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# EXPLETIVES EXPLAINED

Metaphor, Moral Panic and Swearing

By

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## Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to examine discourse on swearing by exploring the language used in two UK newspapers *The Mirror* and *The Express* between 2008 and 2009. In particular, the focal point became two national anti-swearing campaigns that developed after an incident on BBC Radio 2 known as Sachsgate. This was followed by the publication of several polls and reports that appeared to contradict the reasoning for the two campaigns. The discourse used in news reports, editorials and letters pages regarding swearing at this time was closely reviewed within two theoretical frameworks. Firstly, the study drew from Conceptual Metaphor Theory, as outlined by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (2003). Secondly, it used a Moral Panic Theory framework, derived from Stanley Cohen's (2002) original thesis.

The primary findings from this investigation demonstrated a significant correlation between swearing and three clusters of conceptual metaphors: Religiosity, Hygiene and Invasion. It is suggested that there is a blurring between the literal and non-literal that has resulted in swearing being stereotyped as something filthy, irreligious and a threat to the social and moral norms of the Self. The study continued to examine whether the discourse constituted a moral panic, finding that the narrative was presented in the stylised and stereotypical manner indicative of a moral panic and that this intensified the social issue of swearing as a deviant behaviour. This interdisciplinary study has provided evidence as to how (negative) attitudes towards swearing become defined and sustained.



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# 1 Introduction

*Caveat: This thesis contains swear words and language considered to be offensive.*

## 1.1 Background and rationale

This is a thesis about bad language<sup>1</sup>. More specifically, this is a thesis about the *language* about bad language. It will explore and discuss the way we talk about swearing and how that defines and sustains the idea that some words are bad. Swearing has had universal negative press for centuries. As I will discuss in Chapter 2 it has become associated with a range of anti-social behaviours that have seen it come under repeated censorious attacks. And yet, there remains a paradox. Not only do most people admit to using swear words (Rassin and Van der Heijden, 2005: 177) but the words considered to be the most offensive are also the ones that people admit to using the most (Beers Fägersten, 2012: 17). Approximately 10 swear words that have remained stable over the past couple of decades account for 80% of public swearing (Jay, 2009a: 153). Despite the many attempts to control and censor swearing it continues to be a persistent feature of conversations across the globe. This suggests that ‘swearing fulfils some particular communicative functions, which are not easily accomplished through other linguistic means’ (Stapleton, 2010: 290). Nevertheless, much of our understanding about this linguistic phenomenon remains elusive. In part this is because there has been a stigma about the topic as a serious subject of academic interest (Jay, 2009a: 153). While more recently swearing has found a firmer footing as an area of academic enquiry within such disciplines as psychology (Stephens and

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<sup>1</sup> The use of ‘bad language’ throughout this thesis is simply a synonym for swearing and expletives. It is not intended to indicate that any language, whether considered to be offensive or not, is linguistically ‘bad’.

Umland, 2011: Stephens and Robertson, 2020), neurolinguistics (Van Lancker and Cummings, 1999: Van Lancker Sidtis and Postman, 2006), psycholinguistics (Jay, 2000, 2009a, 2009b), and sociolinguistics and pragmatics (McEnery, 2006: Beers Fagersten, 2012: Stapleton, 2020: Love, 2021), there remains a gap in the literature around how and why attitudes towards swearing are developed and maintained. This thesis proposes that by exploring the discourse that we use when discussing swearing we can gain a greater understanding of these attitudes.

At the turn of the twentieth century the psychologist Professor G. T. W. Patrick claimed that understanding profanity could throw light on two much discussed but unsolved problems: the origin of language and the relationship between emotion and language (1901: 113). While there is much to explore about how swearing relates to the evolution of language, and indeed in Chapter 2 I expand a little on this relationship, it is Patrick's second question that has more relevance to this thesis. As I discuss in Chapter 2, swearing has been found to be a means of expressing emotion, be it *anger, fear, sadness* or *excitement* (Crawford, 1995: Jay, 2000: Stapleton, 2010: Love, 2021,) and that it specifically resides in the area of the brain that is important in the perceiving and expressing of emotion (Speedie et al., 1993). Moreover, words closely aligned to certain disgust elicitors, such as poor hygiene, body products or sexual deviance, relate to the conceptual metaphor GOOD is CLEAN and BAD is DIRTY, which as I discuss in 5.4 is highly influential in the way that we view swearing. It seems logical, therefore, that the discourse around swearing would use similar emotionally driven language which I will evidence in Chapter 5. However, why some words cause such an emotional response remains a mystery. It is often the case that when asked *why* they find swear words offensive many people struggle to give a definitive answer and there is

little consensus on when a word is acceptable and when it is not (OfCom, 2016: 6). As I will discuss in Chapters 5 and 6, reactions to swearing in the data included being *angry*, *furious*, *shocked* and *disgusted*. These are strong emotional reactions to a common conversational practice that results in no physical harm (Jay, 2009: 89). For centuries children have chanted an old adage, *sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me*. Yet, for some people at least, swear words seem to genuinely have the power to inflict some kind of physical impact. It cannot be the concepts that trigger such an emotional response because there are plenty of synonyms that are acceptable, polite descriptors for the organs and activities that they refer to. Neither can it be the words themselves because simply the flip of a vowel or consonant can completely change the reaction (Pinker, 2008: 326). As this thesis is exploring the discourse around swearing, rather than the swear words themselves, it is unable to address why swear words can cause such a visceral reaction in some people. However, I hope that it will stimulate conversations and further research into the relationship between swearing and emotion.

As I discuss in Chapter 2, the subjectivity of the concept of offence makes swearing a complicated linguistic phenomenon. For example, in 1987 a row between the cricket player, Mike Gatting, and the umpire, Shakoor Rana, began when Gatting called Rana a 'shit umpire', leading to Rana allegedly reacting by calling Gatting a 'fucking cheating cunt' (Davis, 1989: 1). The incident played out across the British press with Rana demanding an apology for Gatting's abusive language. Gatting, on the other hand, demanded an apology for being called a 'cheat' (*ibid*: 1). This raises interesting questions on what counts as abusive, offensive or rude. While Rana clearly took umbrage at the use of a swear word, Gatting was far more concerned with his integrity as a cricketer being undermined.



The starting point for critical discourse analysis does not begin with a text, it begins with a social problem (Fairclough, 2014: 230). This thesis initially began with two lines of inquiry. Why do certain words evoke such emotional reactions, such as disgust, fear and anger, when linguistically they are as arbitrary as any other utterance in the English language? And secondly, could these same emotions be applied to the people who use the words and thereby create a layer of discrimination? There were many avenues that I could explore to gather data on this subject, which I discuss in more detail in 4.1, but the challenge was how to obtain evidence on how our choice of *words* can influence how we *think* about swearing. There were two areas of research that had the ability to do exactly that: Conceptual Metaphor Theory and Moral Panic Theory.

The field of cognitive linguistics entered the discourse analysis arena in the late 1970s and was fundamentally influenced by the publication of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's book *Metaphors We Live By*. Lakoff and Johnson proposed that rather than just being an arbitrary linguistic tool, metaphor is a natural phenomenon that is founded on physical knowledge and experience. Their Conceptual Metaphor Theory not only contributed to our understanding of how the human mind works but also how our attitudes and perceptions are shaped, both consciously and subconsciously. Metaphor has the power to unite two separate domains by appropriating one as a lens with which to see the other (Black, 1962). The idea that there could be a direct correlation between metaphorical language and how we perceive swearing was an exciting breakthrough for this study. As I will discuss in 3.5 Conceptual Metaphor Theory can offer an insight into how metaphors mediate between swearing and our physical and cultural knowledge of other experiences, and how this then shapes social and emotional attitudes towards the use of swear words.

Around the same time that cognitive linguistics was developing another theoretical concept emerged that transformed sociological analysis. While the concept of a moral panic had begun to gain scholarly attention in sociology circles it was Stanley's Cohen's PhD thesis that established it as an empirical theory. His study into the occasional clashes between two specific youth cultures, the Mods and Rockers, found that there was a discrepancy between the reality of the issue and how it was reported in the news media. Cohen observed that in demonizing the groups involved and exaggerating the mayhem that occurred the media created a mass-communicated truth that was repeatedly reified each time a fresh report appeared (Denham, 2008: 946). The stylized and stereotypical manner in which the mass media reported the threat ignited what he termed a moral panic (Cohen, 2002: 1). It was at this stage that I realized that news discourse could provide a wealth of data for analyzing with an interdisciplinary approach. As the study progressed it became apparent that there was a snapshot of time when the issue of swearing came to the forefront and dominated the news providing an almost unique opportunity to identify and analyze the pervasive patterns and trends that occur in discourse about swearing. The thesis had begun.

## 1.2 Motivation - why does swearing matter?

By the time Cohen published his book *Folk Devils and Moral Panics* the phenomenon that he had been investigating had been consigned to the realms of history. As he wrote in the preface to the First Edition, 'Who on earth is still worried about the Mods and Rockers? Who – some might ask – were the Mods and Rockers?' (Cohen, 2002: xlv – *original italics*). The same could be asked about swearing. Why do attitudes towards swearing matter, what difference does it make? The simple answer is that the use of swear words can have severe consequences that, until I began this research, I was unaware of. There remains a

‘tremendous ignorance about language that perpetuates myths about foul language, the same ignorance that makes people receptive to prejudice’ (Wajnryb, 2005: 238). These prejudices have led to people losing their jobs because of swearing, others have found themselves in court and been fined for swearing. Apparently swearing matters.

Ruth Wajnryb (2005) outlines three perspectives to the myths about swearing. They are not unconnected and can co-exist quite happily, although ‘each individual who subscribes to them tends to lean more heavily towards one in particular’ (Wajnryb, 2005: 239). Firstly, there is the *unemotional* attitude towards swearing, dismissing it as unimportant, merely a throwback to our ancestry, before language enabled us to communicate with more affluence and finesse (*ibid*: 239). The second opinion is simply *linguistic snobbery*. This attitude is the condescending looking down on people who swear as if they are inferior to those who don’t. This myth allows for the perception that ‘swearers lack self-control, suffer from verbal impoverishment, and are impossibly lazy’ (*ibid*: 241). This is where attitudes towards swearing become problematic. The language that people have access to is strongly dependent on their position in the social hierarchy (Fairclough, 2016: 26). It should not be socially acceptable for those that are better educated and financially secure, that is higher up the scale of power, to use swearing as some kind of tool to discriminate against the less educated and less economically privileged. I will discuss the issues of linguistic snobbery in more detail in Chapter 2. Finally, and most importantly to this thesis, is the *ensorial* perspective. Bound up in nostalgia for the yesteryear the people who adhere to this perspective subscribe to a point of view that is ‘condemnatory (“swearing is bad”), concerned (“it’s getting worse all the time”), focused (“teenagers are the worst offenders”), protective (“young children should be protected”), but essentially hopeful (“the condition is

curable”)' (Wajnryb, 2005: 240). As I will show in Chapters 5 and 6, the notion that swearing is bad, getting worse and is a threat to the younger generation is prevalent in the discourse around swearing.

The primary concern of this thesis is to examine how swearing is discursively represented in the British media through the analytical lens of critical discourse study. In particular, I was concerned with how the use of metaphorical language establishes deeply engrained connections between swearing and significantly negative concepts, thereby legitimizing the *linguistic snobbery* and *ensorious attitude* I have just outlined. As I explain in Chapter 4, once the data was gathered and in the stage of analysis a particular moment in time presented a 'whirlwind of attention' (Ungar, 2000: 278) where there was a significant increase in articles concerning swearing. This changed the initial study and fine-tuned the data to two particular newspapers, *The Mirror* and the *Express*, whereupon it became apparent that there was possibly a moral panic in progress. Moral panics are activated where a social problem is suddenly and dramatically constructed, invariably by the media, and presented as a significant threat to the social order (Cohen, 2002: Thompson, 1998: Maneri, 2016). However, the problem with a moral panic is that in reaffirming the stereotype of any given problem they continue to generate prejudices and injustice for certain members of society. All the time that swearing is perceived as something bad, the prejudices towards people who use swear words are unlikely to change. By understanding a little more about how attitudes towards swearing are defined and sustained may go some way to realizing that swear words are just words and that context is everything.

### 1.3 Research Questions

Societal discourse around swearing has existed for centuries. Yet, to date there are few studies into what this discourse is and how it influences our thoughts about swear words and the people who use them, leaving a significant gap in the literature. While sociolinguistic research is useful in identifying and recording attitudes towards language, it should strive to understand what it is that determines and maintains these attitudes. With the theoretical frameworks in place the initial lines of inquiry were updated to reflect how we conceptualize swearing in light of metaphorical language, and how two discursive events that I identify in Chapter 4 created a moral panic around an alleged increase in swearing. As such three research questions were identified.

- RQ1. What conceptual metaphors are found in the identified discourse and how do they contribute to the (negative) representation of swearing?
- RQ2. To what extent did this discourse contribute to a moral panic at the time?
- RQ3. What does the combination of these two theories reveal about the *linguistic snobbery* and *ensorious attitudes* towards swearing and people who use swear words?

In answering these questions, I hope to demonstrate how the language that we use when discussing or debating swearing shapes and legitimises certain perceptions and attitudes about swearing, and that these discourses can be, and often are, manipulated to maintain a negative narrative about swear words and people who use them. I will return to these questions in my conclusion.

## 1.4 Thesis structure

I begin this thesis with an overview of swearing as a linguistic and social phenomenon by considering what it is and why people do it. I touch on previous research into swearing, including how swearing reduces pain and increases strength and power performance before reflecting on its evolutionary journey from an angry grunt, through the ancient beliefs of curses and superstition to the complex socio-pragmatic activity that it is today. I consider why people swear and discuss the difficulties of defining swearing because of the subjectivity of the concept of offence and the impact of contextual variables. Finally, I take a brief look at the history of language censorship and discuss how previous moral panics have influenced today's attitudes towards swearing.

The focus in Chapter 3 is theoretical. In this discussion I reflect on previous literature and explore the frameworks with which I intend to examine the discourse around swearing. I discuss what discourse is and consider how a critical analysis of discourse can not only reveal the ideologies that lie beneath but can actively challenge them. In doing so I also consider how discourse contributes to a differentiation between the moral *Self* and the immoral *Other*, which is pertinent to this thesis. I then look at metaphor, its history, and the reasons we use figurative language, before exploring how Conceptual Metaphor Theory can reveal the power of metaphorical language. I also look at the development of Moral Panic Theory regarding deviance and the creation of stereotypes. Finally, I consider newspaper media as a data base before reflecting on why I chose an interdisciplinary approach.

In Chapter 4 I present the methodology that I have applied to the data. Here I hope to defend my reasons for using an interdisciplinary approach by discussing how discourse

analysis can contribute to the theory of moral panic. This chapter explains how I analysed the data using the Metaphorical Identification Process as constructed by the Pragglejaz Group (2007). I also present the framework that I have used to ascertain whether the identified data constitutes a moral panic, as defined by Stanley Cohen (1975) and others. Throughout this chapter I will identify the limitations and delimitations that determined the final data base.

The analysis is then presented in two chapters. Chapter 5 begins my analysis with an investigation of the metaphorical language found in the identified data and how they create conceptual metaphors around swearing. Chapter 6 continues the analysis with a discussion on whether the discourse at this time created a moral panic, in particular how this leads to the stereotyping of people who use swear words.

The final chapter will reflect on the findings from the two analytical chapters and return to the three main research questions outlined in 1.3, answering each fully. My conclusion will discuss how metaphorical language not only structures the way we think about swearing but can contribute to the creation of a moral panic, which in turn reinforces the stereotype associated with people who use swear words. This chapter will also reflect on the limitations of the study and consider areas for further research.

## 2 Swearing – the Past and Present

*All peoples, past and present, civilized and barbarian, share at least one thing in common: when the need arises, or the humor is upon them, they swear – (Echols, 2001: 111)*

### 2.1 Introduction

There is arguably no other linguistic phenomenon that is quite as divisive as swearing.

While some embrace it and treat it as a fine art (Graves, 1927), others take a dimmer view of bad language and consider it a form of ‘verbal violence’ (Griffith, 1996: 135) that is indicative of a general decline in community standards (Millwood-Hargrave, 2000).

Concerns have been expressed around the influence of profanity with other anti-social behaviours such as aggression, violence and increased hostility (Millwood-Hargrave, 2000; Leung, 2010; Coyne et al, 2011; Ivory and Kaestle, 2013). Moreover, there is also a popular (mis)conception that people who swear have lower levels of education and/or intelligence and come from a lower position on the socioeconomic hierarchy (Stapleton, 2020: 387) leading to a *linguistic snobbery*, as discussed in Chapter 1. When this presumption is challenged by the use of swearing by someone who is clearly not from the working classes or does not lack intelligence it then becomes a sign of arrogance and of being privileged (*ibid*: 387). It also becomes a conundrum when someone who was previously presumed to be a member of the non-swearing in-group violates the agreed social norm, as demonstrated in Chapters 5 and 6 with the popular television presenters Anthony McPartlin and Declan Donnelly, known as Ant and Dec. However, it is worth noting that these perceptual links between swearing and intelligence, education or class are not borne out by



academic research. Recent research suggests that swearing among the working classes is on the decrease, whereas university students, most of which will be well-educated and from a higher socio-economic status, are more likely to use swear words (Love, 2021: 756). Other folk assumptions, such as swearing as a sign of a poverty of vocabulary, have also been disproved (Jay and Jay, 2015). While there is a common perception that men swear more than women as a form of male identity affirmation (Menzie, 1991: Benwell, 2001), other studies find little gender disparity in knowledge and usage of expletives (de Klerk, 1991: 1992) and in fact women are just as likely to use expletives as an act of solidarity and group bonding with other females (Hughes, 1992: Sutton, 1995: Risch, 1987). And despite the notion of swearing being closely related to aggression and violence, studies find that ‘most instances of swearing are conversational: they are not highly emotional, confrontational, rude or aggressive’ (Jay and Janschewitz, 2008: 268). On the other hand, swearing has been found to be beneficial in some areas. Verbal swearing has been found to ease physical pain (Stephens and Umland, 2011) as well as the pain of social stress (Philipp and Lombardo, 2017) and increase strength and power performance (Stephens, et al., 2018). It can help to establish group identity and social bonds (Stapleton, 2010), improve credibility (Rassin and Van Der Heijden, 2005) and positively influence the power of persuasion (Scherer and Sagarin, 2006). Research suggests that swearing can make a stressful situation more bearable and that people who swear suffer less from stress than those who do not (Montagu, 2001: 88). Swearing is also a means of entertainment and comedy. The poetic parody *Go The Fuck to Sleep* topped Amazon’s bestseller chart a month before it was published in 2011. Unfortunately, this thesis does not have the scope to explore both sides of the debate around swearing in more depth. Ultimately swearing remains a dichotomy. It ‘retains a unique capacity to shock, alienate, insult, abuse and generally cause offence’

(Stapleton, 2010: 300) whilst also being entertaining, humorous, affectionate, bonding and powerfully cathartic. However, as I will discuss throughout this thesis, some of the *mythologies* around swearing that I have briefly discussed create stereotypes of people who use swear words that are not necessarily accurate or helpful and lead to the *linguistic snobbery* and *ensorious attitude* outlined in Chapter 1.

Reasons for swearing are multiple and complex. Through the early development of speech acquisition children learn that (a) some words can be offensive and that (b) some people can be offended by those words (Jay, 2000: 108). As adults these words can become a source of amusement, power and expression for the very fact that they are considered to be taboo (Stapleton, 2010: 290). The primary purpose for the use of expletives appears to be a means of expressing the speaker's *emotional* state to others (Jay, 2000; Stapleton, 2010). Those emotions can vary, from anger, fear and sadness, to excitement, enthusiasm and happiness (Crawford, 1995). A common psychological perspective views swearing as a form of catharsis that is linked to an *aggressive* function (Stapleton, 2010: 290). This idea is supported by theoretical proposals that swearing is a neurological reaction that preceded the development of speech (Montagu, 2001; Jay, 2009). Before Homo Sapiens gained the ability to create words it is suggested that we would react to any sudden shock, whether pain, annoyance or surprise, with a physiological noise from the throat that was quite involuntary and not unlike the way we swear today (Montagu, 2001: 6). There is growing evidence to support this theory. Neurological studies have found that swearing stems from the more primitive areas of the human brain, specifically the basal ganglia. For example, swearing often remains when other speech functions are missing through brain trauma. Neurological research into patients suffering aphasia because of brain damage, whether

through injury, stroke or other cognitive changes such as depression in the elderly, dementia, epilepsy or encephalitis, find that swear words and phrases are preserved and produced with clarity despite losing all other articulate language (Van Lancker and Cummings, 1999: 84). Moreover, there is evidence to suggest that swearing specifically resides in the right hemisphere of the basal ganglia, which is especially important in the perceiving and expression of emotion. Brain damage to that area of the brain will restrict any ability to speak swear words (Speedie, et al., 1993: 1773). The neurological disorder Tourette's syndrome (TS) also lends some support to the ancient nature of swearing. The primary hallmark of TS is involuntary tics, both physical movement and vocalisations, that are sudden, rapid, repetitive and, most importantly, serve no purpose even if they could seem purposeful in other situations, such as hitting, jumping or making an obscene gesture (Singer, 2005: 149). The exact genetic abnormality that leads to TS still remains unknown, but the most likely cause is basal ganglia dysfunction (Mink, 2001: 190). While coprolalia, the uttering of obscenities, only occurs in around 10 per cent of patients it is one of the more distressing and recognisable symptoms (Singer, 2005: 149). The use of swear words as a symptom of TS is not to cause offence but is a completely involuntary impulse stemming from a neurological deviation. Such research would appear to support a theory that swearing was originally an *automatic speech*, as in it is used more as involuntary, expressive language, rather than deliberate, communicative language (Van Lancker and Cummings, 1999: 86).

There are a wide range of synonyms and euphemisms for the umbrella term of swearing. Pinker gives a detailed list as 'cursing, cussing, profanity, obscenity, indecency, vulgarity, blasphemy, expletives, oaths or epithets; or dirty, four-letter or taboo words; or as bad,

coarse, crude, foul, salty, earthy, raunchy, or off-colour language' (2008: 325). However, there are some differences between these types of swearing. For example, an expletive tends to be used to express emotion rather than as a means to attack others (Anderson and Trudgill, 1990: 61). While blasphemy and profanity are more likely to refer to words that vilify or ridicule names or objects of religious veneration (Montagu, 2001: 105). Montagu (2001) identifies two types of swearing; *annoyance swearing* and *social swearing* (2001: 87). Annoyance swearing stems from the primal, biologically determined response to frustration of some kind (Montagu, 2001: 72). Alongside laughing and weeping, annoyance swearing provides a relief mechanism for sudden surges of energy that require a response. The use of annoyance swearing may also prevent a more physical reaction, such as violence (Mohr, 2013: 255). Whereas social swearing is a means of bonding and humour. Andersson and Trudgill echo this concept with *abusive swearing*, which is derogatory, and *humorous swearing*, which is not (2007: 197). The two most commonly cited reasons for swearing are humour/storytelling and to create verbal emphasis (Stapleton, 2003) but it is undeniable that when a toe hits a solid, inanimate object the use of an expletive can bring instant release.

