

Bloviating

by Phillip W. Weiss

Bloviating is one of the most repulsive, disgusting and counterproductive forms of miscommunication known to civilization. It is a way of tooting one's horn, grandstanding and pontificating at someone else's expense, and is something that is detestable and should not be practiced anywhere. This has nothing to do with censoring speech or which is protected by the First Amendment which guarantees the right to free speech. Rather, this is about fervently hoping that when someone does exercise their free speech right, that they do not bloviate.

Bloviating, aka pontificating, showboating, grandstanding, is a repulsive form of communication. It is a form of speech characterized by long-winded commentary that says nothing. It is usually performed before captive audiences and is most often practiced by politicians, college professors, and others who use an audience to hear themselves speak.

Synonyms for bloviating include showboating, touting one's horn, grandstanding, lecturing, haranguing, one-way-talk, pomposity, noisemaking, flapping one's lips, running off at the mouth. Derivative verb: to bloviate.

Not surprisingly, two of the more well-known bloviators in American history were politicians. One was President Theodore Roosevelt and President Warren G. Harding, who used the word bloviate in a longwinded and now almost totally forgotten political harangue, and who was even blackballed during his first petition for membership to a Masonic lodge.

So, a word about Warren G. Harding. Warren G. Harding was the 29th President of the United States. Harding was born and raised in a small town in Ohio. He owned a newspaper. He got into politics, became a Senator and in 1920 was elected President. Harding's administration was arguably THE most corrupt in American history. Under Harding's administration not one but TWO major scandals occurred, one involving the sale of oil leases and another involving wholesale theft in the bureau of veterans' affairs. Also, Harding, who was married, while serving in the Senate fathered an illegitimate child.

Both Roosevelt and Harding were first and foremost professional politicians who used bloviation to promote a political agenda and themselves.

So, when anyone feels the urge to engage in bloviation, pause a moment, give the matter some honest and serious thought, and ask yourself three questions:

1. Do I REALLY have anything worthwhile to say?
2. Is the audience REALLY interested in what I have to say?
3. Will whatever I want to say make the world a better and happier place?

If you answer all three questions in the positive, then congratulations. You are doing yourself and the world a service. If, however, you answer one or more of these questions in the negative, then I suggest that, following the examples of Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Harding, you become a politician or better yet, a college professor for whom longwinded boring lectures are commonplace and part of the job. But if you go that route and become a professional bloviator, keep in mind what happened to another well-known bloviator, Il Duce, Benito Mussolini, who made bloviating into an art form, with tragic results for himself, his mistress and his country.

Sources:

[Bloviation Definition & Meaning - Merriam-Webster](#)

[Warren G. Harding - Facts, Political Party & Presidency \(biography.com\)](#)

[The Multiple Scandals of President Warren G. Harding \(history.com\)](#)