

# Swearing A Social History Of Foul Language Oaths And Profanity In English

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this is the only encyclopedia and social history of swearing and foul language in the english speaking world it covers the various social dynamics that generate swearing foul language and insults in the entire range of the english language while the emphasis is on american and british english the different major global varieties such as australian canadian south african and caribbean english are also covered a z entries cover the full range of swearing and foul language in english including fascinating details on the history and

origins of each term and the social context in which it found expression categories include blasphemy obscenity profanity the categorization of women and races and modal varieties such as the ritual insults of renaissance flyting and modern sounding or playing the dozens entries cover the historical dimension of the language from anglo saxon heroic oaths and the surprising power of medieval profanity to the strict censorship of the renaissance and the vibrant modern language of the streets social factors such as stereotyping xenophobia and the dynamics of ethnic slurs as well as age and gender differences in swearing are also addressed along with the major taboo words and the complex and changing nature of religious sexual and racial taboos

tracing the history of swearing from ancient anglo saxon traditions and those of the middle ages through shakespeare the enlightenment and the victorians to the lady chatterley trial and various current trends geoffrey hughes explores a fascinating little discussed yet irrespressible part of our linguistic heritage this second edition contains a postscript updating various contemporary developments such as the growth of political correctness

do men use bad language more than women how do social class and the use of bad language interact do young speakers use bad language more frequently than older speakers using the spoken section of the british national corpus swearing in english explores questions such as these and considers at length the historical origins of modern attitudes to bad language drawing on a variety of methodologies including historical research and corpus linguistics and a range of data such as corpora dramatic texts early modern newsbooks and television tony mcenery takes a socio historical approach to discourses about bad language in english arguing that purity of speech and power have come to be connected via a series of moral panics about bad language the book contends that these moral panics over time have generated the differences observable in bad language usage in present day english a fascinating comprehensive insight into an increasingly popular area this book provides an explanation and not simply a description of how modern attitudes to bad language have come about

it may be starred beped and censored yet profanity is so appealing that we can t stop using it in the funniest clearest study to date benjamin bergen explains why and what that tells us about our language and brains nearly everyone swears whether it s over a few too many drinks in reaction to a stubbed toe or in flagrante delicto and yet we sit idly by as words are banned from television and

censored in books we insist that people excise profanity from their vocabularies and we punish children for yelling the very same dirty words that we'll mutter in relief seconds after they fall asleep swearing it seems is an intimate part of us that we have decided to selectively deny that's a damn shame swearing is useful it can be funny cathartic or emotionally arousing as linguist and cognitive scientist benjamin k bergen shows us it also opens a new window onto how our brains process language and why languages vary around the world and over time in this groundbreaking yet ebullient romp through the linguistic muck bergen answers intriguing questions how can patients left otherwise speechless after a stroke still shout goddamn when they get upset when did a cock grow to be more than merely a rooster why is crap vulgar when poo is just childish do slurs make you treat people differently why is the first word that samoan children say not mommy but eat shit and why do we extend a middle finger to flip someone the bird smart as hell and funny as fuck what the f is mandatory reading for anyone who wants to know how and why we swear

vols 277 230 no 2 include stuff and nonsense v 5 6 no 8 jan 1929 aug 1930

from the earliest times swearing has existed in many variegated forms from the deadliest curse to the most trivial expletives of annoyance hedged about with all manner of complex pressures personal societal religious sexual and other forms of taboo it remains a phenomenon only imperfectly understood geoffrey hughes traces these two contrasting strands through our linguistic history his discussion starts with the use of language as magic in primitive society the binding oath of heroic commitment in anglo saxon warrior society and the emergence of blasphemy in the medieval age of faith with the renaissance came a shift from a religious to a secular idiom of swearing a period combining rich exuberance in language with severe restraint this oscillation between institutional censorship and individual defiance continues to modern times professor hughes includes in this broad ranging survey such topics as xenophobia and the racist basis of abuse graffiti the sexual and sexist patterns of swearing the multifarious forms of euphemism and the curious varieties of verbal duelling known as flyting and sounding his book is a tireless exploration of a little discussed but irrepressible part of our linguistic heritage

when the sex pistols swore live on tea time telly in 1976 there was outrage across britain headlines screamed christians marched tvs were kicked in thirty years on all those words are media mainstream bandied about with impunity on tv and in the papers this is

the story of our bad language and its three decade journey from the fringes of decency to the working centre of a more linguistically liberal nation silverton takes a clear comprehensive and witty look at swearing and the impact of its new acceptability on our language our manners and our society he considers how we have become more openly emotional yet more wary about insulting others and how it s seemingly become alright to say and but not or this is the story of that cultural revolution written by one who was there at the start proudly striking some of the first blows in the long struggle for the right to reclaim filthy english and use it

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