Defining swearing is not easy, either linguistically or legally. Academically speaking swearing is a highly complex socio-pragmatic activity that facilitates a range of communicative functions that are not easily achieved by other linguistic means alone (Jay, 2000; Montagu, 2001; Stapleton, 2020). Legally it is referred to in the *Public Order Act 1986* as 'threatening or abusive words or behaviour...within the hearing or sight of a person likely to be caused harassment, alarm or distress' (Legislation.gov.uk). It is often characterized by its potential to cause offence (Stapleton, 2020: 382), yet the subjectivity of the concept of offence and

the impact of contextual variables makes this too vague a definition. There are a range of social variables, such as social norms, status differentials and formality levels, that have a profound effect on the function of swearing (Stapleton, 2010: 291). Gender and age can also influence the perceived level of offence (Jay, 2009a: 156) and tone and delivery also have an impact (OfCom, 2016: 1). However, there is a lack of universal agreement about which words are offensive, and this is repeatedly shown in attitudinal research undertaken by regulatory bodies and other commissioned surveys (OfCom, 2016: 42). As the comedian Lenny Bruce reportedly said, 'You call a guy a cocksucker, that's an insult. You call a lady a cocksucker – hey, that's a nice lady' (Mohr, 2013: 37). More recently, there has been a shift in public attitudes with discriminatory and racist words considered to be more offensive, with more emotional impact, than the more traditional swear word (OfCom, 2021: 3). Even in the academic world, defining swearing is divided. Some scholars, such as Andersson and Trudgill, define swearing as something that is always figurative and should not be interpreted literally (1990: 53). If the word is being used in its literal sense, then it ceases to be a swear word. An example of this is the use of the word *shit* in reference to the excretory system as opposed to *shit* being used as an exclamation of disappointment or anger (Lutzky and Kehoe, 2015). However, others dispute this and take a more common-sense, inclusive approach that argues that 'someone saying 'I fucked him' at a family meal for example, would most likely be seen as swearing' (Drummond, 2020: 3). As I will evidence in 4.2.1 the one swear word that was used in the incident that sparked the two campaigns that make up the data for this thesis was used in its literal sense, suggesting that swear words can still cause offence whether used literally or figuratively.

The etymological roots of the verb *to swear* lie in the undertaking of an oath or promise, which is still used today within the British legal system to assert the truth of a statement. If the oath is undertaken with an apparent irreverence to God or other supernatural being then it becomes profane. The earliest forms of swearing often fall within this category of the judicial oath, that is 'the unsanctioned use of the names or attributes of the figures or objects of religious veneration' (Montagu, 2001: 101). But deistic swear words barely register as offensive in the current climate and have instead been replaced by the more visceral swear words, that is those related to the human body and its functions (OfCom, 2016).

Another way of describing swearing is the uttering of a word or phrase that is considered to be taboo. A taboo is a form of etiquette dictating that something is forbidden. Over time there has been a seemingly endless list of behaviours that are considered to be taboo but they are not always universal and they do not always stand the test of time (Allan and Burridge, 2007). Taboos stem from ancient behaviours and rituals that observed a ceremonial purity, some of which was based on deistic measures, but others were related to the concept of pollution and contagion (Frazer, 1974: 294). In Western societies there are taboos relating to food, bodily functions, sexual relationships, ethnic groups, religion, dirt and death (Andersson and Trudgill, 1990: 55). Importantly, when it comes to linguistic taboos, it was the lack of arbitrariness that we observe today that influenced attitudes. As James Gordon Frazer wrote in his influential anthropological volume *The Golden Bough*:

Unable to discriminate clearly between words and things, the savage commonly fancies that the link between a name and the person or thing denominated by it is not a mere arbitrary and ideal association, but a real and substantial bond which

unites the two in such a way that magic may be wrought on a man just as easily through his name as through his hair, his nails, or any other material part of his person (1974: 322)

Thus, 'words are regarded as capable of *doing things*' (Montagu, 2001: 8 – *original italics*). As I shall discuss in 5.2.2, this ancient belief that there was a link between a word and its descriptor can help to explain the relationship between swearing and ritual, magic and superstition. Fears of supernatural consequences led to the sanctioning of swear words under an assumption that their use will cause harm to the speaker, the listener or society in general. However, the exact nature of this harm has never been entirely clear (Jay, 2009a: 153). Under this remit swearing can be described as a linguistic practice based on the idea of something that is forbidden, with the words themselves referring to specific stigmatized behaviours such as sex or bodily functions (Stapleton, 2010: 289). The core taboo categories that are most commonly seen as swearing are 'excretion; sexual acts; body parts; ancestry and profanity/blasphemy' (Stapleton, 2020: 382). However, this fails to account for other descriptors for the same taboo behaviours that are considered to be polite. The fact that the behaviour or body part itself is not forbidden indicates that culturally we develop a set of conscious and unconscious rules about which words are polite and which are offensive (Andersson and Trudgill, 1990: 56). Moreover, swear words can be manipulated so that they become acceptable, despite still representing the same word. As Pinker notes 'the unprintable can become printable with a hyphen or asterisk, and the unsayable sayable with the flip of a vowel or consonant' (2008: 326). For many years, the fashion chain French Connection enjoyed some notoriety with its branded FCUK logo. Love offers the most succinct definition for swearing, viewing it as 'a type of so-called bad

language, which, when used literally, relates to taboo topics (typically sex, body functions and religion), but can also be used figuratively to perform a range of functions, including abuse, humour and expression of emotion' (2021: 742-743). Or, as Pinker puts it, 'a taboo word kidnaps our attention and forces us to consider its unpleasant connotations' (2008: 339).

Unfortunately, we still understand little about how, when and why certain words become separated from their polite counterparts and labelled taboo, offensive, obscene, and profane. However, it is the case that taboo words are defined by institutions of power and prohibitions continue within child-rearing practices (Jay, 2009a: 153). Centuries ago it was the church and the crown but in more recent times it is the media and its regulatory bodies that define the level of offensiveness associated with swear words. In the next section I briefly explore how the history of linguistic censorship has contributed to how swearing is viewed today.

## 2.2 A brief history of swearing censorship

The censorship of profanity and bad language is ancient. Over 400 years before Christ, Charondas, legislator of Thurium, decided that the most effective way to control behaviour and language considered to be obscene was to stigmatise and ostracise the perpetrator (Disney, 1729). In a direct attack on freedom of speech he dictated that his citizens should refuse to have conversation or friendship with anyone who used debauched and vicious language and behaviour, effectively beginning the relationship between bad language and censorship. In 1729 the reverend John Disney reviewed the ancient laws against profaneness and immorality, stating 'how happy would it be, if the Laws of every Nation had



adopted this of *Thurium*; or taken as good care by methods of their own, to fix a punishment, as well as scandal, upon keeping vicious company' (Disney, 1729: 1 - *original italics*).

Multiple passages in the Bible give the third commandment as 'Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain', the consequences of which are said to be damnation or death (Leviticus 24: 16). The introduction of Christianity to the pagan islands of Britain in the first century AD established official codes and penalties for the use of blasphemous and profane language. The first reliably attested formal laws for the English people, including penalties for swearing, were recorded by Ethelbert of Kent in around the year 600 following his conversion to Christianity (Montagu, 2001: 107). The medieval movements against swearing and profanity were mainly instigated by religious figures who believed that foul words led to foul deeds (Mohr, 2013: 108). The pastoral literature classifying a multitude of ways it was possible to sin devoted large sections to the sins of the tongue.

Any kind of linguistic censorship stems from the creation of certain linguistic norms. Once a norm is established, through technical or social necessity, it is promoted through a community in order to obtain conformity (Herausgegeben et al., 2004: 172). Following norms is generally considered to be advantageous because violating them can result in some kind of social reaction, or even punishment, from the conformers. Deviation from linguistic norms is punished by sanctions, whether formal or informal, and while they do not always induce a subject to obey, they can lead to stigmatisation or ostracization (*ibid*: 73). The Norman conquest of 1066 had a large impact on language norms in Britain. With the arrival of the French came a new linguistic hierarchy. As the language of the victors, Norman French became the language of the elite while the language of the indigenous

population became synonymous with the common people (Crystal, 2006: 7). While swearing had previously been mostly related to religious blasphemy and profanity, the introduction of a linguistic pecking order created a division between the prestigious language of those in power and the language, and behaviours, of those beneath them, thereby establishing a clear difference between the languages of the upper and lower classes (*ibid*: 7). This arguably made it easier for words that were considered simply *undesirable*, whether they were profane or not, to be identified as offensive.

The practical censorship of bad language in an era before mass literacy and printing was difficult (McEnery, 2006: 61). However, what is clear from the history is that the attempts to censor the use of certain words had very little to do with genuine attempts to suppress bad language. Instead, the censorship of language was a smoke screen behind which certain groups and views that represented danger to the state could be controlled and suppressed (*ibid*: 63). The evolution and growth of the printing industry during the sixteenth century not only stimulated a growth in literacy but also provided avenues for literature that could challenge and undermine any powerful establishment. As a result, censorship of the press became political. Any undesirable propaganda that attempted to undermine those in power had to be prevented from publication. While the ultimate authority rested with the reigning monarch, the Stationer's Company was granted the monopoly of press censorship in 1557. However, during her reign Elizabeth I transferred some of this censorship to the Church Court of High Commission which was controlled by the Bishop of London and the Archbishop of Canterbury. The combination of the Church and the Stationers created a far more pervasive censorship of the press than before (*ibid*: 64). Again, it is important to note that the linguistic censorship under Elizabeth I was not an

attempt to control certain words that were considered to be bad or offensive but rather a concerted effort to repress the growth of certain religious groups that represented a threat to the state (*ibid*: 65). The only group that made clear attempts to censor the use of swearing, blasphemy and oaths were the Puritans, who were not in favour with the Queen. However, as many members of the Stationer's Company were Puritans it is fair to assume that some censoring of bad language occurred behind the scenes (*ibid*: 66). The strength of the Church influence over linguistic censorship grew during the reign of James I and the *1606 Act to Restrain the Abuses of Players* arguably established the first British law aimed at censoring the use of language that was considered to be immoral and offensive (*ibid*: 67). By now the Puritans had gained some favour with the Crown and the introduction of this law was in some part an effort on behalf of the Jacobean government to appease the Puritan complaints about the growing use of immoral language. However, the bad language at this time was to do with speech with religious reference, profanity and blasphemy, rather than the more contemporary idea of swearing. Swearing *by God* or *by Christ* was highly offensive to the Puritans (Gazzard, 2010: 499). However, the concept of profanity certainly contributed to the swearing attitudes today, evidenced by the interchangeability between the terms *blasphemy* and *profanity* with the concept of modern swearing.

The *1606 Act* was primarily concerned with controlling the language of the stage. At this time the stage was akin to the pulpit in spreading mass communication, which included ideas that challenged authority. One of the greatest concerns regarding the theatre was that the language and behaviour used on the stage was not only a threat to the establishment but that it was also contagious (Gazzard, 2010: 504). By controlling the speech on the stage it was argued that other morally corrupt behaviour such as drinking,

gambling and sabbath breaking would also be reduced (*ibid*: 500). This seventeenth century concern around profanity being contagious is reflected in modern attitudes as I will evidence in Chapter 5.

The 1606 Act was eventually replaced with the 1623 *Profane Act* and then the 1650 *Blasphemy Act*. During this time many hundreds of pamphlets and books were published adjuring the populace to refrain from profanity, mostly by Puritans and clergymen who considered such language to be a threat to religion (Montagu, 2001: 159). *A Sword Against Swearers*, published in 1611, and *God's Sword Drawn forth Against Drunkards and Swearers*, published in 1677, reflect the seventeenth-century Puritanical belief that as a threat to religion, profanity had to be robustly controlled and punished (*ibid*: 163). The 1650 Act came into force shortly after the turbulence of the English civil war and was part of a package of measures to impose Puritan morality over the country (McEnery, 2006: 75). However, it is clear once more that the aim of this censorship was not so much about swearing but as a means to control and eliminate non-government opinion that challenged the authority of the Rump Parliament and, more specifically, radical movements such as the Ranters (*ibid*: 76).

The Ranters were a 'hippy-like counter-culture of the 1650s which flew in the face of law and morality' (Davis, 1986: 12). Their behaviours and language scandalised the Commonwealth and their popularity among the poor and marginalised classes made them a serious threat to the establishment (*ibid*: 76). The central theme to their ideals was *antinomianism*, that God was not an external being but resided within every living being, and *pantheism*, that the Devil and sin did not exist (Morton, 1970: 73). The problem with the denial of sin and damnation was that without these there was no threat of eternal

punishment, the very mechanism that the Ranters proposed was 'invented by the ruling classes to keep the poor in order' (Hill, 1979: 313). Thus the *1650 Blasphemy Act* was designed to suppress and punish the 'abominable opinions and practices of the Ranters' (McEnery, 2006: 76). The main provisions of the Act made it an offence to publicly:

1. Advocate drunkenness, adultery or swearing
2. Claim that heaven, hell, salvation and damnation were one and the same
3. Declare oneself to be God
4. Declare that there was no difference between moral and immoral behaviour
5. Deny the existence of God
6. Deny the existence of heaven, hell, salvation and damnation

A first offence would lead to six months in jail but a second offence 'proscribed a punishment of exile from England on pain of death' (McEnery, 2006: 77). This gave the government the power to control any politically troublesome figures by either locking them away, banishing them or, as happened in many cases, coercing them into recanting their Ranter beliefs and adopting a more suitably reverent lifestyle (*ibid*, 78). The history of how laws that seem to be about language, but in reality are designed to suppress and control sections of a population, can help to understand a little more about political motivations behind the censorship of swearing. Today Section 5 of the *Public Order Act 1986* can be used to prosecute the use of any language that might cause a person harassment, alarm or distress. However, it was the growth of the middle classes at the turn of the eighteenth century, and the grassroots reform movements that followed, that were to have a lasting effect on public attitudes towards the use of swear words. Relevant to this thesis is a moral panic that developed toward the end of the seventeenth century. As I discuss in 3.6, a

moral panic is identified as an irrational fear based on exaggerated or false perceptions of some kind of deviance. In this case the panic that formed regarding immorality and irreligiousness sparked the creation of several religious societies that would maintain a sustained campaign against bad language for several decades. This began with the birth of the Society for the Reformation of Manners.

### 2.2.1 Swearing and moral panic

The creation of the Society for the Reformation of Manners (SRM) was ascribed to a rising concern about the immorality of society and the decline in church attendance (McEney, 2006: 88). Swearing was not the only target, many vices were listed by a variety of public commentators, from pride, envy and ambition to the growth in prostitution and the singing of obscene ballads (*ibid*: 88). However, the increase in the use of profane and blasphemous language was seen as something that was directly linked to the moral decay that was seemingly rampant in the eighteenth century (Swift, 1702). While the pulpit was initially used to gain support for the movement, dwindling numbers in attendance meant that the societies had to turn to printed material to propagate their message that social and moral order was under threat. They soon became a prolific publisher, distributing leaflets widely offering their own solutions to the problem and actively seeking out deviants by offering anonymity and financial reward to anyone who informed on them (McEney, 2006: 103). Bad language, in the form of cursing, swearing and blasphemy, became a prime target with long-neglected laws used to prosecute and convict anyone who used offensive words. They also published an annual report, called the *Black Roll*, that listed the accused and convicted in the style of naming and shaming that still abides in the press today (*ibid*: 97). Despite this bid to make informing against immorality acceptable it was not a popular strategy, with

some society members being killed during prosecutions. Nevertheless, it proved to be effective, provoking an early moral panic about the link between bad language and other social ills that were contributing to the moral decline (*ibid*: 90). The propaganda spread by the SRM, through both the pulpit and the press, was successful in creating a correlation between swearing and low social class and poor education that still resound today (Mulac, 1976; Macafee, 1989; Stapleton, 2010). By the time the society began to fade in the eighteenth century their moral agenda had firmly established a link between bad language and immorality (McEney, 2006: 113). As the industrial revolution evolved and technology expanded the nature of British society fundamentally changed. By the twentieth century swearing was facing another battle with the censors, not with the government or the law courts, but with a schoolteacher from Shropshire called Mary Whitehouse.

### 2.2.2 The National Viewers and Listeners Association

As the founder of the National Viewers' and Listeners' Association (NVALA) Mary Whitehouse opposed the emerging social liberalism that she believed was 'destroying our moral and intellectual defenses' (Whitehouse, 1982: 46). From its conception in 1965 to its current form as Mediawatch-UK, the pressure group has routinely campaigned against the broadcasting or publication of media content that it considers harmful or offensive. Of course, the concerns were not just about bad language. Whitehouse despaired at the 'maelstrom of atheist humanist claptrap' (*ibid*: 47) that was enabling progressive attitudes towards a host of behaviours that she considered to be immoral, echoing the sentiments expressed by the religious societies two centuries earlier. However, in her paper to the Royal Society of Health in 1974, she identified bad language as a major source of the moral pollution that was infiltrating the media (McEney, 2006: 124). What is evident from the

publications and speeches given by NVALA and Whitehouse, like the religious societies, their greatest concern was regarding the growing social liberalism threatening the Christian religion. The NVALA effectively came about because of a mass meeting that occurred in Birmingham Town Hall on 5<sup>th</sup> May 1964, a meeting that was said to 'decide the future of our country' (Thompson, 2012: 62). During the meeting Mary Whitehouse gave an impassioned speech launching the Clean Up TV Campaign and explaining that it was born of frustration and concern about the immorality facing society (*ibid*: 70)

This isn't a campaign against 'dirty' plays or 'for censorship', the issue at stake is far greater than either of these... [there is a] desire of many to turn our country into a humanist secular country in which the Christian religion, if it survives, will survive as a fad of the few rather than as the faith of the nation... Do we want a materialistic philosophy to control our country and have power over the minds of our children? We, in the campaign, and many others no doubt, have already made our choice and it is on this battlefield that we are fighting – *Whitehouse speech during Birmingham Town Hall meeting 1964*, (cited in Thompson, 2012: 70)

On the face of it the campaign looked to be about the decline of moral standards within the media, in particular the BBC which was accused of 'pouring into millions of homes the propaganda of disbelief, doubt and dirt' (Thompson, 2012: 76). Whitehouse believed that bad language was childish, offensive and debased the Christian culture. However, she was also aware that bad language could be a vehicle of political subversion and thus had the potential for a revolution against the establishment (McEnery, 2006: 124). A good example of this was the difference in treatment to two particular BBC comedies that shared marked similarities and yet did not receive the same outrage from the NVALA. *Till Death Us Do Part*



ran from 1965 to 1975 with Alf Garnet as central character, a working-class, opinionated, rude bigot who used racist, homophobic, blasphemous and offensive language liberally. *Steptoe and Son* ran from 1962 to 1974 and had an equally as offensive central character in the shape of Albert Steptoe. However, while the NVALA regularly denounced the language used in *Till Death Us Do Part*, regularly locking horns with its creator Johnny Speight, *Steptoe and Son* escaped criticism. If Whitehouse found the use of swearing so offensive why did she not challenge both programmes equally? The answer lies in the purpose behind the language (*ibid*: 136). Speight admitted that Garnet was created as a living embodiment of all that was wrong with the British society; an assault on ‘the pretentious middle-class box who are responsible for some of the most stupid utterances of our time on race, religion, philosophy, and politics (Speight, 1973: 232). Through the character Speight both undermined the discourse of power and highlighted the hypocrisy of moral campaigners such as Whitehouse (McEneary, 2006: 131). Garnet was a dichotomy between being an upstanding Tory voter and ‘loyal patriot who believed in God and was devoted to the Queen’ (Thompson, 2012: 160) while also being a racist, offensive bigot. For Whitehouse this ruthless lampooning of her beliefs and attitudes was a declaration of war. Speaking to the new BBC chairman, Sir Michael Swann, in 1974, Whitehouse said ‘Johnny Speight has made it perfectly clear, on a number of occasions that the motivation for the series is political...he portrays Alf as he does in the hope that the public, in rejecting Alf, will reject also these things that he holds dear’ (*ibid*: 160). Albert Steptoe, on the other hand, was more servile. He understood his position in the hierarchy of power and paid it due respect, apologising for his bad language whenever a superior appeared and adhering more to the stereotype of someone who uses swear words in the privacy of their own home but knows that it is wrong. In other words, Whitehouse’s complaint ‘related to four-letter challenges

to authority, not the four-letter words themselves' (McEney, 2006: 137). Disguised as a drive to clean up the media of bad language and immoral behaviour, the NVALA Clean Up TV Campaign was building on a rhetoric that had been well established by the religious societies in the seventeenth century; the suppression of language which appeared to threaten the authority and power of the establishment. The discourse of purity and moral hierarchy is deeply entwined with discourses of power and discrimination. As McEney surmises 'the discourse of power is discriminatory and maintains an established hierarchy of power which disadvantages the disempowered further by problematising their language use' (2006: 228). It is this that makes the critical analysis of these discourses so important.

### 2.3 Summary

In this chapter I have given a short summary of swearing as a social and linguistic phenomenon. As this thesis is about the discourse used when discussing swearing I have not found it necessary to delve into the swear words themselves. Montagu (2001) and Hughes (1998) both give an excellent account of the etymological roots of expletives should the curiosity arise. In the next chapter I will present an overview of the theoretical frameworks that I intend to draw from in order to analyse the discourse around swearing.

## 3 Theoretical Approaches

### 3.1 Introduction

In order to develop the methodological framework for analysing how swearing is represented in the media it is important to identify and explore the theoretical frameworks that I intend to draw from. Therefore, the objective of this chapter is to define and discuss discourse as a concept before considering how a critical analysis of discourse can illuminate the way it shapes social reality and attitudes. I will then look at a central component of discourse, metaphor, before discussing one of the more current paradigms in metaphor research, conceptual metaphor theory. I will then discuss the history of moral panic and the news media as a basis for a corpus before finally outlining why and how I am using an interdisciplinary approach in this study.

### 3.2 What is discourse?

The concept of discourse can be difficult to identify. In linguistics the term is most likely to refer to 'extended samples of either spoken or written language' (Fairclough, 2016: 3) but it can be a combination of both, as well as sign language, and it can also be broadened to include non-linguistic aspects, such as turn-taking or visual imagery. Ultimately, it is a form of communication, or a *discursive event*, that has a 'characteristic way of saying, doing and being' (Gee, 2014: 47). It is also widely used to describe specific language used for a specific social field or practice, such as *advertising discourse* or *legal discourse* (Fairclough, 2016: 3) as well as stretching from a genre to a way of construing aspects of particular social perspectives with notions such as *racist discourse*, *media discourse* and *historical discourses*

(Wodak and Meyer, 2014: 3). The philosophical understanding of the term discourse was transformed in the 1960s by Michael Foucault who recognised that discourse was a multidimensional social phenomenon that sometimes acted as ‘the general domain of all statements, sometimes as an individualizable group of statements, and sometimes as a regulated practice that accounts for a number of statements (1972: 80). As van Dijk writes:

It is at the same time a linguistic (verbal, grammatical) object (meaningful sequences or words or sentences), an action (such as an assertion or a threat), a form of social interaction (like a conversation), a social practice (such as a lecture), a mental representation (a meaning, a mental model, an opinion, knowledge), an interactional or communicative event or activity (like a parliamentary debate), a cultural product (like a telenovela) or even an economic commodity that is being sold and brought (like a novel) – (2009: 67)

While discourse is governed by ‘a system of rules that legitimise certain knowledge’ (Boreus and Bergstrom, 2017: 212) those rules can and do change over time. The fact that it can mean so many different things across the academic culture can cause confusion and highlights the importance of defining how it is being integrated into any specific research approach (Wodak and Meyer, 2009: 3).

In order to encompass the many different aspects of discourse Norman Fairclough prefers to use the term *semiosis*, so that alongside language it includes body language, visual imagery and any other ways of signifying (2014: 229). However, as this thesis is only looking at the written word and images, specifically within the press, I will continue to use the word *discourse*. By this term I mean a rather simple definition of a sample of written language or

*texts* that will form my corpus. However, I also adhere to Fairclough's school of thought that language use is not purely an individual activity or a result of situational variables, but is instead a social practice that signifies, shapes and enables social reality (2016: 63). As I will evidence, the discourse around swearing is not simply a reflection of language that is considered to be bad or impolite, but is actively shaping how we think about swearing, and therefore how we think about people who swear. In other words, as well as being a mode of representation it is also a mode of action (Fairclough, 2016: 63).

