

Wednesday, 18 September 2012  
Day 7 Post 12 Lang Lit HL

## **Objectives:**

**I will know the cultural implications of euphemisms versus profanity.**

**Unit question:** *What do our words reflect about our culture and ourselves?*

## **Class Business:**

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## **Agenda:**

1. Euphemisms definition
2. Thomas Bowdler and "Bowdlerise" in Hollywood
3. Discussion - Euphemisms and media
4. Examples of Euphemisms - movies to television
5. Activity: Alter a text with euphemisms

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**Euphemism:** using a favorable or at least neutral term because the usual term is considered offensive or denigrating.

"speaking favorably"

"fair speaking"

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# Euphemisms

## Death

kick the bucket  
passed away  
pushing daisies  
six feet under  
departed  
no longer with us  
crossed over

RIP  
Sleeping with fishes  
Grew wings to fly

## Sex

Mate  
Bang  
Make love  
Shag  
Do  
Being pleased  
Launching the meaty  
missile

Got busy  
Rumble in the jungle  
Squeeze and squirm  
Humped  
Park the car  
Train in the tunnel  
Plowing the furrow  
Battered the corn dog

## Bodily Functions

Powder the nose  
Break wind  
Upset stomach  
Visit the loo  
Feeling sick  
Empty your bladder

Answer the call of nature  
Number 1 and number 2  
Take a dump  
Relieve yourself  
Go to the men's/ladies room  
Be excused  
Take a leak  
Prairie Dogging

***"I apprehended the accused and advised him of his rights. He replied, 'Why don't you ram it up your pimhole, you fusking clothprunker.'"***

**- A Bit of Fry and Laurie**

## Thomas Bowdler 1754-1825

Best known for publishing the "Family Shakespeare"



- In Hamlet, the death of Ophelia was referred to as an accidental drowning, omitting the suggestions that she may have intended suicide.
- In Macbeth, Lady Macbeth's famous cry "Out, damned spot!" was changed to "Out, crimson spot!"
- "God!" as an exclamation is replaced with "Heavens!"

**Bowdlerise**: verb

Now associated with "censorship" in literature, film, and television

## Discussion

In *Hollywood*, which words can be said on screen and still be socially acceptable? What determines the acceptance of these words?

On *television*, which words can be said on screen and still be socially acceptable? What determines the acceptance of these words?

How is profanity used in television and film in *your* country or culture?

## *Euphemisms*

### Snakes on a Plane

"I have had it with these monkey-fighting snakes on this Monday-to-Friday plane!"

In Asia, Cinemax just cuts out the line entirely: "Enough is enough! Everyone strap in, I'm going to open some windows."

### Scarface

In the original, Tony describes the town by saying, "This town is one big pussy just begging to be fucked."

In the tv airing he says " This town is one big chicken just begging to be plucked".

## *Euphemisms*

### **See No Evil, Hear No Evil**

Gene Wilder's character tells Richard Pryor's character to "tell me the first thing that pops into your head," and predictably, he replies "Pussy!", which was dubbed over on TV with "Pasta!"

### **500 Days of Summer** (the Delta Airlines version):

When Tom and Summer are playing the penis game the word "penis" is replaced with "panda".



## **Gossip Girl**

## ***Fillers***

"eff"

"Don't eff with an effer"

"Oh my effin' God."

## **Big Bang Theory**

Penny: "Holy crap on a cracker"

## **Battlestar Gallactica**

"Frack" "Frick" and "Felgercarb"

