"That probably was one of the most critical documents ever put out by the government," Rejeski said. "Every agency in Washington should have been meeting immediately to discuss how their plans would have to change because of the extra 80 million people." Instead, nobody seemed to have blinked an eye.

Rejeski, a U.S. native, is an EPA outsider, having come from Germany where he was an environmental planner and public policy analyst for the German government. His two EPA co-workers are a geologist and a philosopher. "The only way to