Discourse is never static. We all have the ability to project multiple different, sometimes conflicting, discourses at any one time by adapting to circumstance. For example, workplace discourse narratives are likely to be very different to social occasions. And even within social occasions, the discourse we choose to present will depend on the formality or location, or the group members present. As I explained in Chapter 2, the offensiveness of swearing is highly dependent on the context and situation in which it occurs. The use of a swear word within an informal social setting is less likely to be problematic to its use within a job interview. So innumerable discourses exist, embedded in innumerable different social institutions, designed to create recognition between members (Gee, 2014: 52). Discourse, then, is closely related to identity and social categorization (Ainsworth and Hardy, 2004: Mills, 2004). Swearing, and its inherent link with slang, is a powerful means of establishing and reinforcing group identity, most markedly for teenagers and working-class men (Stapleton, 2010: 291). As discussed in the previous chapter, research has found that the use of swear words can express solidarity and enhance group cohesion within the workplace (Baruch and Jenkins, 2007: 502) as well as maintaining a class group identity that can sometimes be seen as 'a powerful anti-middle-class weapon' (Hughes, 1992: 291).

However, as I will evidence in due course, the use of swear words is also seen as belonging to a deviant *Other* that is a threat to the morally upright *Self*. This is especially the case for women, who not only incur negative social judgements but are also considered *morally* deviant in a way that is rarely applied to men (Stapleton, 2003). I will discuss *Othering* in more detail in in 3.3.2.

Another influential linguistic means of discriminating between groups in society is the use of certain social shibboleths of taste to highlight a hierarchy. The French socialist, Pierre Bourdieu (1984), developed the *theory of distinction* to expose how features of culture, such as food, art and manners, are used to discriminate between groups. As McEnery points out, this is also relevant to language.

If a taste for fine wine is supposed to be a token of high social status, then on seeing somebody pouring a drink from such a bottle of wine, other factors aside, one might assume they were of a certain social class. Similarly, if one sees somebody drinking a pint of beer, and this is a marker of low social class...one may also infer their social class. However, if fine wine is priced so as to exclude the lower orders from purchasing it, the social hierarchy has nothing to do with taste as such. Rather, these tokens of taste are controlled in such a way as to impose the social structure that they are a token of. Transporting this argument to language is somewhat straight forward. If there are forms of language which are identified with a refined form of speech, then those aware of the perception of this form of language, who are able to invest either the time or the money in order to acquire that 'refined' form of language, will be able to identify themselves with a particular group in society (McEnery, 2006: 10).

The way that discourses of power are identified through other behaviours is a key means of disadvantaging those that are unable or unwilling to gain access to those discourses. In general, 'the discourse of power excludes bad language, the discourse of the disempowered includes it' (*ibid*: 12). The process of setting out linguistic boundaries as a marker of class, taste and decency has a big impact on how society views swearing, and on how we also view people who use swear words.

The myriad of different discourses available informs us that language is structured according to a series of different patterns dictated by different domains of social life. Discourse analysis, then, is the analysis of these patterns (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2002: 1). Some of these patterns become so embedded into social reality that they become naturalised and are rarely questioned or challenged (*ibid*: 32). As Louis de Saussure notes, 'there is an intrinsic link between *understanding what is communicated* – understanding a discourse – and *getting to believe its contents*; both are automatic and uncontrollable processes' (2011: 35 – *original italics*). The way that discourses become naturalised and unchallenged is a key focus of this thesis.

The analysis of discourse has played a pivotal role in understanding how our social reality is normalised and maintained, especially in how it legitimises inequality, oppression and injustice (van Leeuwen, 2018: 141). However, while the analysis of discourse can help us to understand more about how it shapes, maintains and reinforces our attitudes, beliefs, ideologies and values, it is only through the use of *critical* discourse analysis that these discourses can be challenged and changed (Charteris-Black, 2004: 29). Critical discourse analysis is the perfect linguistic tool to scrape beneath discourse to bring ideologies, normally hidden by the habitualization of language use, to the surface for closer inspection

(Fowler, 1991: 89). With that in mind I will now look at critical discourse analysis and consider how it can help to expose the ideologies behind the discourse around swearing.

### 3.3 Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), sometimes referred to as Critical Discourse Studies (CDS), is an umbrella term for a diverse range of methods and approaches designed to investigate the way that discourses influence ideology and power (Baker et al., 2008: 273). Evolving from the theoretical framework Critical Linguistics (CL), initially developed in the 1970s by a team of scholars at the University of Anglia, CDA differs from mainstream linguistics and traditional sociolinguistics in arguing that there are ‘strong and pervasive connections between linguistic structure and social structure...and, moreover, these socially determined patterns of language influence non-linguistic behaviours, including, crucially, cognitive activity’ (Fowler and Kress, 1979: 185). This was a concept previously proposed by Michael Halliday (1976) whose *theory of systemic linguistics* argues that language has a powerful influence in social structure meaning that ‘the language that people have access to depends on their position in the social system’ (Fairclough, 2016: 26). This concept is similar to Bourdieu’s (1984) *theory of distinction* discussed earlier. The use of the premodifier *critical* differentiates it from Discourse Analysis (DA) in that it is more problem-orientated and thus interdisciplinary and eclectic (Wodak and Meyer, 2009: 3). One frequent misunderstanding of the use of the term *critical* is that the matter under investigation must have a seriousness to it. However, the term critical is not being used in its more common-sense usage of something negative. It is instead being used ‘in the special sense of aiming to show up connection which may be hidden from people – such as the connection between language, power and ideology’ (Fairclough, 2013: 4). As Wodak and Meyer write, ‘any social



phenomenon lends itself to critical investigation, to be challenged and not taken for granted' (2009: 2).

The critical discourse analyst recognises that every discourse is both a reflection and a shaper of social structure (Charteris-Black, 2004). As Ortony points out 'language, perception and knowledge are inextricably intertwined' (1993:2) and thus it is the aim of the critical discourse analyst to systematically unpack how they interact and influence each other, in order to challenge dominant discourses and expose unjustified stereotyping (Ainsworth and Hardy, 2004: 236). The key aim of CDA, therefore, is to de-mystify underlying ideologies and power through the methodical investigation of discourse, written, spoken or visual (Wodak and Meyer, 2009: 3). For those working within discourse theory, the notion of ideology has proved to be problematic. The Marxist model of ideology is seen by some as too simplistic in 'assuming that individuals are necessarily simple passive victims of systems of thought' (Mills, 2004: 27). However, as a concept, ideology has undergone many transformations since its inception. More recently, theorists recognise that ideologies are 'largely acquired, expressed and reproduced by discourse...hence a discourse analytical approach is crucial to understanding the ways ideologies emerge, spread and are used by social groups' (van Dijk, 2013: 176). Discourse is also integral in the 'formulation, reproduction, and confirmation of group definition, cohesion, common goals and interests' (van Dijk, 1988: 109). This is important in the creation of an in-group versus out-group rhetoric, that is a feature of a moral panic. As such I will now discuss ideology and attitude and how they relate to the analysis of discourse.

### 3.3.1 Ideology and Attitude

As I have just noted, the concept of ideology is theoretically complicated, especially when it comes to its relationship with discourse (Mills, 1997: 26). The term ideology originally appeared in the early 19<sup>th</sup>-century when, in the wake of the French revolution, Antoine Destutt de Tracy coined the term whilst seeking to create a universal science of *ideas* (Freeden, 2003: 5). He sought to understand the driving forces behind the uprising, and his own imprisonment at the hands of the rebels, by gaining ‘a complete knowledge of our intellectual faculties, and to deduce from that knowledge the first principles of all other branches of our knowledge’ (de Tracy, 1826, cited in MacKenzie and Malesevic, 2002: 1). However, ideology is more closely associated with the German philosophers Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. The Marxian view proposed that ideology was a smokescreen designed to disguise the workings of power by obscuring reality, like ‘an inverted mirror-image of the material world’ (Freeden, 2003: 5). The idea of a distorted *false consciousness* implied that there was a *truth* that could be unmasked, exposing the illusion and emancipating the powerless from the dominant classes (*ibid*: 7). However, this utopian proposal for challenging the oppression of the lower classes was accused of being a ‘simplistic and negative process whereby individuals were duped into using conceptual systems which were not in their own interests’ (Mills, 2004: 26). As Marxism began to fall from political favour the historical connection between ideology and the concept of a false consciousness and a dominant, all powerful ruling class, led to ideology being treated with some scepticism. The term ideology began to represent ‘a kind of mystification that serves class interests, promotes a false view of social relations, or produces injustice’ (Balkin, 1998: 3) and its association with totalitarian ideologies and *isms* such as *communism*, *fascism* or *anarchism*, made it ‘too controversial and contested, too deeply marred by a history in

which it has been hurled back and forth as a term of abuse, to be salvaged today for the purposes of social and political analysis' (Thompson, 1990: 6). However, as new social philosophers emerged, such as Karl Mannheim (1893-1947), Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) and Louis Althusser (1918-1990), ideology once again became recognised as not just a theory of ideas but also of behaviours and events (MacKenzie, 2002: 12). Ideology began to be seen, not as a distortion of reality, but as a *reflection* of historical and social environments, our shared rituals and prejudices, the analysis of which could give insight into the human thought process. Ideologies both shape us and are shaped by us, and while they can exercise power and be exploitative, the *proletariat* has more control over ideology than Marx and Engels first proposed (Thompson, 1990: Balkin, 1998: Mills, 2004).

The problem for ideology, similarly to discourse, is the myriad different ways to define and understand it. At its most simplistic, ideology can be seen as 'a coherent and relatively stable set of beliefs or values' (Wodak and Meyer, 2009: 8) that create a 'a systematically organised presentation of reality' (Hodge and Kress, 1993: 15). Although we 'produce, disseminate, and consume ideologies all our lives, whether we are aware of it or not' (Freeden, 2003: 2) they are rooted in a *socially shared belief system* and should not be isolated as a personal or individual trait. As such, it is important for any study of ideology to incorporate group-based social practices, as well as the way individuals respond, participate and reproduce ideologies in their attitudes (van Dijk, 2013: 3). Michael Freeden explains ideology as a series of maps that help us make sense of the political and social world around us, that we impose, or we adopt from others (2003: 2). He gives the example of an individual's reaction to encountering a large group of people, waving banners and shouting, whilst being surrounded by people in uniform. The decoding of the situation will rely

entirely on the ideologies subscribed to, whether consciously or not. A conservative may well read a dangerous situation that appears to be illegitimate or illegal because of the police presence. A liberal may appreciate and admire the freedom to protest and free speech in a democratic country. Whereas an anarchist might instantly think of it as a good example of direct action needed 'to wrest the control of the political away from elites that oppress and dictate' (Freedon, 2003: 2). Ideology, then, can be seen as a thought-practice (*ibid*: 21).

The type of ideology that can be revealed by the analysis of discourse is the 'hidden and latent type of everyday beliefs, which often appear disguised as conceptual metaphors and analogies' (Wodak and Meyer, 2009: 8). The sociocognitive approach to discourse analysis proposes that ideology not only creates mental frameworks of beliefs about society but also plays a significant role in the stabilisation and challenging of dominance and power (van Dijk, 2013: 1). However, rather than being simply the puppet master that Marx asserted, ideology is a crucial cog in a process that van Dijk (2013) identifies as the discourse-cognition-society triangle. This sociocognitive framework demonstrates that, despite previous assumptions about social variables being directly controlled or caused by discourse structures, there is a cognitive mediation (the *thinking* as well as *doing*) between discourse and society that has been previously overlooked or trivialised. The cognitive mediation between discourse and society acts as 'the interface between the social and the personal, between the group and its members, and between the system and its manifestations' (van Dijk, 2013: 179). While ideologies always belong to a group, when it is shared amongst the members of that group individual circumstances, personalities and experiences will influence how those members accept, understand and translate that ideology. Moreover,

individuals can be members of any number of different ideological groups at any given time, which sometimes (maybe often) are contradictory. This highlights the importance of differentiating between language as a socially shared system and personal language that will be influenced by personal biography and personality, as well as the context (van Dijk, 2013: 180). van Dijk (2013: 178) proposes that ideologies are built via a general schema of basic categories that help to organise the beliefs of an ideology, such as;

- **Identity** – *who are we? Who belongs to us? Who is a member and who can join?*
- **Activities** – *what do we (have) to do? What is our role in society?*
- **Goals** – *what is the goal of our activities?*
- **Norms and values** – *What are the norms of our activities? What is good or bad for us?*
- **Group relations** – *who are our friends and our enemies?*
- **Resources** – *what material or symbolic resources form the basis of our (lack of) power and our position in society?*

Closely related to the concept of ideology is opinion and attitude. These are not always the same. It is entirely possible to have an opinion that does not correlate with your general attitude. For example, someone might have a normative belief (attitude) that swearing is harmless and fun, but when asked for an opinion feels obliged to toe the line and express a contrary opinion that swearing is bad. While ideology is the shared, accepted belief of specific social groups an attitude is an ideologically based viewpoint about specific social issues (van Dijk, 2009: 65). For example, subscribers to a feminist ideology may all have very different attitudes and opinions (normative beliefs) about debates and struggles within that ideology, such as abortion, divorce and arranged marriage (*ibid*: 65). Like ideology, the

concept of attitude can be difficult to define. To put it simply, in the process of communication, people 'form specific opinions about the text, speaker or situation' (van Dijk, 1988: 108) that lead to an evaluative belief. These beliefs are tied up with emotive aspects, such as *like/dislike*, and tend to be 'organised in complex attitude structures or schemata' (van Dijk, 1988: 108). Schemata are 'well integrated packets of knowledge about the world, events, people and actions... often referred to as *scripts* and *frames*' (Eysenck and Keane, 2010: 401 – *original italics*). The knowledge within these schemas, of which there are a multitude, aid us in interpreting the world around us. We have schemas for specific people (such as one's parent), groups of people (such as one's family), roles (such as a teacher versus a student), processes (such as ordering fast food), events (such as a music festival) and so on and so forth. Schemas are essentially social, in that they tend to 'define the goals, interests, values and norms of a group, relative to socially relevant issues' (van Dijk, 1988: 108) and thus, any behaviour that appears to challenge those values and norms will trigger an attitude. Schemas of social groups are particularly significant in developing evaluative beliefs for example, 'British people often believe that the Americans are 'brash', the French think the British are 'cold' and so forth' (Martin et al., 2007: 691). These shared schemas are best described as *stereotypes* and they are often used to characterise an out-group in less favourable terms than the in-group. Stereotypes can serve to justify a need for control, for example a stereotype that characterises an out-group as lazy and unmotivated is an excellent justification for taking control over that group; 'they are lazy and so that is why, for their own good, we need to make decisions for them and take control of their destiny' (*ibid*: 692). Broadly speaking it is 'difficult to distinguish attitudes towards language variety from attitudes to the groups and community members who use them' (Garrett et al., 2003: 12) which obviously has implications of prejudice and discrimination, especially in that

attitudes tend to be automatic and unconscious. As I will evidence in Chapters 5 and 6, attitudes to swearing are closely intertwined with the creation of negative stereotypes and a need to control the out-group.

Both ideology and attitude give rise to a separation between a *Them* (the *Other*) and *Us* (the *Self*). As van Dijk notes 'ideologies in everyday and academic discourse, are typically attributed to Others, such as our ideological opponents or enemies: *We have the truth. They have ideologies*' (2013: 175- *original italics*). The way discourse separates the *Self* from the *Other* is notably relevant to this thesis. With that in mind, I will now present an overview of the concept of *Othering*.

### 3.3.2 Othering

A key term to arise in studies of discourse is the concept of the *Other* to identify an individual or group that is deemed to be different from the norm or the *Self* (Mills, 2004: Holliday, 2011). In everyday life certain social groups 'construct ideological imaginations both of themselves and others' (Holiday, 2011: 2). The process of *Othering* constructs, or imagines, a demonized image of the *Other* while simultaneously supporting an idealised, superior image of the *Self* (*ibid*: 69). The idealization of the *Self* does reflect actual behaviour, but the positive attributes are enhanced and exaggerated while the less positives are played down (*ibid*: 70). What is also important in this process is that the negative *Other*-presentation is applied to all the members of the group or society being *Othered*, which can perpetuate prejudices and discrimination (*ibid*: 69). Holliday (2011: 70) outlines a sequence of *Othering*.

1. *Identify 'our' group by contrasting it with 'their' group.*

2. *Strengthen the constrained images of Self and Other by emphasizing and reifying respective proficient and deficient values, artefacts and behaviours.*
3. *Do this by manipulating selected cultural resources such as Protestantism or Confucianism.*
4. *Position Self and Other by constructing moral reasons to attack, colonise or help.*
5. *The Other culture becomes a definable commodity.*
6. *The imagined Other works with or resists imposed definitions.*

The concept of *Othering* arguably began with Edward Said's work on *Orientalism* in the late seventies. Said proposed that the linguistic features that repeatedly occur in discourses about colonised countries were not simply a matter of journalistic choice but were 'due to larger-scale belief systems structured by discursive frameworks, which are given credibility and force by imperial power relations' (Mills, 1997: 95). The writings in the nineteenth century, he argued, did not describe the Orient as a society and culture functioning in its own right but instead compared it to the West in ways that represented the Orient as an uncivilised, negative *Other*, in order to reaffirm the positive, civilised image of Western society (*ibid*: 96). Value-laden statements were presented as fact so that anecdotal or fictitious information accrued factual status with very little contest (*ibid*: 97). The non-West were presented as culturally morally deficient and in need of help and liberation, thereby justifying Western imperialism (Holliday, 2011: 71). The people of the East were dehumanised by being likened to animals and stereotyped, such as 'the *inscrutable* Chinese, the *untrustworthy* Arab, the *docile* Hindu, and so on' (Mills, 1997: 97- *my italics*). They were also often relegated to the past, as if they were at an arrested stage of development and somehow congenitally backward or primitive compared to the advanced, modern Western



world. As such, they required civilising and educating by the West for their own good, and ours (Zimmerman, 2006: 1). By bringing *them* into accord with *us*, the well-being of the idealised *Self* is realised (Holliday, 2011: 75). However, this ethos of the *Other* needing help from the *Self* requires they be *inferior*, which feeds ‘the ideology underlying the construction of minority group cultures based on the principle of differences’ (Sarangi, 1995: 1). This, in turn, can have problematic consequences, such as racism, chauvinism, xenophobia and religious intolerance. As a result, *Othering* is often used in identifying and tackling racist and xenophobic discourse around immigration, which this thesis is not concerned with. However, the way the *Self* and *Other* can contribute to discriminatory discourses, leading to social exclusion and marginalisation, is of interest. As discussed in Chapter 2, people who swear are routinely considered to be of lower class, lower intellect and generally *inferior* to people who do not use bad language. The way in which the *Self* is presented as good, strong or pure while simultaneously constructing the *Other* as bad, weak and impure (Holliday, 2011: 70) is echoed in the contrasting qualities between the good, moral *in-group* and the bad, immoral *out-group* found in moral panic theories (Hall, 2013: McEneaney, 2006). In a moral panic the demonised *Other* is presented as the *deviant*, or the *folk devil*, whose attributes are contrasted against the superior *Self*. I will discuss the *folk devil* as the *Other* in more depth in 3.6.

Another intrinsic part of *Othering* is the use of metaphor (Baider et al, 2017: 41). Studies into polemical debates around immigration have found that parasite metaphors, such as leeches or bloodsuckers, are often used to stigmatise and dehumanise immigrants (Musolff, 2015). As I will evidence in Chapter 5 the discourse around swearing frequently involves metaphorical language designed to create a separation between those who use swear

words (the *Other*) and those who find it offensive (the *Self*). As such I will now explore metaphor as a rhetorical device.

### 3.4 Metaphor

Metaphor is ancient. As long ago as 4BC the Greek philosopher Aristotle defined how names used to describe one thing could be used to describe another. This concept stemmed from a notion proffered by another Greek philosopher, Socrates, who debated that all names belong to an object, be it a *someone* or a *something*. Aristotle then identified metaphor as 'the transference of a name to something it does *not belong to*' (Harris and Taylor, 1997: 20 - *my italics*). Over 2000 years later, there is still a general agreement among theorists that 'metaphor involves, or is, the transfer of meaning' (Ortony, 1975: 45). Cameron and Low refer to a *folk* meaning of metaphor as the comparison of 'two things which are actually very different' (1999: 77). The dissimilarity between the two things is referred to as *tension* (Ortony, 1975: 45). This has led to a more technical description of metaphor as 'a linguistic representation that results from the shift in the use of a word or phrase from the context or domain in which it is expected to occur to another context or domain where it is not expected to occur, thereby causing semantic tension' (Charteris-Black, 2004: 21). More recently this has been extended into 'thinking of one thing (A) as though it were another thing (B) [resulting] in an item of vocabulary or larger stretch of text being applied in an unusual or new way' (Goatly, 2007: 11).

There are opposing beliefs about metaphor. Ortony sums up the two alternative approaches as the *constructivist*, viewing metaphor as an essential characteristic of the creativity of language, or as the *nonconstructivist*, where metaphor is treated as something

that is rather unimportant, and is deviant and parasitic upon normal usage (1993: 2). The former proposes that metaphor has an important role in language and cognition and should be a central component of critical discourse analysis (Charteris-Black, 2004: 28). By contrast the latter sees metaphors as 'vague, inessential frills, appropriate for the purpose of politicians and poet, but not for those of scientists' (Ortony, 1993: 2). To a certain extent both viewpoints are valid. We understand literal language to be the denotive one-to-one meaning of a word and metaphor is a deviance from that. All theorists would agree that the nature of metaphor is to challenge interpretation by a linguistic sleight of hand, whether it be purely for creative tactics or for constructing entirely new meanings. However, the more traditional school of thought overlooks how metaphors impact 'the fundamental, literal contents of human thought and language' (Gibbs, 2014: 15) and underestimate the potential power behind metaphor (Charteris-Black, 2004: 23). The main disagreement between the two is whether metaphors are simply lexical tools 'used chiefly for poetic or rhetorical emphasis' (Cameron and Low, 1999: 78) or whether there is a significant connection between language and cognition and, in particular, between language and our experiential, physical reality (Gibbs, 2014: 15).

One of the criticisms of the nonconstructivist point of view is that they mistakenly believe that literal language could replace metaphorical language (Black, 1993: 22). This fails to address why people *choose* to use metaphors, instead of literal language, when metaphors can be misunderstood, risking socially harmful or undesirable consequences (Ortony, 1993: 5). There are several reasons why people choose to use metaphorical language. It is not always beneficial to state a viewpoint literally or directly, so metaphor can provide a smoke screen with which to discuss more awkward or controversial topics (Charteris-Black, 2004:

11). Research into the language used when making complaints found that the use of metaphor can help to distance the speaker from what they are talking about while still inviting others to share their point of view (Drew and Holt, 1988). Moreover, metaphor is often found to be far more effective in persuasion, especially in argumentative language such as political speeches, because 'it represents a novel way of viewing the world that offers some fresh insight' (Charteris-Black, 2004: 7). Metaphor is 'held to be a vital and powerful cognitive tool for children to learn about the world' (Cameron and Low, 1999: 84). Its use as a teaching device, especially for concepts that are ordinarily difficult to learn because they are unfamiliar or complex, is invaluable (Petrie and Oshlag, 1993: 600). Other studies find that metaphor use can be bonding, creating an emotional intimacy between participants (Cooper, 1986).

