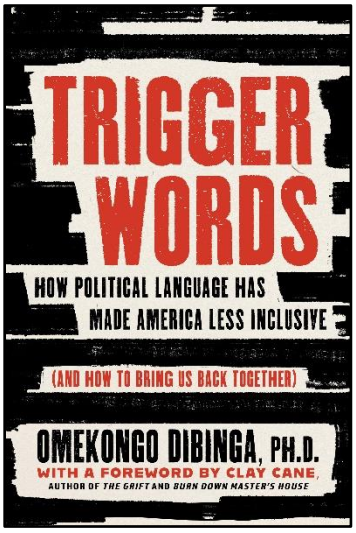
For media inquiries, please contact:
Anthony Pomes | Senior Marketing & Publicity Manager
apomes@globepequot.com

The War of the *Words*
(and the Arrival of a Peacemaker)



Trigger Words

How Political Language Has
Made America Less Inclusive
(and How to Bring Us Back Together)

By Omekongo Dibinga, Ph.D.

with a *Foreword* by Clay Cane

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258 pages | Size: 6 x 9 | **1 B&W Illustration**
Category: Social Science / Discrimination / Diversity & Multiculturalism

Trigger Words examines how language in the United States has been manipulated and politicized to sow division and dehumanization, rather than to encourage inclusion and equity. From "woke" to "DEI" to "CRT," words that once emerged from marginalized communities to speak truth to power have been weaponized by conservative movements—especially the MAGA wing of the Republican Party—to stoke fear, shut down dialogue, and preserve systems of oppression. At the same time, however, language has been coopted by many in liberal spaces in watered-down ways that remove the overall message that was intended to be communicated by said language, such as switching terminology from "homeless" to "unhoused," "African American" to "BIPOC," or "Latino" to "Latinx."

This incisive and thoughtful look at how our language has been dangerously politicized by both sides of the aisle is not just a diagnosis—it is a **roadmap**. With experience as a university lecturer, community activist, award-winning poet and rapper, renowned professional speaker, and bestselling author (*Lies About Black People*), Dr. Omekongo Dibinga charts a path forward to reclaim and reframe these terms in their original contexts and intent.

Trigger Words is an urgent and hopeful call to action that shows that healing begins when we stop simply repeating these words like ideological mantras or rejecting them out of political fear. Instead, the book invites readers to understand the deeper histories behind our most loaded social vocabulary, challenge manipulation and misuse, and foster authentic dialogue that connects rather than divides.

(*turn over*)

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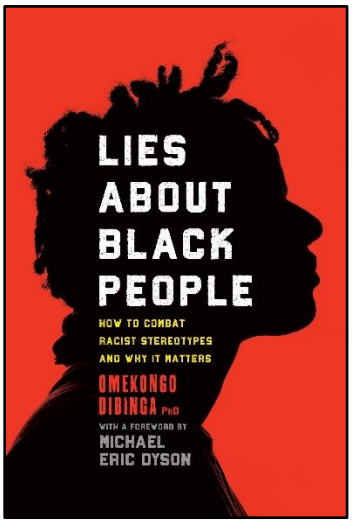
Photo: Drew Xeron

About the Author:

Dr. Omekongo Dibinga's life has been devoted to challenging bias and smashing stereotypes for over 30 years since first getting involved as a community activist. Dr. Dibinga is Senior Professorial Lecturer of Intercultural Communication at American University. He is an award-winning poet, rapper, and a world-renowned professional speaker working with corporations and school districts across the world on leveraging diversity for organizational success. His undergraduate and doctoral work has centered around issues facing the Black community not only in America but across the globe, which has led Dr. Dibinga to live and work in almost 30 countries. Dr. Dibinga earned his Ph.D. in International Education Policy at The University of Maryland (UMD) where his dissertation centered on post-Civil Rights Era Black youth. He also worked with the Southern Poverty Law Center's "Teaching Diverse Students Initiative" and provides leadership, educational and diversity empowerment as a consultant and motivational speaker for corporations, associations, and institutions around the world. He lives in Maryland.

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