Metaphorical language can help to express a message more economically than with the use of literal language. In his insightful paper *Why metaphors are necessary and not just nice* Ortony (1975) presents three thesis' that explain the importance of metaphor in communication. The *inexpressibility thesis*, as the title suggests, proposes that metaphors fill in when there is no other means of saying something. In contrast to the nonconstructivist point of view, Ortony argues that there are times in which there is no possible way of literally saying what must be said, making the use of metaphor 'essential as a vehicle for its expression' (1975: 49). The *vividness thesis* accounts for the richness of detail and imagery that are not restricted to visual aspects but extend to all sensory modalities, such as sound, smell and touch, making metaphor a strong emotive force that is effective in moving from the well-known to the less-known (*ibid*: 51). The vividness of metaphorical language, and how it influences our attitudes towards swearing, will be

discussed in more depth in Chapter 5. Finally, the *compactness thesis* proposes that metaphors enable communication to take place without having to explicitly spell out all the details (*ibid*: 47). Ortony theorises that this is an imperative function of metaphor, allowing large *chunks* of messages that might be too boring or time consuming for both speaker and hearer, to be converted or transferred into more economical exchanges (*ibid*: 47).

Metaphorical language incites a subset of characteristics that can then be applied, or eliminated, depending on the appropriateness of the transference. For example, consider the sentence *He dived into the icy water like a fearless warrior*. Ortony describes how our interpretation draws from two subsets. Firstly, the perceptual, *distinctive* characteristics that define a warrior from a non-warrior. So, whilst he might have hair, a nose and a mouth, that does not identify him as a warrior from say, a postman or a pilot. Our understanding of a stereotypical warrior requires that he may be wearing armour or war-paint, that he might be armed and on horseback. Secondly, we draw from a set of more abstract, *salient* characteristics such as bravery, strength, blood, injury, death. However, the 'characteristics to be transferred must be conceivably transferrable' (*ibid*: 48). While the salient characteristics of being brave, strong and at risk of injury might reasonably apply to someone diving into icy water, our knowledge of swimmers tells us that he is unlikely to be wearing a full suit of armour or riding a horse. Ortony calls this *tension elimination* (*ibid*: 48). However, the salient characteristics of a suit of armour being *something that gives protection* may well transfer as a swimmer in a wet-suit or covered in oil. Because of these two subsets the chunk of language that was required to describe the diver as brave, strong, fearless, aggressive, muscular, determined etc. is neatly wrapped up in two words, *fearless warrior* (*ibid*: 49). Moreover, the persistent repeating of the same (or similar) metaphor can encourage an automatic and unconscious processing (Refaie, 2001: 359). As I will discuss in

Chapter 5, the salient characteristics that transfer between metaphors and swearing are highly influential in how society develops and maintains attitudes towards bad language.

However, it is the suggestion that 'metaphor may be part of thought and not just language' (Gibbs, 2014: 14) that has stimulated the more recent theoretical and empirical activity into the way of thinking about why we choose to use metaphorical language over literal. There continues to be growing empirical evidence for the way metaphors can have a cognitive and social impact. For example, experiments around the use of metaphorical framing within health messages and vaccination programmes found that when a specific illness, such as influenza, is described as a *beast*, a *weed* or an *army*, there was a marked increase in willingness to be vaccinated as opposed to when the descriptors were literal (Scherer et al., 2014). Other studies have shown that even a brief exposure to metaphoric framing can prompt observers to think of the more abstract target issue in terms of the more concrete source domain (Landau and Keefer, 2014: 463). Participants who were asked to read stock market reports that either framed the price trend in terms of a living agent (the market *climbed* upward) or an inanimate object (the market was *swept* upward) opted for the former conceptual metaphor when it came to predicting price trends because their own knowledge base was that living objects are capable of self-movement whereas inanimate objects do not move with intention (Morris, et al., 2007).

In its simplest form a metaphoric utterance is saying *S is P* while meaning *S is R* when *P* plainly does not mean *R* (Searle, 1993: 102). However, as stated earlier, metaphors can be misleading or misunderstood. How does the crossover between *R* and *P* successfully occur? Our understanding of any utterance, whether literal or metaphorical, depends on our factual background information (Searle, 1993: 86). However, a metaphor is only successful

if it speaks to our engrained schematic knowledge (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003). For a speaker to effectively communicate through metaphor 'there must be some principles according to which he is able to mean more than, or something different from, what he says, whereby the hearer, using his knowledge of them, can understand what the speaker means' (Searle, 1993: 84). I shall give a brief example. The statement *I am a cow* will lead most readers to ascertain that I do not literally mean that I am of bovine descent (*P*) but that I am using the term as a form of insult (*R*). The use of *cow* as a metaphorical descriptor has been culturally established for several centuries as 'a coarse or degraded woman' (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021) and as such there is an agreed schematic code that translates the statement from a female bovine animal (literal) to an insult (metaphorical). The metaphor is successful<sup>2</sup>. However, if I was to exchange the term *cow* for *heifer*, while it might still be understood as metaphorical because it is generally known as depreciative slang, it is further from the original agreed schematic code and as such it can take longer to understand what I am saying, especially if English is not your first language. And if I exchanged *heifer* for *bull* then I have completely moved away from the agreed schematic code regarding derogatory terms for women and the metaphor no longer makes any sense and is likely to fail. However, if I was trying to metaphorically imply that I was strong then *bull* would be more appropriate than *cow*. And if I referred to myself as an *animal* it can be understood as both literal (humans are animals) and metaphorical (behaving with a lack of decorum). This shows how metaphorical and literal language can overlap and so it is

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<sup>2</sup> This will be very culturally specific as cows are seen as sacred in some areas of the world and as such the metaphor could be misconstrued.

perhaps more accurate to consider language as on a continuum between the literal and the metaphorical (Ritchie, 2013: 10).

The above example demonstrates how subjective metaphor can be. Not only does there have to be an agreed schematic framework that both speaker and hearer understand, but the interpretation can depend on particular knowledge, opinion and viewpoint. As such, there is no reliable way of determining how a metaphor will be interpreted. Once again, this begs the question why metaphors remain so pervasive in language use. The strongest argument for the use of metaphors comes from the cognitive theorists, who propose that metaphor is a human thought process that helps us to understand the world around us (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003). The use of metaphor matters. They are not simply a linguistic trick between two different domains but are integral to our knowledge and understanding of more abstract concepts (Lakoff and Johnson; 2003). The way we use metaphors can 'determine a great deal about how we live our lives' (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003: 244). The critical analysis of metaphor can provide insight into the underlying ideologies that shape our beliefs, attitudes and knowledge, thereby offering 'a vital means of understanding more about the complex relationships between language, thought and social context' (Charteris-Black, 2004: 42).

At this juncture I would like to briefly touch upon literal language that can be interpreted as metaphorical. As I noted earlier, some scholars propose that metaphorical and literal language can overlap (Ritchie, 2013: 10). It was the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein who suggested that many literal terms can be related by what he referred to as a *family resemblance*.



Consider for example the proceedings that we call ‘games’. I mean board-games, card-games, ball-games, Olympic games, and so on. What is common to them all? – Don’t say: “There *must* be something common or they would not be called ‘games’ “ – but *look and see* whether there is anything common to all, but similarities, relationships, and a whole series of them at that . . . a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing; sometimes overall similarities, sometimes similarities of detail – (1963: 32 – *original italics*)

Characterised by his mantra ‘don’t ask for the meaning, look for the use’ (Anderson and Ortony, 1975: 168) Wittgenstein illustrated the polysemy of words by using the verb *to eat*.

Consider the phrases *eat steak*, *eat soup* and *eat an apple*. Eating a steak requires a knife and fork. Soup is sipped with a spoon. Commonly an apple is eaten without a utensil. In each case the actions of the lips, teeth and tongue are different. Further variations in sense are introduced when the agent is considered (Anderson and Ortony, 1975: 168 – *original italics*)

In other words, the comprehension of an utterance can draw from a mental representation that is more metaphorical than the utterance intended (Anderson and Ortony, 1975). Let us consider the introduction of an agent.

Lady Fitzgerald ate the soup.

The tramp ate the soup.

The act of eating the soup is not metaphorical. However, referring back to Ortony’s subsets, while the perceptual, *distinctive* characteristics are of someone consuming a liquid meal it is

clear that the abstract, *salient* characteristics will differ. The lady might be wealthy, beautiful and posh while the tramp will be viewed as poor, possibly old and unhygienic. The former might be eating in a posh restaurant, while the latter is in a soup kitchen. The soup itself may differ, from a soup made from expensive ingredients to a Dickensian broth. Each statement 'gives rise to different suppositions about location, circumstance, manner...the general point is that a word could have different meanings in a very large number of sentences in which it might appear, even when there is some "core meaning" as in *eat*. – (Anderson and Ortony, 1975: 169 – *original italics*). The statements are literal but they create a conceptual frame from the salient characteristics. Conceptual frames are mental structures that do not require figurative language. They are subconsciously activated in our brains through language and the more it is activated, the stronger the frame becomes (Lakoff, 2004: 10). They can also be activated via cultural key words. Cultural key words are special lexicons which are particularly important in revealing core values and cultural assumptions (Wierzbicker, 1991: 333). The word *heritage*, for example, can be ideologically and politically loaded towards a national unity (Stubbs, 2001). While these words are easily recognisable to everyone, 'there exist certain culture-specific concepts which are fully understandable only to a member of a specific culture' (Moisejeva, 2017: 93). As I discuss in 5.2.1 these conceptual frames and cultural key words play a key part in the discourse around Religiosity.

This thesis aligns with the *constructivist approach* in proposing that metaphor is far more than simply ornamental language but is a central cog to our knowledge of reality (Ortony, 1993: 1). As I will evidence, the metaphorical language around swearing is not arbitrary, or simply journalistic choice, but is a reflection of larger-scale belief systems (Mills, 1997: 95)

that have created conceptual metaphors over time that have significantly influenced attitudes towards the use of bad language. To do this, I will draw from the theory of conceptual metaphor.

### 3.5 Conceptual Metaphor Theory

Currently the most dominant paradigm in metaphor research is cognitive or conceptual metaphor theory (Gibbs, 2014; Ritchie, 2013; Semino, 2008; Cameron and Low, 2004; Cameron-Black, 2004). Largely developed by Lakoff and Johnson in their 1980 seminal work *Metaphors We Live By*, Cognitive/Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) proposes that metaphor is not simply an aspect of language, as in choice of *words* or how we *talk*, but is a fundamental condition of human thought (Gibbs, 2011: 529). In contrast to the nonconstructivist, who argue that metaphor is simply a literary stylistic device, CMT explores how metaphor can not only make us think about one thing in the terms of another but it also goes on to create an underlying relationship between two separate concepts or domains (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003). It is this relationship that becomes what is referred to in the literature as a *conceptual metaphor* (in line with the literature all conceptual metaphors will be identified in SMALL CAPITALS and linguistic metaphors will be in *italics*). Conceptual metaphors differ from linguistic metaphors because they present a cross-domain mapping between two conventional patterns of thought that can be based on experience or perception (Semino, 2008: 7). For scholars of conceptual metaphor, 'the primary function of metaphor is to understand difficult, complex, abstract, or less clearly delineated concepts' (Kovecses, 1986: 6).

Theoretically the first domain (A) is referred to as the *Topic, Target or Tenor*, which tends to be abbreviated to (T) and the second domain (B) becomes the *Vehicle or (V) or the Source (S)*. This thesis will refer to the *Target (T)* and the *Source (S)*. The *Target* tends to be a relatively abstract concept that is less well understood with the *Source* being more concrete and familiar (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003: Steen, 2014). The basis for the theory is that the relationship between (T) and (S) is not arbitrary but instead stems from a physical and cultural grounding that is common to us all as we grow and learn, including the way our biological bodies behave and how we perceive and handle objects (El Refaie, 2001: 353). So, rather than being random and isolated, metaphors are deliberately organised and defined by a coherent system of experience (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003: 18).

We are in constant interaction with metaphor throughout our life. As children we acquire a view of our world and culture via conventional metaphors and this then develops an understanding of the information-transferring aspect of metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003: Cameron and Low, 2004: Ritchie, 2013: Stapleton, 2020). An example that is often used to evidence the relationship between our physical experience and metaphorical behaviour is our understanding of *up* and *down*. We can understand spatial orientation because we have physical bodies that function and move within our environment, learning that up-down, in-out and front-back are orientational trajectories that go in opposite directions (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003: 14). Even as young children we are quick to learn that falling *down* is bad but being picked *up* makes us feel better (Taylor and Littlemore, 2014: 2). Conceptual metaphors enable us to understand the more complex aspects of our life experience by using more familiar and recognisable terms (El Refaie, 2001: 353). There are many conceptual metaphors that stem from this knowledge of opposing movement. For

example, HAPPY is UP and SAD is DOWN. Happiness is a physical feeling but it is an abstract concept that is not always easy to explain. The use of something that we can physically relate to, as in being picked up, helps us to recognise, and communicate, how we feel when we say we are happy. In theoretical terms the more abstract concept HAPPY (T) is being symbolised by the more familiar concept of UP (S). This concept also draws from our physical posture. For example, when we are in a positive emotional state we tend to stand erect, but when we are feeling sad we tend to round our shoulders and adopt a drooping stance. Likewise, when we smile our mouth turns up and when we frown we are physically *down at the mouth*. Being picked up as a baby is usually a positive experience because it leads to food, warmth or safety. So, it makes logical sense that HAPPY is UP and SAD is DOWN, which is reflected in these metaphors.

Table 1: UP is HAPPY, DOWN is SAD

UP - <i>Happy</i>	I am feeling <i>upbeat</i> . My spirit <i>soared</i> . I am in <i>high</i> spirits.
DOWN - <i>Sad</i>	I am feeling <i>down</i> . My spirit <i>sank</i> . I <i>fell</i> into a depression.

Another example from the UP/DOWN concept is CONSCIOUS, HEALTH and LIFE are UP and UNCONSCIOUS, SICKNESS and DEATH are DOWN. These also make logical sense. Humans tend to sleep lying down and under normal circumstances when we wake we get up out of bed (conscious), stand upright and move around (health and life). Whereas, when we feel ill we tend to stay in bed so instead of getting *up* we lie *down*. If we are badly attacked we are likely to fall *down*. And of course, the ultimate state of being prostrate, and thus *down*, is death.

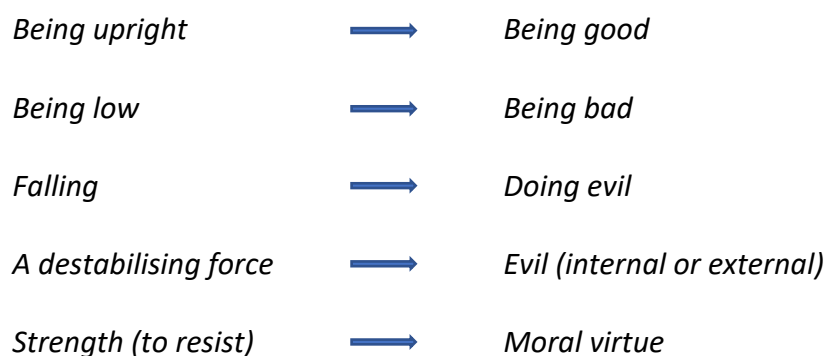
Table 2: UP is CONSCIOUS, DOWN is UNCONSCIOUS

UP <i>Conscious, health, life</i>	Get <i>up</i> . Wake <i>up</i> . I like to <i>rise</i> early. She is at the <i>peak</i> of her health.
DOWN <i>Unconscious, illness, death</i>	He <i>fell</i> asleep. She <i>fell</i> ill. He <i>sank</i> into a coma. His health is <i>declining</i> . He <i>dropped</i> dead.

The trajectory of UP/DOWN is often used in discourse about MORALITY and POWER.

Morality and moral strength is often conceptualised in terms of physical uprightness (Lakoff and Johnson, 1999: 299). Examples such as an *upstanding citizen* once again draw from the physical understanding that being UP is better than being DOWN (Meier, et al., 2007: 757).

The biggest threat to morality is evil and this becomes metaphorically represented as a force, either internal or external, with which strength is required to overcome (Lakoff and Johnson, 1999: 299). The metaphor of moral strength consists of the following mapping:



The concept of moral strength, of being upright and higher, is modelled on dominance in the physical sphere (Lakoff and Johnson, 1999: 301). The strong are moral, the weak are immoral. Morality is seen as the courage and the willpower to stand up to external evils and to overcome hardship, immorality is self-indulgence and a lack of self-control (*ibid*: 300).

Vertical positions can also become symbols of power. Power is another abstract concept that is usually defined as ‘the potential to influence others and to promote one’s own goals’

(Schubert, 2005: 1). Metaphorically we speak of powerful people having *high* status or being at the *top*. The *upper* classes are considered to be more powerful than the *lower* classes. We also look *up* to our betters and look *down* on those we consider beneath us. This then leads to another abstract concept of HAVING CONTROL or BEING CONTROLLED, which can also be mapped to the orientational metaphor ABOVE/BELOW. The roots for both conceptual metaphors probably lie in physical size and strength. Size matters in negotiating power relations. As children we learn that those who stand above us, whether parents, siblings or taller peers, are able to coerce us physically (Schubert, 2005: 3). This gives us a physiological understanding that stronger people are more likely to win in any physical confrontation or competition, giving them an advantage over their weaker opponent. A successful outcome means they gain control. Not only will the weak fall DOWN and the strong stand UP, but the weak will now be BELOW and the strong will be ABOVE. While the roots for this conceptual metaphor may lie in physical combat, whether on an ancient battlefield or in a playground, the concept also lends itself to our understanding of how power and control behave in social and cultural settings.

Table 3: UP is HAVING CONTROL, DOWN is BEING CONTROLLED

UP/ABOVE <i>Having control</i>	I am on <i>top</i> of the situation. He has control <i>over</i> her. She is at the <i>height</i> of her power.
DOWN/BELOW <i>Being controlled</i>	She <i>fell</i> from power. He is <i>under</i> my control. He is <i>low</i> on the ranks. He works <i>beneath</i> me.

The experiential grounding of these orientational metaphors then establish our understanding that being UP and HIGH is better than being DOWN or BELOW. Good health, feeling happy and being in control characterise what is good for a person. Not only is

success in competition or fight better than losing but it can also be the difference between life and death. Thus, the conceptual metaphor GOOD is UP, BAD is DOWN, stems from our physical and cultural experiences of health, success and control. This continues to other abstract concepts of good and bad, moral and immoral, such as virtue and depravity, also being mapped to the physical reality of up and down.

Table 4: UP is GOOD, DOWN is BAD

UP <i>Virtue and good</i>	She is an <i>upstanding</i> citizen. We have <i>high</i> standards. She does <i>high-quality</i> work.
DOWN <i>Depravity and bad</i>	I would never <i>stoop</i> that <i>low</i> . He <i>fell</i> into the wrong crowd. They have hit rock <i>bottom</i> .

Being virtuous is to act with moral rectitude and conform to moral principles (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021). Conformity, and its close ally obedience, is key to the concept of virtue. As Lakoff points out ‘to be virtuous is to act in accordance to the standards set by the society/person to maintain its well-being. VIRTUE IS UP because virtuous actions correlate with social well-being’ (2003: 17). Depravity, on the other hand, is to refuse to obey those standards and instead pervert them with immoral and wicked behaviour (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021). The difference between the two leads to cultural concepts such as ascending UP to Heaven and descending DOWN to hell. Thus, in general, everything that is better for a person, such as good health and good mood, success and winning, being considered virtuous and having the ability to control your life is all linked to the metaphor of UP and ABOVE. In contrast, having low standards or low morale, losing, be it a battle or control, are all evidence of things that are considered to be BAD and BELOW. The concept of UP being GOOD and DOWN being BAD is deeply engrained in the British culture. Take the



old-fashioned children's game Snakes and Ladders. In this game, the snake, forever linked to the serpent in the Garden of Eden and the temptation of Eve, takes you DOWN away from your goal of winning. Whereas, the ladder, another biblical symbol connected to Heaven, will rise you UP towards your goal. The ladder rewards and the snake punishes, but the child playing the game will be oblivious to these underlying metaphorical concepts. Instead, as they grow they take with them the notion that going UP is a good, positive thing to do and going DOWN is bad and negative.

A central role in our experiences growing up is that of the parent. Because every child looks up to their care giver for guidance they become the voice of authority. Metaphorically speaking, parental authority becomes the moral authority within the family, issuing commands that must be obeyed. There are two types of authority. *Legitimate authority* is earned through good parenting; protection, nurture and education (Lakoff and Johnson, 1999: 301). Good parents set a good example through moral strength. Abusive and neglectful parents are unlikely to gain legitimate authority. However, they can have *absolute authority*. Unlike legitimate authority, which is earned through respect, absolute authority exists simply because they are in the role of a parent and thus must be obeyed (*ibid*: 302). Of course, these are the two extremes, there are plenty of variations in the role of parenting. These are just useful to explain how the role of parent maps to the role of moral authority. Thus, the metaphors for parental authority is moral authority is as follows;

An Authority Figure is A Parent

A Moral Agent is a Child

Morality is Obedience

As children we grow up believing that our parents have our best interests at heart and therefore we should trust their teachings and obey their commands (*ibid*: 302). The metaphorical mapping from this experience informs us that a moral authority can also be trusted. There are many kinds of moral authority that will depend on moral and spiritual beliefs, as well as personal experience of their own parents (*ibid*: 303). Our understanding of a moral authority links to the idea of an ideal moral order, a hierarchy of dominance (*ibid*: 303), key examples of which are:

God is naturally more powerful than people

Humans are naturally more powerful than animals, plants and natural objects

Adults are naturally more powerful than children

Men are naturally more powerful than women

The hierarchy of dominance establishes who is more powerful and has more authority and therefore legitimises certain existing power relations as being natural and therefore moral. However, this undermines alternative points of view by making them appear to be unnatural and, therefore, deviant and immoral. The metaphor of moral order creates a moral superiority that has momentous consequences. For example, Western culture over non-Western culture, Christians over non-Christians, straights over gays, the rich over the poor, leading to attitudes that are 'morally repugnant' (*ibid*: 304). As I will discuss in Chapters 5 and 6, the discourse around swearing draws heavily from the notion that those who do not swear, and who find swearing offensive, are morally superior to those who use swear words. This causes a struggle when someone who would otherwise be considered as a moral authority uses bad language.

Closely related to our experience of growing up in a family network is another metaphorical concept, that of moral nurturance and the Strict Father and the Nurturing Parent. In order to develop into a morally stable adult children need to be nurtured; 'they need to be fed, protected from harm, sheltered, loved, kept clean, educated and cared for...such nurturance teaches them how to care for other people...a parent who does not adequately nurture a child is thus metaphorically robbing that child of something it has a right to' (*ibid*: 310).

While there are many other societal influences on a child's development and values, they will always be filtered through the moral understanding that is instilled through the family network. The parental authority can be divided into two models. The Strict Father is the response to the dangers and pitfalls of life with discipline, a model that is 'geared towards developing strong, morally upright children who are capable of facing the world's threats and evils' (*ibid*: 313). This model is one of tough love, a moral authority that enforces obedience through reward and punishment, thus ensuring self-reliance and self-control. On the other hand, the Nurturing Parent believes that moral development stems from mutually respectful communication and allowing children the freedom to realize their potential, thus gaining obedience through love and respect, not through fear of punishment (*ibid*: 315).

Similarly to the legitimate and absolute authority discussed earlier, these models are idealisations. There are plenty of variations with *pathological* versions at each end of the spectrum. Just as being excessively strict is not healthy for a child, neither is being too permissive (*ibid*: 316). Though they differ in sets of priorities, the one similarity is that they presume that their system of child-rearing will be replicated in the child, with each considering their own behaviours the most beneficial. The candidate of the parent can vary. For most religious believers God is all-powerful and as such is the ultimate moral authority who will reward the moral and punish the immoral (*ibid*: 318). Depending on point of view

he is Strict Father or Nurturant Parent, or a combination of both. Strict mother rarely appears. God as Mother tends to be regarded as the Nurturant Parent (*ibid*: 318).

However, in many circumstances it is society in general that undertakes the role of parent. The metaphorical Strict Father sets and maintains social norms. Society as parent is often personified in metaphors such as *society frowns upon bad behaviour* and *society will not tolerate obscene language* (*ibid*: 320). As I will go into in Chapter 5, the data frequently refers to the role of parent, be it God, society or literally the care giver, as an important factor in attitudes towards swearing. In some instances, poor parenting and a lack of discipline is blamed for the increase in swearing, which as I will discuss, contributes to the idea that swearing is a sign of low moral standards.

The concept that things that are UP and ABOVE are superior, moral, healthier and better for society is a key element of this thesis. As I will demonstrate in Chapter 5, there is a strong correlation between the metaphors used in the discourse around swearing and our conceptual understanding of UP/DOWN, ABOVE/BELOW, GOOD/BAD. Related to this is the conceptual metaphor GOOD is CLEAN and BAD is DIRTY. The physiological basis for the concept of clean being good stems from our childhood experiences, from being physically washed by our carers as babies to being routinely reminded that we should clean our hands, wash our clothes and leave dirty boots at the door. During toilet training we are rewarded for success and reprimanded for failure, leading to CLEAN is GOOD and DIRTY is BAD.

However, there is also a long history between cleanliness and religious ceremony and ritual that suggests a psychological association between physical cleanliness and moral purity (Zhong and Lijenquist, 2006: 1451). Studies have found what is referred to as the *Macbeth effect*, 'that is, a threat to one's moral purity induces the need to cleanse oneself' (*ibid*:

1451). This can trigger another mechanism by which language affects cognition, the elicitation of disgust. Disgust is 'a pre-cognitive response to specific images, smells, tastes, sounds, a host of things associated therewith' (Royzman and Sabini, 2001: 48). Just like danger produces *fear* and a transgression produces *anger*, *disgust* is an emotion that is conjured up by a physiological, as in out of our control, response to a number of causes. Haidt et al. (1997: 107) identified seven categories of disgust elicitors which included food, certain animals, poor hygiene, sexual deviance, body products, body-envelope violations and contact with death. More recently it has been found that in many cultures disgust elicitors have expanded from food and hygiene to the social order, leading to in addition to the seven categories can be added social concerns such as socio-moral violations (Haidt et al., 1997: 107). Generally speaking, these are all a risk of contamination. As I will discuss in 5.4 the conceptual metaphor GOOD IS CLEAN and BAD IS DIRTY, and vice versa, and its connection to disgust and risk of contamination, is highly influential on the way we view swearing.

Another orientational conceptual metaphor that I will demonstrate influences attitudes towards swearing is IN and OUT, with the metaphorical projection of a container with boundaries indicating a clear inside and outside. We learn about containers from a very young age as we explore the physical world around us. We discover that we can put things in a container and take things out, and that boundaries provide a limit to what can be placed inside. Things can fall out or spill out of a container, indicating a loss of control. Metaphorically, the container is a bounded space within which a living being, thing or an idea, is located and confined (Owiredu, 2021: 92). Crucially to this concept, while the container may have strong rigid walls, it is vulnerable to perforation and rupture, both from

inside and outside, and as such it must be continuously supported and reinforced (Charteris-Black, 2006: 575). There is a powerful rhetorical link between the concepts of container and disaster in that 'they are both related to the emotional domain and therefore influence powerful emotions such as fear and the desire for protection' (*ibid*: 579). Narratives that exploit the emotional potential of something building pressure within a container are often found in discourse around more contentious topics such as racism or immigration. Debates around these issues will regularly see the far-right rhetoric utilising the concept of the pressure reaching a bursting point, or even exploding, providing a schema of the nation about to explode under pressure from immigration. This tactic not only merges the concept of the metaphorical container with an overall sense of disaster and violence, but it also motivates wider social self-interested anxieties about the need for security and protection from the *Other* (*ibid*; 578) as discussed earlier in 3.3.2.

Because containers frequently contain fluids there is often a conceptual link between the cognitive image of a container and the more emotive metaphor of water related disaster (Charteris-Black, 2006: 569). Moreover, 'water metaphors have the potential to evoke historical experience of a more glorious and imperial past – by contrast with which any change may be represented as change for the worse' (Charteris-Black, 2006: 573). As a result, the subliminal communication of something perforating a boundary and entering a container stimulates a response of fear aroused by our experiential knowledge of disaster and containment. This has been extended to the idea that ANGER IS A HOT FLUID IN A CONTAINER by which the emotion of anger is portrayed as something that can burst from its containment, thus is out of control, and represents a threat to anything in its vicinity (Kovecses, 1986). The idea of crossing or breaching a boundary also creates the conceptual

metaphor MATTER OUT OF PLACE. As I will demonstrate in 5.4. the use of moving water, crossing boundaries and the notion of matter being out of place, is often found in the discourse around swearing.

The container can represent a range of things, both physical and conceptual, such as a nation or a culture, a house or a family. Relevant to this thesis is the concept that when the container represents a physical human body, the language that leaves the body can be conceptualised as a container that physically moves during the process of communication and has to be *unpacked* by the recipient of the message (Charteris-Black, 2006: 575). This obviously has implications for language that is considered to be BAD, which I discuss in more detail in Chapter 5.

As with most theories, conceptual metaphor has its critics. Like the chicken and the egg, the most persistent debate around the study into metaphor is what comes first, the *Target* or the *Source*. The cognitive linguistic point of view argues that metaphors are 'conceptual devices for understanding or creating reality, rather than merely describing it' (Kovecses, 1986: 9). In other words, it is our experiential knowledge of the source domain (the metaphor) that motivates our understanding of the target (the abstract concept). For example, the statement *my job is a jail* creates a cross-domain mapping that takes our understanding of a (S) *jail* as an unpleasant, confined space and maps that knowledge to the description of the (T) *job* (Musolff and Zinken, 2009: 2). However, critics argue that this fails to take into account any pre-existing knowledge of the concept of a job and that it is feasible that our understanding of certain types of employment is the reason that some jobs are referred to as jails, therefore the target is motivating the source and as such is pre-metaphoric (*ibid*: 2). The concern for critics is that if the metaphor always comes first, then

that suggests that we are unable to understand the abstract concept without it. So, for example, the cognitive linguistic idea of LOVE and ANGER being understood in terms of such conceptual metaphors as HOT FLUID or INSANITY proposes that a child is unable to process the idea of love and anger until they have experienced a hot fluid or the concept of being insane. Instead, 'it seems more reasonable to suppose that children come to acquire concepts of anger and love *before* acquiring an understanding of the behaviour of hot fluids, or the concept of insanity' (Ortony, 1988: 102 - *original italics*). In order to account for the linguistic data without claiming that the abstract concept itself is somehow comprised of the metaphorical construct, Ortony proposes the *lexicalisation* view of metaphor where 'we simply borrow the language from one lexically rich domain to talk about a lexically less rich domain' (Ortony, 1988: 101). This is certainly a valid criticism but arguably overlooks the way metaphor is used in order to communicate ideas that we otherwise struggle to expand upon. One would hope that in most cultures a child learns about love and anger as a feeling that happens, either when a parent makes them feel safe and secure, or when a parent is cross with their behaviour, or even when they feel cross with themselves or a peer. However, the cognitive linguist argues that being able to communicate the emotion, or feeling, of LOVE and ANGER is difficult without the use of metaphor and that the *conceptualisation* view allows one concept to become represented, and understood, by our knowledge of another, more familiar concept (Kovecses, 1986). Arguably, the difference between the two, whether metaphors constitute cultural models or simply reflect them, do not necessarily need to be mutually exclusive. Studies have shown that there is a flexibility between the source and the target, indicating that 'cultural models can be both created by metaphors and at the same time can determine (or select) the metaphors we use in discourse' (Kovecses, 2009: 22). Ortony himself concedes that the conceptualisation view



and the lexicalisation view could, at times, meet in the middle where the borrowing of a lexical item results in what he refers to as *conceptual leakage* (1998: 103).

Another obstacle that CMT often faces is the translation factor. As discussed earlier, metaphors are not fixed and thus interpretation is always subjective (Charteris-Black, 2004: 20). There is no reliable way of knowing how a metaphor will be interpreted. We all look at things from different angles with different levels of granularity, sometimes closer, sometimes further away (Taylor and Littlemore, 2014: 1). For example, the old proverb *a rolling stone gathers no moss* can have opposing meanings. A negative evaluation will consider that people who move around a lot do not acquire stability and wealth and yet, a positive interpretation might see it as people who move around a lot are free from the dullness and routine of standard lives (Moon, 1998: 248-9). The interpretation relies on whether moss is seen as good or bad.

The issue of interpretation has caused several conceptual metaphors to come under closer scrutiny by the critics. A popular conceptual metaphor, ARGUMENT IS WAR, has been questioned because there is no definitive way of determining how words such as *attack*, *defend*, *manoeuvre* or *strategy*, will be interpreted. They could be as easily applied to an athletic contest, a boxing match or a game of chess as much as the act of war (Ritchie, 2003). There have also been observations that most people learn about the experience of an argument long before they learn about the concept of a war. In the more recent edition of *Metaphors we Live By*, Lakoff and Johnson addressed this issue with a correction and clarification:

The metaphor actually originates in childhood with the primary metaphor Argument is Struggle. All children struggle against the physical manipulations of their parents, and as language is learned, the physical struggle becomes accompanied by words. The conflation of physical struggle with associated words in the development of all children is the basis for the primary metaphor Argument is Struggle. As we grow up we learn about more extended and violent struggles, like battles and wars, and the metaphor is extended via that knowledge (2003: 265).

The subjectivity of interpretation is a rational concern regarding CMT and should be taken into consideration in future research, however it does not necessarily compromise the integrity of the theory. Lakoff and Johnson are quick to point out that ‘meaning is not cut and dried; it is a matter of imagination and a matter of constructing coherence’ (2003: 227). The interpretation factor is not a concern for this thesis. As I discussed in Chapter 2, the discourse around swearing has been deeply engrained in British culture for several centuries and has become almost ritualistic. I believe that CMT offers an empirical way of exploring this discourse that to date few other theoretical frameworks can offer. However, discourse is a multidimensional concept that can be approached from a variety of different disciplines (Wodak and Meyer, 2009). One of the identifying features of conceptual metaphor is how the language is used effortlessly and automatically, without challenge. Another theoretical framework that centres on the way language, and labels, can be used subliminally to create a mythology around a topic is moral panic theory. I will now present an overview of this theory and consider how it can be used in a study about swearing.

### 3.6 Moral Panic

The SAGE Dictionary of Criminology defines a moral panic as ‘a disproportional and hostile societal reaction to a condition, person or group defined as a threat to societal values, involving stereotypical media representations and leading to demands for greater social control as well as creating a spiral of reaction’ (McLaughlin and Muncy, 2001: 175). Moral panics come in a variety of shapes and sizes, ranging from minor episodes that leave little trace once the panic has subsided to ‘major, fateful developments which transform masses of lives and whole social landscapes’ (Garland, 2008: 13). The problems that provoke the moral panic can be about serious or trivial issues, or even transpire eventually to be a figment of the imagination (Garland, 2008: 13) but to count as a *classic* moral panic the reaction to the issue in question has to be in some way *disproportionate* (Lashmar, 2013: 52). I will discuss the complexities associated with the concept of disproportion, and how it can be measured, later in this chapter.

While modern moral panics are mostly sparked by the mass media, the concept of some terrible threat to society that generates an exaggerated hostile reaction is not a modern phenomenon (Jenkins, 1992: Thompson, 1998: Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 2009). Prior to the introduction of the printing press, the church was the influence and drive behind moral standards (McEnery, 2006: 6). The Renaissance witch trials are a perfect example of how the pulpit could create mass hysteria within a community, long before writing, newspapers and television (Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 2009: 89). Based on pagan superstitions, the witch trials provided an effective tool with which to develop solidarity within a community by ‘providing an outside enemy against whom “normal” society could unite’ (Jenkins, 1992: 4). They also show how a traditional elite group can generate a sense of panic in order to

maintain their privileged position, generating a ‘terrifying series of threatening stereotypes, including not only witches but also Jews, heretics and lepers’ (Jenkins, 1992: 4). However, the development of the printing press in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries had a significant influence on how moral panics behave. As literacy increased so the moral entrepreneurs had a widening platform to share their concerns about perceived threats to moral and social order, making the spread of panics easier and more powerful. As discussed in Chapter 2, the moral panic established by the Society for Reformation of Manners (SFRM) in the eighteenth century around irreligiousness and immorality, followed by the National Viewers and Listeners Association (NVALA) campaigns in the twentieth century, were significant in the shaping of modern attitudes to bad language (McEnery, 2006).

While moral panics have existed since the dawn of civilisation, scholarly attention only really began in the early seventies. Initially proposed by Jock Young (1971) it was the sociologist Stanley Cohen’s seminal work on the Mods and Rockers in Britain that developed the first theoretical framework with which to identify a moral panic. Cohen recognized that there were moments in time when a sudden flurry of concern arose over an issue or threat that when reflected upon later were not as threatening as first appeared.

Societies appear to be subject, every now and then, to periods of moral panic. A condition, episode, person or groups of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests; its nature is presented in a stylized and stereotypical fashion by the mass media; the moral barricades are manned by editors, bishops, politicians and other right-thinking people; socially accredited experts pronounce their diagnosis and solutions; ways of coping are evolved or (more often) resorted to; the condition then disappears, submerges or deteriorates

and becomes more visible. Sometimes the object of the panic is quite novel and at other times it is something which has been in existence long enough, but suddenly appears in the limelight. Sometimes the panic passes over and is forgotten, except in folklore and collective memory; at other times it has more serious and long-lasting repercussions and might produce such changes as those in legal and social policy or even in the way the society conceives itself (Cohen, 2002: 1)

Drawing from the study of social types, which proposes that types such as the *hero*, the *villain* and the *fool* become role models for a society, Cohen labelled the condition, episode or person/s as the *folk devil*. The reaction to the folk devil, and the ensuing amplification within the mass media, was the spark for a moral panic, the essence of which was to 'represent the threat as simultaneously new (menacing but hard to recognise; deceptively ordinary and routine, but invisibly creeping up the moral horizon) as well as merely camouflaged versions of older and well-known evils' (Cohen, 1999: 586). The problem as Cohen saw it, was the power and influence that the mass media has on society by summoning up 'an astonishing range of old-fashioned moralizing: whether (and sometimes together) self-righteous, vindictive, hysterical or whinging' (1999: 585).

Another highly influential account of a moral panic, was *Policing the Crisis* by Stuart Hall and colleagues in 1978. Building on Cohen's original thesis of youth, crime and stereotyping, Hall et al. explored how themes of youth, crime and race were condensed into an image of *mugging*, a seemingly new street crime that came to be an indicator of 'the disintegration of the social order, as a sign that the British way of life is coming apart at the seams' (2013: 1).

On 15 August 1972, an elderly widower was stabbed to death in London as he was making his way home from the theatre. The motive, behind the stabbing was, apparently, a

robbery (Hall et al., 2013: 7). The next day the national press ran the story as 'a mugging gone wrong' and referring to it as a 'frightening new strain of crime' (quoted in Hall et al., 2013: 7). Hall did not dispute that the incident that sparked the moral panic was a horrific crime. However, like Cohen, the main concern for Hall et al. was how the news media adopted 'a sort of folk ideology of crime and punishment' (*ibid*: 85) that was not an accurate representation of the actual event. Moreover, the narrative singled out young, black men as the *folk devil*. The descriptor *mugger* and the criminalisation of black youth, they argue, 'has done incalculable harm – raising the wrong things into sensational focus, hiding and mystifying the deeper causes' (*ibid*: 1).

Cohen's original framework provided a solid foundation for the next few decades of research, reflected in the fact that nearly all scholars reference him and that fifty years on it is still an effective tool for analyzing social phenomena. The term moral panic is now ubiquitous throughout criminology and the science of deviance and has also expanded into many other fields such as psychology, linguistics and media studies. As a concept moral panic is less concerned with the behavioral questions, such as 'What causes an individual to commit a deviant act?', and more interested in the more definitional and structural questions, such as 'Why does an act become defined as deviant, deviant to whom and deviant from what?' (Muncie, 1987: 44).

While theoretical frameworks vary, moral panics typically follow a pattern (Morton and Aroney, 2016: 26). The sentiment that lies behind every moral panic is the idea that 'something should be done' (Lashmar, 2016: 589). They will always have a beginning, middle and end (Citcher, 2003: 140). In the beginning something or someone is presented as a potential threat to the established, *moral* way of life (Thompson, 1998: 1). The threat is

then depicted in an easily recognizable form by the media, relying heavily on exaggeration and the concept of stereotype, with a rapid build-up of public concern and panicked reactions from those in power (Morton and Aroney, 2016: 28). The end sees the panic recede or result in social change that satiates those demanding for something to be done (Critchler, 2003: 141). Sometimes described as a *crusade* or *campaign*, or even a form of *public hysteria*, moral panics appeal to people 'who are alarmed by an apparent fragmentation or breakdown of the social order' (Thompson, 1998: 3). Cohen identified three crucial elements in the creation of a moral panic.

First, a **suitable enemy**: a soft target, easily denounced with little power, preferably without even access to the battlefields of cultural politics...Second, a **suitable victim**: someone with whom you can identify, someone who could have been and one day could be anybody...Third, a consensus that the beliefs or action being denounced were not insulated entities...but integral parts of the society (Cohen, 1972: xi - *author's emphasis*)

Moral panics will always have an *in-group*, which is good, and an *out-group*, which is deviant (McEnery, 2006 188 – *my emphasis*). As I discussed in 3.3.2 this concept is reflected in the notion of *Self* and *Othering*. The folk devil, or the suitable enemy, plays such a core role in a moral panic because it enables a moral confrontation between these two groups, the respectable members of society versus the social deviants (Maneri, 2013: 188). However, the targets of a moral panic are not randomly selected. They are *cultural scapegoats*, singled out because they possess certain characteristics that suit the narrative and expose the fragile border between the good *Us* and the deviant *Them* (Garland, 2008: 15 – *my emphasis*). They tend to have a similar base; crime, a disrespectful upcoming generation or

any general bad behaviour that can be seen as a threat to social order (Thompson, 1998: 1).

Cohen (2002) identified seven clusters of identity that are generally targeted during a moral panic.

Table 5: Cohen's Familiar Clusters of Social Identity

Seven familiar clusters of social identity
Young, working class, violent males
School violence: Bullying and shootouts
Wrong drugs, used by wrong people at wrong places
Child abuse, satanic rituals and paedophile registers
Sex, violence and blaming the media
Welfare cheats and single mothers
Refugees and asylum seekers, flooding our country, swamping our services

Once the folk devil has been established there is a reaction stage, or *media inventory* to use Cohen's original terminology, which will either amplify the issue and thereby bring about a moral panic or smother it. Maneri considers the way moral panic behaves in the reaction stage as *consensual* - where there is a general agreement across all sources about the problem - *conflicted* - where at least one influential source contests some of the defining features of the problem - or *stillborn* - where the issue is vigorously and successfully denied by the primary definer (2013: 182). Critcher notes that moral panics depend on a unified message between the claims makers, the mass media and the political elite, and it is likely to founder if differences of opinion between this circuit of communication become obvious (2003: 138). An example of how moral panics can be quashed before they begin is the media reaction to the Stephen Lawrence murder on the evening of 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1993. Despite



the accusations of racism and gross incompetence in the metropolitan police, this did not amount to a moral panic for the simple reason that the police were unsuitable as a folk devil and had the 'power to deny, downplay or bypass any awkward claims about their culpability' (Cohen, 2002: xi).

It is important to note that moral panics are not always bad, although there are concerns that this seems to be the focus of empirical research (Cohen, 2011: 238). Cohen identifies moral panics as 'malignant (those that result in more social harm than good), benign (those that result in more social good) or just a waste of time' (1999: 589). A *good* moral panic, he argues, can help to overcome 'the barriers of denial, passivity and indifference that prevent a full acknowledgment of human cruelty and suffering' (1999: 589-590). There are many instances where a *panic*, or at least an *indignation*, is in the public interest (Morton and Aroney, 2016: 27). For example, the moral panic that resulted from the appearance of an HIV-positive sex worker on a well-known Australian current affairs programme in the late eighties, that saw her forcibly detained in a locked AIDS ward and a mental asylum, was wholly disproportionate to the risk she posed to society (*ibid*: 28). However, it did help to break through the political correctness surrounding HIV and AIDS at the time to open up a much-needed discussion about the threat from HIV to the heterosexual community. By going on the programme, despite knowing the stigma that would follow, she was trying to 'alert the public to the fact that HIV/AIDS was not just a danger to the gay community' (*ibid*: 28).

As with all theoretical frameworks, its value is often debated and challenged. Critics accuse the term *moral panic* as being value-laden and subjective. The word *panic* is considered too 'colourful and exaggerated' (Lashmar, 2013: 66) and 'has the most unfortunate tendency to

conjure up images of folks frantically fending off more demons than hell can hold' (de Young, 2004: 1). Using the word *panic*, rather than a mistake, misjudgment or overreaction, suggests 'a form of neurotic behaviour, a hysteria, a psychopathology' (Garland, 2008: 21). Other scholars suggest that more appropriate terminology might be 'moral indignation' (Morton and Aroney, 2016: 27) or a 'passionate outrage' (Garland, 2008: 26) or more simply a 'moral concern' (Lashmar, 2013: 66). While Cohen admits that there are connotations of 'irrationality and being out of control' (2002: xvii) he questions the unnecessary attention paid to a simple metaphor. The term, he argues, is not designed to 'convey images of a hysterical mob, utterly out of control, running for their lives after someone has screamed "fire" in a crowded cinema' (*ibid*: 587) but is merely a descriptor for the 'enduringly (and to some, endearingly) reactionary character of British society' (1999: 585). On the other hand, the ubiquity of the term in the public lexicon has led to accusations of its overuse weakening much of its sociological relevance (de Young, 2004: 4). As Lashmar argues, 'the phrase moral panic has all too often become a form of coded shorthand to criticize the media as well as, on occasion, other primary definers' (2013: 55).

Another major concern for critics of moral panic is the concept of *disproportionality*. Throughout the literature a moral panic centres on the 'idea that public concern about something is not proportionate to its actual harmfulness' (Lashmar, 2013: 63). However, there are criticisms that this undermines genuine social anxiety; 'one person's moral panic is another person's real concern' (*ibid*: 66). Critics have observed that when a theorist diagnoses an out of proportion reaction it is subjective; 'he or she is not measuring the reaction against some hard reality, but merely against his or her own representation of the way things are' (Garland, 2008: 22) and the term *disproportionate* has been accused of

simply being a code for 'something we don't like for ideological or other reasons?' (*ibid*: 64). The study into the moral panic around mugging discussed earlier, came under significant criticism for 'being a polemical rather than an analytical concept' (Waddington, 1986: 258). The study was accused of 'playing down the real increase in violent crime in the 1970s and the rational fears this engendered, particularly among the working classes, who were often its victims' (Thompson, 1998: 57). However, others defended the thesis, arguing that the moral panic did not stem from whether crime was on the increase, or whether the fears were rational, but from the particular *discourses* within the mass media designed to create an impression of a rapidly increasing moral decline (*ibid*: 57). The overuse of the word *mugger* in the media, borrowed from America with all the dark connotations of the American ghettos, was designed to create a new strain of crime, despite the fact that it was not. Lord Blom-Cooper, QC, was one of many who vocalised concerns about the use of the word. Writing in the *Times* at the time he stated that mugging was not a new phenomenon.

Little more than 100 years ago there occurred in the streets of London an outcrop of robbery with violence. It was called garrotting, which was an attempt to choke or strangle the victim of a robbery. (Mugging differs from garrotting only in its use of offensive weapons) – (*The Times*, 20 October 1972)

It was the construction of stories around the word *mugger*, with its dark connotations, and the panicked reactions from the powerful elite, that gave the impression of a new and widespread threat to the moral foundations of society and led to the moral panic (Thompson, 1998: 64). The way that the media frames a problem can be as much an indicator of a moral panic as statistical evidence (Hall et al., 2013).

In the third edition of *Folk Devils*, Cohen acknowledges that the assumption of disproportionality can be problematic.

On what grounds is the sociologist's view always correct, rational and justified? ...

How can the exact gravity of the reaction and the condition be assessed and compared with each other? Are we talking about intensity, duration, extensiveness?

... We have neither the quantitative, objective criteria to claim that R (the reaction) is 'disproportionate' to A (the action) nor the universal moral criteria to judge that R is an 'inappropriate' response to the moral gravity of A (2002: xxviii)

However, in his view this objection only makes sense 'if there is nothing beyond a compendium of individual moral judgements...there are surely many panics where the judgement of proportionality can and should be made – even when the object of evaluation is vocabulary and rhetorical style alone' (*ibid*: xxviii). Questions of symbolism, emotion and representation, Cohen argues, cannot always be translated into a set of statistics (*ibid*: xxix).

Thompson agrees, stating that there are many lessons to learn from 'decoding signifying practices as a form of discourse analysis [especially those] amplifying episodes of 'deviant' behaviour to create a sense of increasing risk' (1998: 58). Sometimes the amplifying of the deviance comes as a result of a shift in focus. An example of this was the death of a 17-month-old boy in 2007 who became known as Baby P. What happened to the young child was shocking and any public reaction, moral or otherwise, could easily be justified.

However, the reaction took a different trajectory. Instead of the brutal death of a child, the media coverage centred on the failings of the social workers, presenting them as the *folk devils* who were responsible for Baby P's death, rather than the actual culprits, his mother, her boyfriend and their lodger (Warner, 2013). It is this shift in focus, theorists argue, that

bears 'all the hallmarks of a classic moral panic. Not because it isn't shocking, but as the attention is fixed on social workers it switches attention from moral issues to technical decisions about risk...as a way of getting rid of our anxiety' (Karpf, 2008: *no page*). The intensified risk discourse that resulted from the tragedy was typical of a moral panic but the hostility that followed also demonstrated the close relationship between a moral panic and, what can be termed, 'an extreme form of Othering' (Warner, 2013: 217). Not only were there petitions for the dismissal of the social workers involved but Baby P became a metaphorical representation of a welfare-dependant and feckless underclass, thereby tapping into a powerful and familiar discourse on 'poverty, dependency and the welfare state' (Warner, 2013: 225). Something as tragic and shocking as the murder of a young toddler morphed into a panic about the disintegration of the family, the dependency culture and sexual promiscuity, as well as who ultimately had the responsibility for protecting the vulnerable.

Goode and Ben-Yehuda (2009) attempted to address the concerns by identifying five indicators of disproportionality. They claimed that the criterion of disproportion was met if any cited figures were 1) exaggerated or 2) fabricated, or 3) if the harm was simply a rumour that did not actually exist, citing the snuff movie panic that occurred simply because the producer of the film *Snuff* circulated a rumour that the actress had actually been murdered during the filming simply to increase ticket sales (2009: 45). They also stated that the criterion of disproportion was met if 4) 'the attention that is paid to a specific condition is vastly greater than that paid to another condition, and the concrete threat or damage caused by the first is no greater than, or is less than, the second' (*ibid*: 45). Finally, if 5) the attention is greater than that paid to it during a previous or later time (*ibid*: 45-46). For

example, returning briefly to the murder of Baby P discussed earlier, ‘during 2006-7 there were 68 victims of homicide under the age of 16: half of them were killed by a parent’ (Karpf, 2008: *no page*). Only a few months later, a girl of a similar age died from 40 injuries, including a broken spine, inflicted by her father, and yet her murder did not receive the same media coverage. While his death was undeniably tragic, the attention given to the death of Baby P was vastly greater than to any of the other murdered children and thus can be argued that the response to his death became a moral panic.

However, sociologists are still accused of making value judgements about perceived and real risk (Maneri, 2016: 183). As a result, there has been a marked shift from the more quantitative term *disproportionate* to the more qualitative idea of *appropriateness* as a means to measure a media reaction to a social problem (Cohen, 2002: xxix). Other scholars have turned to the term *amplification*, referring to dynamic representation rather than an objective reality (Maneri, 2016: 184). Amplification concentrates more on journalistic practices (the media inventory of Cohen’s original thesis) and the reactions of those in power, politicians, public officials and experts (*ibid*: 184). It is also grounded in language.

In moral panics we find an intensive use of figures of speech (hyperbole, metaphor), of big and prominent headlines...a striking prevalence of the emotive dimension, a campaigning discourse, as hoc evidence (statistics, summaries of episodes) and typical tags (‘emergency’, ‘invasion’, ‘alarm’) that convey a sense of exceptionality (Maneri, 2016: 184).

The matter of disproportion remains a point of contention for some critics. When I began this research there was no realistic means of empirically knowing whether swearing has

increased, either in society or on television. However, recent research published in 2021 has found that, contrary to the claims made in the data that I will be discussing, swearing has reduced (Love, 2021). As I will outline in 4.4.1, I will aim to address these concerns by defining the criteria with which I intend to provide evidence of a *disproportionate*, or *inappropriate*, reaction.

The centrality of the media in creating moral panics is a persistent theme throughout the literature. News organizations in particular 'are active in constituting what are social problems and what should be done about them' (Ericson et al., 1987: 70). And yet, throughout the 50 years of research into moral panic, few studies engage with the news practitioners view of the subject (Lashmar, 2013: 69). As a long-time journalist, Paul Lashmar (2013) argues that moral panic as a concept would benefit from a better understanding of the news making process, the differences between editors, reporters and commentators, and the relationship between the journalist and the audience. Fowler says that 'the significance of discourse derives only from an interaction between language structure and the context in which it is used' (1991: 90). It is therefore important to contextualise newspapers as a data base by exploring institutional, historical and economic structure of the industry. As such, the next section of this chapter will look at newspapers as data before concluding with an account of how and why I have used an interdisciplinary approach to analyzing the data.

### 3.7 Newspapers as data

The British press has reflected the fabric of society since the dawning of the print era. The success of a paper was reliant on its ability to create a *textual bridge* for its reader that was

authentic in tone and reaffirmed their own experiences, attitudes and beliefs (Conboy, 2006: 11). At a time when literacy rates were low, illustrations were used to entice the public and the articles were designed to be read out loud or even sung, so appealed to a whole community rather than a specific reader. While recently all newspapers have seen a decline in readership, the British press still retains a significant role as a social educator (Smith, 1975: 11) and as an accurate barometer of the social and cultural landscape (Conboy, 2006: 13). However, the news does not give neutral, empirical *facts* about the world, but rather value-laden *ideas* (Fowler, 1991: 1).

In the UK there are two main branches of newspaper: the broadsheet or quality press and the tabloid or popular press. The distinction between the two stems from a time in the late nineteenth century when the morning papers were deemed more respectable than the evening press, that was considered to be disreputable (Engel, 1996: 11). Over time the broadsheet-sheet sized papers that were more popular adopted the tabloid layout that is used today; *The Sun* in 1969, the *Daily Mail* in 1971 and the *Daily Express* in 1977 (*ibid*: 11). More recently other broadsheets have launched compact editions that resemble the tabloid in size, such as *The Independent* in 2003 and *The Times* in 2004 after 216 years of being a broadsheet. This was mainly because of public demand as the smaller papers are easier to carry on public transport. But there was also a psychological influence in that a smaller paper looks easier to digest than the broadsheet, that can induce guilt when there is no time to read it (Garcia and Hoffman, 2004). *The Times*, *The Telegraph*, *The Independent*, *The Guardian* and *The Observer*, plus their Sunday counterparts if applicable, fall under the remit of the broadsheet or quality press. The broadsheet is considered to be upmarket. These are mostly read by the well-educated and the economically and politically powerful



and thus their content reflects their preferences and politics (Richardson, 2004: 36). The mid-market press includes the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Express* and sees a significant drop in socioeconomic class in its readers. Finally, the downmarket tabloids, or popular press, include the most highly circulated British newspaper *The Sun*, along with the *Daily Mirror*, the *Daily Star*, the *Evening Standard* and the *Metro*. The tabloid is mainly aimed at the working classes with a narrative that is more embedded with a populist nationalist vernacular (Conboy, 2006). They also tend to favour picture-led coverage with a tighter word count that makes for a more reader-friendly experience (Garcia and Hoffman, 2004).

Journalistic discourse is a specific genre that displays particular characteristics that are defined by the relationship between the news and other agencies of symbolic and material power (Richardson, 2007: 1). It is this close relationship between the news media and power that makes its language use so critical because this language that we so frequently hear and read from the news media shapes our social reality.

Journalism has social effects: through its power to shape issue agendas and public discourse, it can reinforce beliefs; it can shape people's opinions not only of the world but also of their *place* and *role* in the world; or, if not shape your opinions on a particular matter, it can at the very least influence *what* you have opinions on' (Richardson, 2007: 13 – *original italics*).

The stories that we read in the news are filtered. Journalists decide which stories to run by employing certain criteria for selection. They also take into consideration 'inferred knowledge about the audience, inferred assumptions about society, and a professional code or ideology' (Hall, 1973: 86). Ultimately a *newsworthy story* has to be interesting to the

audience and the more dramatic the better, especially if it involves attractive, popular or controversial characters (Denham, 2008: 947). However, when ordering and prioritising the news journalists will rely on certain *values* that are deemed important if a story is to qualify as news. These include significance, drama, surprise; personalities; sex, scandal and crime; numbers (as in how big the story is) and proximity (Richardson, 2007: 91). Harcup and O’Neill (2001) drew up a list of ten values that a news item should satisfy (Richardson, 2007: 92) as outlined in table 6.

Table 6: News Values

1	reference to the power elite, whether individual, organisation or nation
2	reference to celebrity
3	entertainment (e.g. sex, human interest or drama)
4	surprise
5	good news
6	bad news
7	magnitude
8	relevance (cultural proximity or political importance)
9	follow up stories
10	the newspaper’s own agenda (both politically and relating to the structure of the genre)

These *news values* can be condensed into Proximity (geographical or cultural relevance), Negativity or Deviance (conflict, death, disaster, scandals), Eliteness (experts, celebrity, importance) and Superlativeness (the more X, the more newsworthy, intensified lexis) which offers a more concise understanding (Bednarek and Caple, 2014: 136). Or, as it has been neatly surmised, the news tells us that ‘negativity is interesting, that elite people are worth

listening to, that what is near to us is more important than what is far from us' (*ibid*: 150).

Any list of news values also keeps in mind the presumed preferences of the audience (Richardson, 2007: 94) thus a news value for the *Financial Times* is unlikely to be relevant to a news item in *The Sun*. And more recently, there has been a shift from investigative journalism and hard news to more entertaining, human-interest stories resulting in the stories being judged more newsworthy tending to be more trivial 'infotainment' (Franklin, 1997: 4). Ultimately, regardless of how a story becomes news it is important to acknowledge that it has been socially and culturally constructed and thus it is ideological rather than neutral (Fowler, 2001: Bell, 1999: Richardson, 2007).

Another important factor in news making is the *source* behind the story. In an effort to find and gather new stories journalists tap into a range of sources and institutions considered to be reliable and authoritative such as parliament, councils and courts, political parties, trade unions and non-commercial organisation, the police and other emergency services, royalty, celebrities and other prominent people<sup>3</sup>. However, these sources are highly privileged and established by official authority, social status or commercial success with resources and organised communication outlets designed to control and influence the point of view of any particular narrative (Fowler, 1991: 22). Not only does this result in the news, and thereby the dominant beliefs and opinions, being ideologically influenced by the elite (van Dijk, 2009: 83) but it also leads to 'an imbalance between the representation of the already privileged, on the one hand, and the already unprivileged on the other' (Fowler, 1991: 22). That is not to say that the news is all powerful and society are simply passively absorbing

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<sup>3</sup> For a full breakdown of the kinds of institution and events that journalists attend to gather news see Whitaker, B (1981) *News Limited, Why you can't read all about it*, London, Minority Press Group

the ideologically views permeating the stories. It is rather that because of habit and inertia, the audience is not always conscious of the linguistic tools being used to influence and persuade them to adopt a particular viewpoint (*ibid*: 66) which leads to the incorrect assumption that the news they hear is neutral, fact-based information. The selection process of news events means that the media is active in identifying and outlining a social problem, and most importantly, offering solutions (Lashmar, 2016: 52). As I will demonstrate in due course, 'perceived threats to national stability appear to trigger a range of narratives which act as a cry for assistance in maintaining the resilience of national community under attack' (Conboy, 2006: 59). Crucially to this thesis, the media plays a dynamic role in the creation of a moral panic, which can be activated when 'one or more key events activate the attention of the mass media, which is next backed up by politicians, experts and public officials' (Maneri, 2013: 173). However, sometimes a newspaper can get it wrong in their choice of story and misjudge the public mood about an issue (Richardson, 2007: 94). An example of this was in 2003 when *The Sun* ran with a front-page headline BONKERS BRUNO LOCKED UP. In reporting on the mental health problems of Frank Bruno, the British boxer, referring to him as a *nut* and *bonkers*, they misjudged the significant section of the audience that were to find the tone offensive, and who immediately criticised the article for attacking 'the dignity of anyone with mental health problems' (*ibid*: 94). Later editions of the paper saw the editorial changed, describing Frank Bruno as a hero under the revised headline SAD BRUNO IN MENTAL HOME, and the next day the paper launched a charity appeal to raise money for mental health in an effort to make amends for their blunder. This episode 'demonstrated the central importance of judging the values and temperament of your target audience and the costs of failing to do so' (*ibid*: 95).

Once the event has been selected as newsworthy it then has to be constructed and presented so as to make it intelligible to an assumed audience, a discursive process that 'constitutes a number of specific journalistic practices, which embody...crucial assumptions about what society is and how it works' (Hall, 2013: 58). In other words, how is the story sold to a reader? A number of decisions are made, such as where to place the story, which stylistic tone, what headline to run, typographical decisions, layout and what images to use etc. These decisions will, to a certain extent, be subject to an unwitting bias, for example which voices are considered credible, and which are not (Hall, 1973: 88). The way that a story can be manipulated, for example by omitting some crucial information, or foregrounding it, can lead to a *misrepresentation* (van Leeuwen, 2018) which can 'result in social inequality, including political, cultural, class, ethnic, racial and gender inequality (Van Dijk, 1993: 250). In 4.4.1 I discuss how the *exaggeration* and *distortion* elements that are typical of a moral panic rhetoric are modalities of misrepresentation.

On the other side of this process is the reader. There are several steps in the way a reader comprehends news, from the way it is perceived and absorbed, how it is decoded and interpreted through to how it becomes represented in our episodic memory (van Dijk, 2009: 141). All these steps are heavily influenced by our social situations, that is our norms, values, goals and interests (*ibid*: 140). van Dijk suggests that retrieval, application and uses should be added to this framework of news comprehension because our understanding of a story is based on what we have learned from previous experiences with the news (*ibid*: 141). The way we apply previous knowledge and experience to a story is also important to the success of a moral panic (Cohen, 2002: Critcher 2006: Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 2009).

The structure of a newspaper is also influenced by how the news is read. The top to bottom, left to right layout, the use of headlines and leads and the hierarchy of topics all contribute to our general knowledge about the press (van Dijk, 2009: 141). Whereabouts a story runs within the paper is also influential on how it is perceived. The front page is the most important page of a newspaper because readers are more likely to read it than any other article inside (Reisner, 1992: 971). As a result, it is usually reserved for the news that is considered the most important on the day and ultimately making those stories the most newsworthy. However, it is worth noting that a front-page position does not necessarily make the story strong or important, but that on that day there was nothing else of front-page status. Editors routinely develop weaker stories into front-page news 'by elaborating and intensifying the basic story report' (*ibid*: 984).

Headlines are also crucial elements in newspaper discourse. Normally printed across the full width of the article, the headline effectively acts as a gatekeeper to the news because the decision to read the full story rests upon how the headline is received (van Dijk, 2009: 144). Moreover, big and prominent headlines represent a 'written transcription of oral tone intensity' (Maneri, 2013: 184). Not only does the headline determine whether the reader continues or stops reading, it also influences how the rest of the text is interpreted (van Dijk, 2009: 143). New opinions can be formed, or existing ones reaffirmed, simply by the reading and decoding of a headline, which can be incomplete or biased (*ibid*: 144). The way we interpret headlines is complex because they rarely adhere to the grammatical structure of a full sentence. Instead, much of the processing comes from semantic and conceptual interpretation, similar to understanding a telegram, and a certain level of guesswork (*ibid*: 144). Some prior knowledge of the situation is always useful and when it is lacking, for

example in politics or finance, it can be a major impediment to how a headline is understood (*ibid*: 144). Occasionally editors deliberately create a headline with a double meaning which can lead to further misunderstanding. Take for example the headline 'Prostitutes Appeal to Pope'. While the use of *appeal* is meant to mean 'to plead' or 'to request', if it is mistranslated into the alternative meaning, 'to attract' or 'to tempt', the reader is likely to come away with the impression that the head of the catholic church is partial to entertaining ladies of the night (Richardson, 2007: 24). Time restraints, situation and reading goals will all contribute to whether a reader engages with a story, as a result it can be assumed that many news articles are only read partially, making the headline and lead even more influential in how a story is interpreted (*ibid*: 142).

As well as position and layout, the genre will also influence a story by the change of stylistic tone. The primary media of mass communication can be divided into two genres; news and advertising (Bell, 1999: 13). If it is not advertising than it tends to be referred to as editorial, or copy, which can be further divided into three broad categories; service information, opinion and news (*ibid*: 13). Service information tends to be associated with specialist sections, such as sports, finance or business, and will mainly consist of lists, for example weather forecasts, sports results or share prices (*ibid*: 13). This thesis is mainly interested in the opinion and news categories. On the whole the news is more formal and presented as more impartial than an opinion piece, a column or an editorial, which is used to reflect the newspaper's own views on an issue (*ibid*: 13). Visually, a reader can usually differentiate between the various formats used within a newspaper, for example a comic strip, a stock market table or an advert all look very different to the standard news editorial (van Dijk, 2009: 141). Letters pages are usually quite distinctive from the rest of the news and provide

a forum for the voice of the public and, as such, provide an ideological link between a newspaper and its readership (Conboy, 2006: 20). They have great importance for both reader and newspaper because they appear to offer interactivity between the community and the newspaper that represents it. However, letters' pages are also biased as they may not accurately represent the total letters submitted on an issue. While brevity, relevance and entertainment will all play a role in the selection criteria, ultimately a newspaper will only choose readers' letters that are 'compatible with their narrow news agenda' (Richardson, 2008: 59). As I discuss in 4.2.1, the Letters Pages provided a useful tool in both media campaigns. Images and photographs are not essential but they can be used to add another dimension to the text because they can impose meaning without diluting the story (Hall, 1973: 176). When two planes crashed into the Twin Towers in New York on 11 September 2001, the Editor of the *Guardian* made the decision to clear 15 pages of news to let the photographs tell the story with minimal text (McCabe, 2008: 192). As I mentioned earlier, the tabloid tends to gravitate towards more pictures and tighter word count for an easier read.

The way people are named and quoted will also influence the level of authority to a message by indicating the level of formality. For example, a diminutive or a nickname will indicate the intimacy of face-to-face contact (Fowler, 1991: 63) and create a bridge of familiarity between the story and reader (Conboy, 2006: 22). Whereas a formal title, such as Lord or Sir, will afford an authority to the speaker, and thus attribute an element of eliteness to their words. And choices of certain pronouns, such as *we*, *us* and *our*, can be used to illustrate the consensus and unity expected of the reader (Fowler, 1991: 49). All of



these cultural shorthand techniques mediate the story so as to develop the appearance of a dialogue between newspaper and reader.

Metaphor is pervasive in newspaper narratives as a means to 'structure a bridge between the factual world and ideological persuasion' (Conboy, 2006: 27). Certain types of metaphor can be more associated with specific genres of journalism (Richardson, 2007: 66). For example, sport narratives will often employ war like metaphors, such as *attack* and *defence*, to provide a framework with which to see sport as something that employs power and normally has a definitive ending of a win and loss. Because metaphor is often employed as a means to discuss target domains that are deemed distasteful the narrative around war itself is often written in metaphorical language so as to avert the reader from the brutality of war. War metaphors are often used in discourses around ill health and disease, such as *fighting* or *battling* cancer. Cancers are said to *invade* healthy tissue and the medicines *attack* cancer cells (Marron et al., 2020: 624). More recently, the global pandemic of Covid-19 was frequently discussed in the media in metaphorical descriptions as a WAR, such as *alien invader* and *enemy*, but the use of such metaphors was widely criticised 'for inappropriately personifying the virus as a malevolent opponent, creating excessive anxiety, potentially legitimising authoritarian governmental measures, and implying that those who die did not fight hard enough' (Semino, 2021: 52). As I will discuss in Chapter 5, the use of metaphorical language in the discourse around swearing can at times be seen as inappropriate and seemingly designed to legitimize censorious attitudes.

### 3.8 A theoretical framework

In this final section I will clarify why I have used an interdisciplinary approach for this thesis and explain the relationship between the three theories. Cohen (2002) suggests that a moral panic is more likely to occur in times of crisis. In the next chapter I will outline two events that created the right conditions for the prerequisite heightened *concern* for a panic (Ungar, 2000: 276) that were then followed by a media inventory that outlined the folk devil and amplified the deviance. However, moral panic can only partly explain how social problems become defined as a threat to society (Critcher, 2006: 178). In order to understand how moral panics legitimise the labelling of deviant behaviour it is important that any theoretical framework incorporates the dimension of discourse (Critcher, 2006: 173).

As I discussed in 3.3 CDA has many benefits but one of the criticisms is 'its lack of attention to the cognitive aspects of communication' (Guo, 2013: 475). As a core part of Cognitive Linguistics, the study of conceptual metaphor provides an indispensable tool with which to address this criticism. The research interests of CDA, in exposing and challenging ways in which language influences social issues such as power and domination (Fairclough, 2014), are closely aligned to CMT and this has led to an integration between the two theories that is beneficial to both. A good example of the importance of understanding the power of metaphor can be seen in the investigation and exposure of racist metaphor. Racist ideologies can be greatly masked by the use of metaphor. Presenting an argument metaphorically removes the need to laboriously evidence facts, which could be challenged, and instead invites the audience to access knowledge about the metaphor and transfer that knowledge from the source domain (e.g. rats, invasion) to the target domain (e.g. immigration). However, taking a nonchalant attitude towards the use of metaphor allow

narratives that express even the most extreme and abhorrent views to remain unchallenged. This becomes a further issue when problematic ideologies are dismissed or excused under the guise that it is simply 'colourful rhetorical ornaments...[or] subjective imagery' (Musolff, 2012: 301). An example of this was when the leader of the far right-wing Party of Nationally Orientated Swiss, Dominic Luthard, had his conviction for racial discrimination overturned on the grounds that while his language 'may be emotionally loaded and perhaps even ethically reprehensible ..[it had no]...bearing on the core information of a statement and its implications, for which the speaker can be held legally responsible' (*ibid*). Of course, metaphor is not restricted to racist extremism but is found in all fields of public discourse. Therefore, any critical analysis of a discourse is enriched when it addresses the cognitive aspects of discourses and draws attention to the social accountability of metaphor (Guo, 2013: 480). As it was clear from the data that there is a stigmatising discourse around swearing it was imperative that the analysis was cognitive, as well as critical, and therefore I chose to use a combination of CDA and CMT. However, another crucial element to the analysis of the data was how the discourse around swearing escalated into a power struggle over moral regulation and this is where MPT proves useful.

An intellectual relationship between discourse analysis and moral panic theory was first identified by Kenneth Thompson (1998) and was developed further by Chas Critcher (2006). Both theorists recognised the relevance between moral panics and the essential characteristics of discourse as outlined by the French philosopher Michel Foucault (1972). Foucault's influential work on the relationship between knowledge, power and truth has much to contribute to the theory of moral panic, especially his recognition that power is not necessarily a top-down action but rather it *spirals* through society (Thompson, 1998: 25).

Foucault's *discursive practices* have three key concepts that are relevant to moral panic. Firstly, Foucault was concerned with how deviant outgroups were socially constructed in an institutional context, which is where most moral panic discourses are located (the media, lawmakers, pressure groups etc.). Secondly, a discursive structure can be detected because of how it effects ways of thinking and behaving, both simultaneously promoting behaviours and restricting them (Mills, 1997: 15). Finally, and perhaps most crucially for the purpose of a moral panic, a discourse can operate as an exclusionary device (Critcher, 2006: 168). How the discourses of some (the *deviant*, the *folk devil*, the *Other*) are disregarded and excluded is a fundamental basis for a moral panic. Thus, discourse analysis has the potential to expose the linguistic strategies that validate the threat and response characteristic of a moral panic (Critcher, 2006: 168). In other words, 'moral panics should be conceptualised as forms of discourse' (Critcher, 2008: 1139).

The Foucauldian school of thought is that the human consciousness, that is how we interpret and shape our environment, is built on a *knowledge* that is derived from and dependent upon the respective discursive contexts into which we are born and live (Jager and Maier, 2014: 34). Because context is key our individual knowledge is conditional because 'its validity depends on people's location in history, geography, class relations and so on' (Jager and Maier, 2009: 34). As discussed in Chapter 2 this is very relevant to swearing as the potency of words labelled as *bad* is dependent on which century and which country we were born in and what social and economic standing we hold. This fluidity of language considered to be offensive and/or bad reveals the arbitrariness of swearing as a social phenomenon but also suggests that it is the discourse around swearing that shapes our attitudes to bad language, rather than the words themselves. How we assign meanings

to reality is core to a Foucauldian analysis, however it is not restricted to discourse. Non-discursive practices and materialisations also help us to shape our reality and thus should be considered during the analysis. For example, we are taught the word for a tree but we also simultaneously gain the non-discursive knowledge that a tree can be sawn into planks, which can be made into a table, where we will eat food (Jager and Maier, 2014: 39). This interplay is referred to as a *dispositive* and it helps to close the gap between discourse and reality. It is this relationship, between object and knowledge, that can also lend itself to the analysis of conceptual metaphors. It is our experiential knowledge of a certain object, such as a tree in this case, that will inform certain mappings between a *source* domain and a *target* domain. An oak tree and a Christmas tree will trigger very different mappings. As I mentioned in Chapter 1, reactions to swearing can be wide and varied. While Rana was offended by the use of the word *shit* to describe him as an umpire, Gatting was more concerned with the accusation of being a cheat than being described as a *cunt*.

A cognitive semantic approach to discourse analysis can be valuable in understanding more about the complex relationship between thought, language and social attitudes (Charteris-Black, 2004: 42). Metaphors are effective in persuasion because they can convey a message and invite a shared perception while shielding the proposition from direct discourse (Cameron and Low, 1999: 86). As a result, we often interpret the argument subconsciously and remain unaware of how the metaphorical language influences our emotional response (Charteris-Black, 2004: 243). The analysis of metaphorical language can offer alternative ways of looking at how attitudes to swearing are developed and maintained. The next chapter will now outline in more detail the theoretical frameworks used in this study.

## 4 Methodology

### 4.1 Introduction

This thesis is a critical discourse study of the discursive representation of swearing in the British press. The aim of this chapter, therefore, is to outline the methods of data selection and choice of theoretical framework that I intend to use to answer the questions outlined in Chapter 1. As I pointed out in my introduction, until more recently swearing has been sorely under researched within the realms of academia. Polls and surveys are routinely used by regulatory bodies to rank swear words in order of offensiveness and track historical change in potency. However, polls can often be in the form of word lists which are rated with Likert-type numerical value scores, involving little or no context, which is an insufficient tool for exploring public beliefs and attitudes towards swearing (Beers Fägersten, 2012: 95). In her thought-provoking book *Who's Swearing Now* Kristy Beers Fägersten points out:

One speaker's happy reaction to a friend's good news may be, "Shit!" This would most likely not offend. This utterance taken out of context, however, and presented for evaluation of a scale of offensiveness simply as "Shit!" may encourage the evaluator to only consider offensive contexts of use (2012: 9).

Moreover, with the advance in technology this type of research is now likely to be run online, which makes it easy to direct it to specific groups in order to achieve particular, biased results (Jay, 2000; Beers Fägersten, 2012).

Collecting first hand data can also be challenging as people can be sensitive about their attitudes to swearing and modify their behaviour in order to create a good impression

(Baruch and Jenkins, 2006: 498). This is what Labov (1972: 113) referred to as the Observer's Paradox; the difficulty in observing natural speech because participants become aware of the observer/interviewer/researcher and can adapt their speech/opinions accordingly, leading to unreliable data. For example, when a study into swearing and credibility asked the respondents to self-report their feelings about swearing in court testimonials, and then compared it with their actual reactions when presented with legal statements with or without swear words, it found a dichotomy between what people say and what people do (Rassin and Van Der Heijden, 2007: 181). This is a good example of the difference between opinion and attitude as discussed in 3.3.1. The Observer's Paradox makes conversational analysis difficult (Bell, 1999: 3), although not impossible as Baruch and Jenkin's (2006) paper into swearing in the workplace proved (see Chapter 2). Corpus data is useful in exploring swearing as a social/historical phenomenon, especially with regard to sociolinguistic variables such as age, gender and social class (McEnery and Xiao, 2004). However, while corpus data has proved useful in understanding more about how swearing evolves over time there are limitations. For example, only ten per cent of the British National Corpus is based on spoken language (BNC Consortium, 2007). Moreover, facial expression and other non-verbal aspects can be crucial aspects in communication (Fairclough, 2014: 227) and context of utterance and tone of delivery significantly affect the perceived offensiveness of swearing (Beers Fägersten, 2007: 32). A case in point would be the difference in reaction to the use of swearing during a comedic routine as opposed to swearing during a bar brawl. The methodology can also sometimes be flawed, for example failing to separate insults from swearing, or not isolating swearing during everyday conversation from swearing as a form of verbal abuse (Jay, 2009: 86). Another issue with corpus data is the risk of previous censoring in the gathering process. For example, French

et al. (1930) published a word frequency database of recorded telephone conversations that were long considered an accurate representation of conversational English (Beers Fägersten, 2007: 14). However, 25% of the 80,000-word database was removed, which included profanity. This transpired to account for 40% of the omitted data, making profanity a corresponding 10% of the original, uncensored database (*ibid*: 14).

Another way of understanding more about swearing is to examine how public opinion is influenced into holding certain beliefs and attitudes towards it. As explained in 3.3.1, an attitude is a socially shared, ideologically based opinion and belief about specific social issues (van Dijk, 2009: 65). Regulatory bodies are more concerned with examining *what* people's attitudes are towards swearing and *how* offensive swear words are. However, it seems more logical to explore *how* these attitudes develop and *where* they stem from? In other words, why does British society react to the use of swearing in the way it does? One area that has proved to be a good barometer of public opinion, and the way it is influenced, is the study of the media, and in particular, the news media (Bell, 1999; Richardson, 2017; Hall, 2013). The media dominates modern communication. It is heard by mass audiences and, despite being the few talking to the many, it pervades society in such a way that we are more likely to hear, and thus learn, more from the media than from direct human conversation (Bell, 1991: 1).

News discourse, in particular, is a specific genre that produces 'the stories and images of our day' (Bell, 1999: 2). As I noted in 3.7 these stories are filtered. While billions of events might be occurring across the world in any given day, only some of them will make the headlines. Journalists and editors will ultimately decide what is newsworthy and what is not, thus heavily influencing what stories society gets to hear (Hall, 1973: 86). Then, if a



story becomes suitably newsworthy, further decisions are made on how much of it to reveal and what should not be shared with the public (Bell, 2005: 21). Moreover, people tend to favour one daily newspaper and one television channel as their source of news meaning that 'people experience a much more restricted range of mental models than their society affords in potential' (Fowler, 1991: 67). It is not surprising that this level of influence that the media has upon our world, affecting our beliefs, values and attitudes, is often the subject of criticism and debate and gives rise to a host of ethical and social questions. (Kieran, 2003: x). In general, the public remain oblivious to the bias behind the news because we have no way of knowing what stories are missed or what photographs or quotes have been excluded, and for what reasons (Cohen and Young, 1973: 40). Critical linguistics was devised to consider these questions and expose the patterns of ideology encoded in language in such a way that it falls below the threshold of notice for those not deliberately looking for it (Fowler, 1991: 67). Theo van Leeuwen (2018: 141) outlines three assumptions of critical discourse analysis:

1. *That discourse analysis can provide an incontrovertible account of the way representations of social reality select, interpret and evaluate social reality.*
2. *That this has a profound effect on people's knowledge of most aspects of social reality especially when, as is often the case, people do not have access to alternative representations, or to personal experiences that might contradict dominant discourses.*
3. *That discourse analysis provides valid grounds for the critical evaluation of such representations.*

These three assumptions are key to this thesis. As I will demonstrate, the way swearing is represented through the *selection* and *interpretation* of social reality has (or aims to have) a profound effect on the way society views the use of bad language, especially in the naturalization of metaphorical language. Moreover, the way that these representations are intensified during periods of moral panic can make these discourses dominant in a way that does not allow for alternative or contradictive points of view. As such the need for a critical evaluation of these representations is well overdue. The link that this study will attempt to draw between the use of conceptual metaphors and their contribution to the rhetoric that creates moral panic is precisely within the aforementioned CDA principles.

#### 4.2 Choice of data

The starting point for this study was to examine and analyse how swearing is metaphorically represented, or *misrepresented* (van Leeuwen, 2018), in the British press. The aim was to gain an awareness and understanding of how underlying persuasive media rhetoric influences how we think about swearing and, as discussed in 3.3, critical discourse analysis can be a valuable way of identifying how lexical choices influence the interpretations made by the receiver of the text (Charteris-Black, 2004: 9). At the initial data gathering stage it was important to the research that the data exploration crossed the spectrum of readership classes and political allegiances, so an assortment of national newspapers was considered, both broadsheet and tabloid. This was to avoid a self-fulfilling prophecy by gravitating towards tabloids where the stories are more sensationalised and thereby are more susceptible to moral panics (Cricher, 2008: 163). I originally looked at a ten-year period between 2007 and 2017 using two archive databases, Nexis and UKpressonline.

When sampling media language it is important not to end up drowning in data by throwing the net too wide and collating data that will become irrelevant (Bell, 1999: 28). To ensure a realistic project a set of criteria was established to systematically identify which newspaper articles, or units of analysis, fell under the remit of the thesis. Luger (1983) identifies five basic classes of texts in identifying how language is used in different sections of newspapers. These are not exclusive and there can be many crossovers but Luger proposes that there is usually one predominant intention that can be identified and classified (Jucker 1992: 44).

*Table 7: Text classes in newspaper discourse*

Text type	Example
Informative	Basic facts with very little or no evaluation. Subtypes include weather reports or news in brief.
Instructive	These give practical advice, guidance and information. Subtypes might include gardening advice or a recipe but can also include articles that explore pros and cons on something such as holidays, cars or even choice of pet.
Dyadic	These texts are either interviews with a succession of questions and answers or dedicated columns where a specific question is answered by a particular individual, often identified as an 'agony aunt'
Contact creating	These are the 'eye-catchers' designed to engage and stimulate with the aid of images and catchy headlines and are found more in the down-market papers than the broadsheets.
Persuasive	These evaluate, give opinion and stimulate discussion and debate. Subtypes include leader, commentary and review.

This thesis only intends to analyse persuasive and contact creating texts so only articles that were actively discussing swearing as an issue or problem for society were recorded for analysis. This meant excluding any reports that made an incidental passing reference to someone swearing, especially if it was only mentioned towards the end of the article. It also

excluded reviews of books or tv/radio programmes that included swearing unless the subject itself was swearing. Because of the complexities in identifying swearing, as discussed in 2.1, I decided to exclude references to *offensive language*, as in racism, sexism or other discriminatory language, as I felt this would detract from the subject of swearing as words that relate to taboo topics. Articles in the sport section were generally excluded unless they were specifically discussing swearing as a social phenomenon, not restricted to the sporting arena. This allowed the thesis to concentrate on the newspaper coverage that was more in-depth and comprehensive and dealt directly with swearing as a social, conversational phenomenon.

Issues to arise were the key terms used to explore the corpus. *Swearing* regularly brought in 3000+ hits after the year 2012 and often had to be manually filtered to exclude swearing as legal terminology (in January 2009 Barack Obama was sworn in as the first African-American President of the United States which interfered with the data search). *Bad language* was too vague a term as the word *bad* had many connotations that brought in results that were not relevant to the search. *Offensive language* resulted in a manageable number of hits but often included offensive behavior as opposed to language, such as racism, which as discussed earlier, were excluded on the grounds that the traditional swear word is not necessarily in line with racist or sexist language. *Profanity* is an old-fashioned term that also sometimes led to misleading results but was nevertheless included as a key term. It was also important to be aware of the complexities of using key word searches and the risk of creating 'false positives', that is when multiple uses of the word create more results than accurate, and 'false negatives', that is when the term might exclude large amounts of data

because it is too specific (Pettigrew, 2011: 53). As a result, there had to be a significant degree of manual filtering.

It soon became apparent during the initial research that there was a disparity between archive suitability. The UKpressonline archive displayed each newspaper in its original, printed form. However, the Nexis archive is a database of word documents. The semiotics of an article can be just as revealing as the language used (Fairclough, 2014: 229) and the analysis of visual communication is valuable in understanding how an issue is being represented in the media (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). It was therefore important to this study that I was able to view the original article, complete with page positioning, accompanying images and advertising, and that access to the entire publication was available. This could then ensure that graphetic and graphological variations, such as size and positioning of text, use of visual elements and any other key mechanisms that are used to dramatize reports, were included (Deacon, 2007: 10). As a result, the newspapers that were exclusively archived on the Nexis database, which included the *Sun*, the *Guardian*, the *Daily Mail* and the *Telegraph*, were eventually excluded from the data. The *Times* does have its own digital archive but it only ran until 2010 which limited the scope of accessing more recent data. Nexis was then replaced with the Independent Digital Archive which reduced the papers to the *Daily Mirror*, the *Daily Express* and the *Independent*.

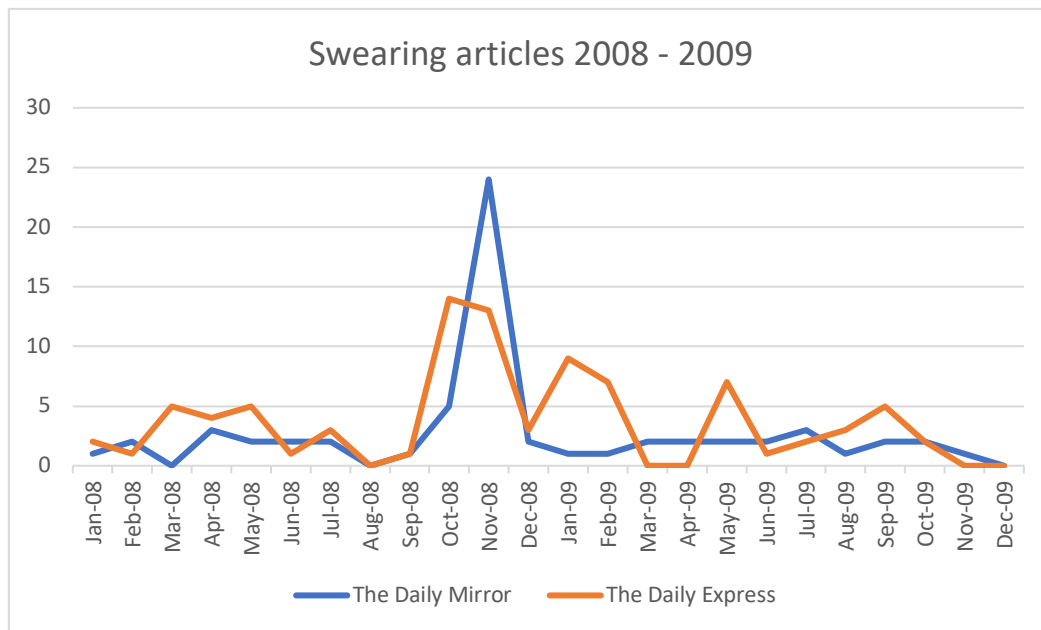
As the research progressed a particular moment in time presented as having a significant increase in articles concerning swearing compared to other years. Swearing is not routinely discussed in detail in the British press so this 'whirlwind of attention' (Ungar, 2000: 278) suggested a spiral of amplification that warranted further attention. One criterion for a systematic collection of data for discourse analysis is a specific period of time where a

*moment of crisis*<sup>4</sup> is identified (Fairclough, 2016: 230). The events that occurred during the 12-month period of October 2008 to October 2009 brought about a flurry of articles within the *Mirror* and the *Express* that also saw the launch of two nationwide anti-swearing campaigns. The first moment of crisis was an alleged increase in swearing on the television and the detrimental effect this was having on society, and children in particular. A few weeks later a second moment of crisis was identified in the publication of a series of polls around swearing attitudes. Two related but separate incidents so close together provided a unique situation from a moral panic point of view as the initial social reaction could be compared with the surveys to establish consensus or over-reaction, in other words, was the media response to swearing on television a true reflection of how the general public felt or was it *disproportionate*? The second incident also provided a benchmark (people's first-hand experience of the social reality) with which to examine whether the representation was legitimate or, as van Leeuwen (2018: 144) describes, was it a *misrepresentation*. As a result, I decided to focus the data collection on this time period, with the *Mirror* and the *Express*, and removed the *Independent* from the final corpus. While I appreciate that both newspapers are tabloids, which I initially hoped to avoid, the data spoke for itself with regards to discourse around swearing.

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<sup>4</sup> Also referred to as a 'cruces' meaning a particular point of difficulty.

Figure 1: Swearing Articles 2008-2009



The events that triggered the moment of crisis around swearing can be divided into two. The first event involved an incident on Radio 2 that became known as Sachsgate. This incident set off several conversations around swearing including a speech made by the ITV Executive Chairman Michael Grade to the Broadcasting Press Guild. *The Telegraph* had the headline ‘Broadcasters should curb swearing on TV, says ITV’s Michael Grade’ (03 November 2008). Whereas *The Sun* ran with ‘TV doesn’t need filth to be fab’ (05 November 2008). It was this event, and Grade’s speech, that brought about the two campaigns aimed at reducing swearing on the television. The second trigger was the publication of a series of polls and reports around swearing attitudes that appeared to contradict the two campaigns. In January 2009 an Australian company Nulon released a report on swearing attitudes in the UK, followed the next month by a survey of 3000 11-year olds by youngpoll.com. In June the BBC published its report following the Sachsgate incident and finally, in September 1000 people were polled by Online Opinions. The corpus was eventually filtered to articles that

were discussing swearing in the light of these two discursive events, and as such, I will now discuss these events in more detail.

#### 4.2.1 Sachsgate

The controversy that became labelled Sachsgate occurred in October 2008 during a radio show hosted by the comedian Russell Brand. Brand, a well-known presenter and comedian with a reputation for controversy, had presented the *Russell Brand Show* on Radio 2 since April 2006 with a regular audience of over 2 million listeners. During the recording of the radio programme Andrew Sachs, a well-known British actor, was scheduled to be interviewed about his time on the 1970s comedy sitcom *Fawlty Towers*. However, when the actor did not answer his phone Brand, along with his co-presenter Jonathan Ross, decided to leave a series of messages for the actor.<sup>5</sup> While the conversation began harmlessly with a discussion about what programme had made Sachs famous Jonathon Ross suddenly blurts out “he fucked your granddaughter” referring to the relationship between Brand and Sachs’ granddaughter, Georgina Bailie. The line resulted in much hysterical laughter in the studio. Brand tried to mitigate the situation, stating “I did nothing with Georgina” before shouting “abort, put the phone down, code red, code red”. However, they then decided to ring back whereupon they continued to make matters worse by referring to Baillie’s burlesque dance group, the Satanic Sluts, with Ross stating that they had met on a sex swing, and Brand asking for Baillie’s hand in marriage. The programme was not aired live but an editorial decision saw the programme broadcast on the evening of Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> October attracting two complaints from listeners. However, following a feature about the incident on the front

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<sup>5</sup> Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U7IHJ66wj9g>



page of the *Mail on Sunday* a week later both the BBC and the broadcasting watchdog Ofcom received over 40,000 complaints, the second-highest number of complaints recorded at the time. The incident eventually led to the resignation of Brand and the suspension of Ross, as well as the resignation of the controller of BBC Radio 2, Lesley Douglas, who had made the decision to air the programme. The BBC was fined £150,000 and offered a formal apology. The next year the BBC commissioned 'the most extensive piece of research it has ever undertaken' (2009: 3) as a direct result of the Sachsgate incident.

The incident crossed nearly all of the boxes identified as news values in 4.2. At the heart of the scandal were two very well-known celebrities and a much-loved actor from a popular sitcom that the older generation could remember well. The elite element was also provided by the conversations that occurred about the issue, from members of parliament to other well-known celebrities who were referred to as *legends* or *stars*. People with titles, such as Sir or Dame, were also used to emphasise their authority. The deviance, or negativity, was the bad behaviour and invasion of privacy which, as I will evidence, were referred to in metaphorical ways so as to intensify the issue indicative of superlativeness. Knowledge of the BBC provided an ideological and cultural proximity.

A few weeks later two campaigns were launched, both of which referenced the Sachsgate scandal as the core of the problem. The *Mirror* launched their 'crusade to clean up the airwaves following the Manuelgate<sup>6</sup> scandal' on November 5<sup>th</sup>. Two days later a letters page was dedicated to the incident. A campaign logo accompanied most following articles

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<sup>6</sup> The incident resulted in several different names, including Manuelgate which referred to the character that Sachs played in *Fawlty Towers*, but as Sachsgate became the most well recognised I have chosen to reference only that name for consistency.

regarding the level of swearing on television. The logo was designed to echo the prohibition



signs of the highway code, with a red circle, the inside of which was

coloured yellow for visionary impact. The stencil like typography

created a military feel. The *Sunday Express* launched their Decency in

Television charter on November 9<sup>th</sup> ‘against a background of 40,000 complaints about the offensive prank calls made by Jonathan Ross and Russell Brand’ (*Article E5a*). An editorial on

the same day claimed that ‘the obscene debacle involving Jonathan Ross and Russell Brand

was the last straw’ (*Article E4*). The following week the *Sunday Express* ran a double page

spread pointing out that ‘the public backlash over offensive calls by Jonathan Ross and

Russell Brand highlighted the need to impose new standards’ (*Article E7a*). The campaign

promoted a *Decency in TV charter* that demanded a £100,000 fine for any broadcasters or

stars using four-letter word swearing. ‘If it takes hefty fines to remind arrogant producers

and performers that their viewers believe in decent behavior, even if they don’t, then so be

it’ (*Article E4*). The logo that accompanied the campaign featured the paper’s symbol of a

crusader that was introduced to the paper by Lord Beaverbrook.<sup>7</sup> The image shows a

crusader in chainmail and helmet, holding a shield and sword.

However, while the *Mirror* frequently used its campaign logo

over several months the *Express* only used the Clean Up TV

crusade logo twice.



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<sup>7</sup> When Max Aitken bought the Daily Express in 1916 the symbol on the paper was the royal coat of arms. He introduced the crusader symbol when launching a campaign for free trade within the British Empire. The campaign was not a success and was eventually abandoned in 1931 but the image of the crusader remained. For more information see Hutchinson (1992).

#### 4.2.2 Swearing attitudes polls

As the campaigns began to wane results from research undertaken by an Australian company, Nulon, emerged. The company undertook a nationwide survey to understand British attitudes towards swearing before launching their latest product in the UK. 'Start Ya Bastard' was a vehicle fuel product 'designed to instantly fire-up difficult-to-start engines' (Nulon.com.au). The name was a play on the frustration of not being able start a car and the research was an effort to establish if the British audience was likely to find the name offensive. The survey of over 2000 people found that only eight per cent were offended by swearing and that 'swearing is a fact of life in today's society, both at home and in the workplace' (*Article E10b*).

Ninety-four per cent of those aged 18-30 said bad language was no longer even an issue, while just 79 per cent of people aged 50-60 agreed. According to the research, men are more foul-mouthed than women, with 90 per cent swearing on a daily basis compared with 83 per cent of women. Perhaps most shockingly, some 78 per cent of people admitted to swearing regularly for no reason whatsoever, while the overwhelming majority – 98 per cent – admitted they swore when they lost their temper (*Article E10b*)

The research resulted in another *Express* front-page headline designed to shock 'Swearing now the blight of Britain' (*Article E10a*). The article continued on page five along with another article declaring swearing to be 'the curse of modern Britain' (*Article E10b*).

A few weeks later another survey emerged that claimed, '9 out of 10 parents swear in front of children' (*Article E14*). The PR and marketing firm Onepoll targeted 3000 11-year-old

children via an online survey with a paid reward. The *Express* ran an article that crossed over to the Sachsgate incident with a photograph of Jonathan Ross as a 'bad example' (*Article E14*).

In June 2009 the BBC released their report after surveying over 7000 viewers regarding attitudes on taste and decency following 'the furore over Jonathan Ross and Russell Brand' (*Article E16*). The research found that 'the public is more relaxed than ever about swearing on TV' (*Article E16*). Finally, in September 2009 another marketing firm, Online Opinions, polled 1000 people and found that 'a third of us are subjected to a swear word every five minutes' (*Article E21*) and that 83 per cent still found swearing offensive.

The *Mirror* did not write any articles about the first three surveys and only wrote a short editorial piece and article about the BBC report, claiming it as a victory for their campaign.

#### 4.3 Final corpus

There is no definitive number to establish whether a corpus is large enough to be sufficiently representative and often the element under investigation will determine the size of the data (Jucker, 1992: 5). Swearing is not a subject that is regularly found within news columns because it rarely registers as newsworthy according to the news values as outlined in 3.7. Moreover, according to Cohen the nature of a moral panic is by definition a sporadic 'splutter of rage' (2002: xxx), which makes a large corpus unlikely. However, a small number of discourse samples are adequate if they 'yield as much insight as possible into the contribution of discourse to the social practice under scrutiny (Fairclough, 2016: 230). A small corpus also has the advantage of being analysed manually with a tighter interpretation directly from the scholar (Baker et al., 2008: 275). The crucial focus of discourse analysis is

to get to a point where further analysis will not reveal new findings and often it only takes a relatively small amount of qualitative data to get to this point (Jager and Maier, 2014: 51).

To explore 'a particular language feature, the amount of language needed is governed by how often the feature occurs' (Bell, 1999: 29). The twelve-month period as outlined in 4.2 saw a significant rise in swearing appearing as a feature in the news. A total of 51 articles over the twelve-month period compiled the final corpus, with over 14,000 words. I believe that for the purpose of this thesis, the timeframe and discursive events provide sufficient data for analysis and expanding the research further was unlikely to significantly affect the results. Other discursive events related to the topic of swearing were considered for contextual awareness but were not included in the corpus for analysis. For example, at the beginning of 2008 the BBC was 'carpeted over four-letter outbursts' (*Daily Express*, 10 April 2008) but as this was not related to the moment of crisis as identified in 4.2 it was not included.

Once the corpus was established the analysis began by exploring the overall meaning of entire discourses in order to identify and collate themes. The whole article was examined, including visual communication such as images, colour choice and positioning of the text, to gain a complete understanding of the message being conveyed. With the metadata explored, the narrative and textual structure of the articles were further analysed to identify thematic structures and discourse schemata, to be discussed later.

Any analysis of discursive practices in the news must consider the dialectical relationship between the *production* of the news and the *consumption* by the audience, and how these are interrelated (Richardson, 2007: 112). Every narrative is written with the demographic

variables and political leaning of an audience in mind. With that in mind I will briefly expand on the audiences of the two newspapers.

#### 4.3.1 The audience

As referred to earlier, the British newspapers are traditionally divided into two groups – the qualities or broadsheets and the populars or tabloids (Jucker, 1992: 47). The press can also be further split by the socio-economic classes of the readership; up-market, mid-market and down-market press. The socio-economic classes of the readers are established by the National Readership Survey (NRS) which looks at the occupational data of the head of the household or chief wage-earner, with the assumption that this information can indicate the social status within a community (Jucker, 1992: 49). There have been several debates around the suitability of such an approach but to date there has been no reliable alternative offered and there is no room in this thesis to explore the limitations of the data in any great depth. The *Mirror* and the *Express* are both tabloids from the popular press, however the *Express* is considered mid-market while the *Mirror* is down-market (Jucker, 1992: 48). The *Mirror* is politically left leaning and is read by more women than men. At over half a million copies sold a day in 2018 it has the highest circulation and the highest C2DE (lower-class) readership. The *Express* is considered to be right-wing and is read by more men than women. With such opposing gender and political stances the papers offer a balanced readership.

Another critical issue to consider when analysing newspapers as data, especially within the concept of a moral panic, is what is going on outside of the print.

#### 4.3.2 The socio-political context

When considering the presence of a moral panic it is useful to understand the timing and other issues that are occurring outside of the panic. (Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 2009; Critcher, 2008). Furthermore, as I explained in 3.5, metaphor is not universal and as such it is important that research into metaphor takes the socio-political context into consideration and does not isolate it from the motivations that might be influencing the discourse participants (Refaie, 2001: 368). Research into metaphor use should try at all times to consider how they are embedded in larger discursive activities (Zinken and Musolff, 2009: 2).

The UK had been under a labour government for over ten years, with Gordon Brown as the Prime Minister at the time. In January 2008 the UK officially entered the worst economic recession since World War II, according to the Institute for Fiscal Studies (Cribb and Johnson, 2018). Major UK high street stores, such as Barrett Shoes and Woolworths, collapsed and the unemployment rates reached the highest level since 1995. The financial squeeze on the pocket of the average family no doubt added to the tensions around the fat cat salaries of many celebrities, explaining some of the outrage about Sachsgat.

There was also raised concern around moral standards, especially regarding parenting. The previous December had seen 11-year-old Rhys Jones shot dead while walking home from football practice. In February 2008 the Shannon Matthews saga played out as the concern regarding her disappearance was replaced with fury when the child's mother was found to have been responsible for drugging and hiding her. As I will demonstrate in Chapters 5 and 6, concern about poor parenting standards and the welfare of children played a significant role in the data.

In September 2008 the UK was subjected to extreme flash flooding after severe rainfall. The beginning of the year had seen 71 areas in flood threat and the previous year had seen severe floods that lead to looting and rogue builders. On 8<sup>th</sup> September the *Daily Mirror* ran a double page spread on the *killer floods* with several emotive photographs of people being evacuated and rescued. This will have had an impact on the experiential mapping of MASS OF WATER as a source domain, which I discuss in more depth in 5.4.1.

#### 4.4 Designing a model

In line with the suggestion that moral panic theory can benefit greatly from discourse analysis, as discussed in 3.8, this thesis uses a combination of critical discourse analysis, in particular Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), alongside Moral Panic Theory (MPT). Given the relationship earlier discussed between moral panic and Foucault's contribution to discourse I have drawn primarily from the Foucauldian critical discourse framework (FCD) as outlined by Jager and Maier (2014) for the initial discourse analysis. The core of a Foucauldian analysis of discourse is how the collective and individual consciousness is fed by *discourse strands* that transport knowledge by exerting power (Jager and Maier, 2014: 39). Discourse strands are flows of texts that centre on a common theme. When considering how discourse analysis and moral panic can unite, these discourse strands provide a valuable link. A moral panic is often evident by the extensive use of figures of speech, such as metaphor and hyperbole, (Maneri, 2013: 184) so whilst analysing the discourse strands I systematically identified and coded all metaphorical language. To do this, I drew from the Pragglejaz Group's (2007) metaphor identification procedure (MIP), comprising of the following steps.



1. Read the entire text-discourse to establish a general understanding of the meaning.
2. Determine the lexical units in the text discourse.
3. (a) For each lexical unit in the text, establish its meaning in context, that is, how it applies to an entity, relation or attribute in the situation evoked by the text (contextual meaning). Consider what comes before and after the lexical unit.  
  
(b) For each lexical unit, determine if it has a more basic contemporary meaning in other contexts than the one as the given context. For our purposes basic meanings tend to be:
  - More concrete
  - Related to bodily action
  - More precise
  - Historically olderBasic meanings are not necessarily the most frequent meanings of the lexical unit.  
  
c) If the lexical unit has a more basic current-contemporary meaning in other contexts than the given context, decide whether the contextual meaning contrasts with the basic meaning but can be understood in comparison with it.
4. If yes, mark the lexical unit as metaphorical.

This ensured that only lexical units that had a meaning that contrasted with the basic meaning were included. However, as discussed in 3.4 cultural key words can also reflect and reveal the core values of a culture which are not metaphorical. As such in order to address RQ(1) I kept a separate database of key words that appeared to frame the topic of

swearing in a manner of religiosity. While the MIP was not designed as a means to identify conceptual metaphors its operational definition of the linguistic metaphor is compatible with ‘the cognitive-linguistic definition of metaphor as indirect meaning based on cross-domain mapping’ (Steen, 2014: 135) and as such was able to establish the *source domain* as defined by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). This then identified the paradigms for the conceptual metaphors that are discussed in Chapter 5.

For the moral panic analysis, I have incorporated aspects from earlier models created by Cohen (2002), Goode and Ben-Yehuda (2009), Critcher (2006), McEnery (2006) and Maneri (2013). My aim is to first establish how conceptual metaphors are used in discourse around swearing and consider the relationship between these and our perception of swearing. I will then determine whether a moral panic was established and successful in amplifying the threat of swearing as a social and moral threat and in creating a stereotypical image both of swearing and people who use swear words.

The media inventory stage of a moral panic as outlined in Chapter 3 is about identifying properties of discourse. Exaggeration and distortion are modalities of misrepresentation, prediction is a kind of speech act and symbolization represents the problem in figures of speech designed to be illusive, such as metaphor, metonymy and hyperbole (Maneri, 2013: 172). So, it is through the analysis of these discourse strands that the media inventory stage of a moral panic can be fully explored. Discourse strands can also become entangled, as in there is a crossover between textual themes and topics, and an important means of creating this crossover is by collective symbols. These provide the cultural stereotypes that we rely on to interpret reality (Jager and Maier, 2014: 48). However, the concept of collective symbols entangling discourse strands can be seen as closely related to the *target* and *source*

that conceptual metaphor theory draws from. It was therefore crucial to this thesis that discourse strands and collective symbols were identified and systematically coded in order to structure how swearing is symbolised within the media.

Finally, I explored several different MPT frameworks that have emerged since Cohen's original framework in the Seventies. As discussed in Chapter 3, MPT has evolved significantly over the past fifty years. While the first stage has generally remained the same to Cohen's original identification of a moral panic 'emerging as a threat to societal values and interests' (2002: 1) the way in which a moral panic behaves during its presence has been the source of much debate. Goode and Ben-Yehuda developed Cohen's model to outline five stages of moral panic; *concern, hostility, consensus, disproportionality* and *volatility*. However, as previously discussed this framework has drawn criticism, mostly about how to identify a *real* risk as opposed to a *perceived* risk (Waddington, 1986, Ungar 2001, Maneri, 2013). Concern, consensus and disproportionality can be more easily understood 'if they are considered to be the properties of the dynamics of mediated discourse' (Maneri, 2016: 172). Moreover, Goode and Ben-Yehuda's model overlooks two essential elements of a moral panic; '(i) the *moral dimension* of the social reaction, particularly the introspective soul-searching that accompanies these episodes and (ii) the idea that the deviant conduct in question is somehow *symptomatic*' (Garland, 2008: 11-*original italics*). As such, I decided to move away from the attributional model of Goode and Ben-Yehuda and develop a more processual model as introduced by Cohen (2002), developed by Hall (2013) and Thompson (1998), and more recently updated by Critcher (2006) and Maneri (2016).

For Maneri, the second stage of a moral panic is the *impact stage*, where media 'coverage is disproportionately high compared to usual journalistic norms' (Maneri, 2013: 176). During this stage a *news theme* or *frame* appears to unify stories about the deviance. However, in order to establish the frame some incidents are removed from their original context and relocated in a more symbolic context that then gives salience to an aspect of the story that would otherwise not be particularly significant (*ibid*: 178). This is relevant to this thesis as not only did the Sachsgate incident get relocated into an issue about swearing, but as clearly evident in Figure 1 the media coverage significantly spiked at the time compared to the journalistic norms of previous and following years. The analysis of these frames can illuminate 'the precise way in which influence over a human consciousness is exerted by the transfer (or communication) of information' (Entman, 1993: 51). However, I also feel that it is important to address the way a moral panic develops from the coded or processed rhetoric of deviance in the media (Critcher, 2008: 1129). For me, the media inventory stage, as outlined by Cohen and Critcher, is crucial in understanding how rhetorical tropes are used to symbolise the folk devil and amplify the deviance. The moral panic rhetoric, that is how language is manipulated to evoke specific responses, is an intrinsic part of a moral panic (McEneaney, 2006: 9). It is for that reason that I chose to include Cohen's exaggeration and distortion, prediction and symbolisation so as to identify the disparity between the reality of the social problem and its representation in the media. As discussed in Chapter 2, Hall (2013) separates these stages as the primary definer and the secondary definer. A moral panic analysis is interested in how the concern changes from the emergence (primary definer, as in authority and claims makers) to the media's interpretation (secondary definer, as in news outlets and social media). It is during this stage of analysis that Foucault's *discursive formation* emerges to reveal the way certain discourses about certain social

problems 'assume dominance and privilege their terms and conditions over others' (Critcher, 2008: 1139).

The stage following the media inventory has a number of differing terms according to theorists but they mostly deal with 'who has defined this as immoral behaviour and on what grounds?' (Critcher, 2008: 1141). Moral entrepreneurs, experts, pressure groups and other figures of power emerge to diagnose the problem and offer solutions. It is also during this stage that otherwise minor events gain visibility on the back of the established news theme, giving the illusion of an escalation in the frequency or severity of the issue (Maneri, 2016: 180). This is especially relevant to this thesis as some of the articles were only spuriously linked to the concern about swearing on television but were knitted together as one issue by the presence of the campaign logo. As a result, my framework combines Maneri's *propagation* stage with Critcher's *moral entrepreneur* stage, where I will look at how the concern around swearing is widely spread and promoted, either via the inclusion of minor events or by the alleged *expertise* or *authority* in the voice of the moral entrepreneur defining the issue. I will label this stage the *Consensus* stage.

Maneri's *reaction* stage is very similar to Critcher's *coping and resolution* stage, where there are diagnoses and interpretations, calls for procedural change or stricter controls, and proposals for short and long-term solutions (2016: 181). With the diagnoses and interpretations come links to wider social issues and problems. It is crucial at this stage that there is a clear consensus within the concerned parties or the moral panic might fail. Both the propagation stage and the reaction stage, which can overlap, contribute to the *Self* and *Other* rhetoric that is so often found within a moral panic. Finally, the *latency* stage, or

Critcher's *fade away*, will evidence how and why the moral panic draws to a conclusion.

Table 8 shows the framework that I applied to the data.

Table 8: Moral Panic Theoretical Framework

	Stage	Evidence
1	Emergence	Someone or something ( <i>folk devil</i> ) emerges as a threat to the values and interests of the social and moral order. Discourse strands increase and begin to cross over in order to highlight the concern.
2	Media inventory	The threat is depicted in an easily recognisable form in the media via three discourse strategies: <i>exaggeration</i> and <i>distortion</i> , <i>prediction</i> and <i>symbolisation</i> . Idiomatic and stereotypical language is used that is familiar to the reader and speaks to an already established ideology. Rhetorical tropes permeate the narrative. An increase in hostility towards the folk devil becomes evident in the disproportionately high coverage when compared to usual journalistic norms.
3	Consensus	A clearly defined consensus emerges between the moral entrepreneurs, pressure groups, politicians and the public that develops a <i>them</i> and <i>us</i> narrative. Otherwise minor events gain visibility on the back of the original deviance leading to a <i>wave of incidents</i> and a rapid build-up of public concern.
4	Reaction	Those in consensus respond with diagnosis and solutions to the threat. This stage is key to the trajectory of the moral panic, a lack of clear consensus will usually put an end to any moral panic.
5	Latency	The coverage returns to the usual journalistic level and the panic recedes. However, the stereotype has been confirmed.

Finally, to address the concerns around disproportionality, as outlined in 3.6, I will be considering the reaction within the *amplification* assessment as defined by Maneri (2016). Firstly, did the journalistic practices within the media inventory ‘lead to an apparent wave of incidents and to the perception of a new and threatening social problem?’ (2016: 184). Secondly, did the contribution of politicians’, experts’ and public officials’ reactions contribute to the growing coverage and subscribe to a discourse of fear? Finally, was there a sensationalized publicity involving ‘intensive use of figures of speech (hyperbole, metaphor), of big and prominent headlines (the written transcription of oral tone intensity (Fowler [1991]), a striking prevalence of the emotive dimension, a campaigning discourse, ad hoc evidence...and typical tags (‘emergency’, ‘invasion’, ‘alarm’) that convey a sense of exceptionality’ (Maneri, 2016: 184). I will discuss this further in Chapter 6.

#### 4.5 Presentation and style conventions

This thesis is combining two theories that are not usually seen together, as such I would like to briefly mention how I will present the analysis in the next two chapters. Firstly, I will present the metaphorical representation of swearing in the two identified newspapers during the specified time period as outlined in 4.2. These are collated into three clusters or themes: *Religiosity*, *Hygiene* and *Invasion*. In line with the literature, the conceptual metaphors will be written in SMALL CAPS and examples from the corpora that are not in quotation marks will be written in *italics*. The second part will then look at whether a moral panic occurred at this time as identified by Cohen and others in Chapter 3, using the theoretical model designed in 4.4.1.

## 4.6 Summary

In this chapter I have explained the decisions which underpinned my choice of data and proposed a theoretical framework with which to answer the research questions as outlined in Chapter 1. In doing so I have hopefully made the case for choosing to combine Conceptual Metaphor Theory with a Moral Panic Theory framework. The next two chapters will now present and discuss my findings.



## 5 Swearing and Metaphor

### 5.1 Introduction

The next two chapters will explore the discourse around swearing in the selected data as outlined in Chapter 4. While this time period opens with mild concern regarding swearing, both on television and in the general public, it was not until November 2008 that a greater level of concern was triggered, reflected in the marked increase in media attention, including two nationwide media campaigns calling for more control of swearing on television. This was followed by a series of polls and reports that broadly speaking disagreed with the idea of a public outrage and backlash towards swearing. The campaigns dwindled towards the end of 2009.

As discussed in Chapter 3, metaphors are used in discourse to enable us to think and talk about more abstract and complex areas of experience (Semino, 2008: 30). They are also used to reason, explain and theorise in trying to persuade others to adopt a similar viewpoint (Charteris-Black, 2006; Kovecses, 2010). However, metaphors are seldom neutral. The choices we make over which metaphors to use to construct something in terms of something else will often reveal certain attitudes towards the subject (Semino, 2008: 32). When studying metaphor as a discursive tool it is important to consider why particular metaphorical patterns have been chosen. As discussed in 3.5, cognitive linguists propose that patterns of metaphor can reflect how we use our human experiences to understand more abstract concepts (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003). The more work that is required to understand the mapping between the source and the target will reveal whether an utterance feels figurative, as in more work has to be invested in order to construe the

relevant meaning, or whether it feels conventional, that is the mapping occurs rapidly and seemingly effortlessly (Zinken, 2007: 447).

The data was replete with metaphorical language that were 'well-delineated and image rich' (Semino, 2021: 54). On the whole they were expressed through highly conventional lexis and rhetorical patterns, such as repetition. As I touched on in 3.4, the persistent repeating of metaphors can encourage an automatic and unconscious processing (Refaie, 2001: 359). Moreover, as I will discuss in Chapter 6, an intensive use of figurative language such as metaphor can be an indicator of a moral panic (Maneri, 2016: 18). This chapter will demonstrate how the metaphorical language used in the discourse around swearing create *conceptual metaphors* that can be documented under three themes, that I will refer to as conceptual clusters. These clusters, Religiosity, Hygiene and Invasion, reveal specific metaphorical patterns that have built a long-term schematic understanding of swearing leading to the metaphors becoming conventional and considered to be 'a common-sense representation of reality' (Refaie, 2011: 354). As I will discuss, these clusters are important to how swearing is symbolised and perceived and contribute to how we process our thoughts about bad language. I will now explore all three clusters, however it is worth noting that there are often crossovers between the themes.

## 5.2 Religiosity

In Chapter 2, I explained that the concept of the swear word originates from language that was considered to be forbidden for fear of invoking the wrath of God or other objects of religious veneration (Montagu, 2001: 101). Older synonyms for swearing, such as *blasphemy*, *profanity* and *obscenity*, are found in biblical scripts describing behaviour that

shows a disregard for pious practice and thus have strong religious denotations (Hughes, 1998: 246). The concept of an obedience or reverence to a superhuman or supernatural power is a global phenomenon that varies according to culture. Rituals, sacrifices and sacramental symbols are all deeply engrained in religion and these contribute to the semantic frame that becomes embedded in our knowledge of religion as a concept. The physical structure of a temple or church, with steeples, stained glass and pews, all represent religion as schematic images. Hymns, scriptures and prayers speak of religion and create religious oral scripts. In other words, one does not have to be religious to understand the concept of religiosity. However, it is worth noting that in this particular instance, I refer to religiosity as the concept of religion within the European social context of Christianity. In the Christian tradition, God is the moral authority, whether as the Strict Father or Nurturant Parent as discussed in 3.5, and as such, religiosity is also about morality and moral strength and weakness (Lakoff and Johnson, 1999: 321). Moral evaluation is a key aspect in understanding how certain discourses legitimize or delegitimize social practices (van Leeuwen, 2018: 147) but because it is an abstract concept it can be difficult to describe and measure. Conceptual metaphors help us to understand abstract concepts and in this section I will evidence how religiosity and morality are used as conceptual metaphors to condemn swearing.

There is a strong affiliation between theology and linguistics (Owiredu, 2021: 98). Studies show that religious discourse draws considerably from figurative language such as metaphor, metonymy and personification (Jablonski et al., 1998; Lakoff and Johnson, 2003; Owiredu, 2021). As well as providing a critical link between our everyday, physical experiences and religious utterances, the extensive use of figurative language allows for

multiple interpretations (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003: 40). In 3.5 I discussed how the conceptual metaphor GOOD is UP, BAD is DOWN, stems from our physical and cultural experiences of health, success and control and expands to MORAL is UP, IMMORAL is DOWN. Spatial and orientational metaphors are frequently found in religious scripts to identify and separate good from bad (Jablonski et al., 1998; Corts and Meyers, 2002; Meier et al., 2007). The idea that God resides in the *high heavens* while the devil is found *down below* is an ancient concept that can be found in many different cultures and religions, from the Ancient Greeks with Mount Olympus and Hades to the current concept of Heaven and Hell (Xie and Zhang, 2014: 172). Not only does this lead to the conceptual metaphor that GOD is UP and the DEVIL is DOWN, it reaffirms the embodied knowledge that GOOD is UP and BAD is DOWN. As with the nature of conceptual metaphor, the ripple effect leads to VIRTUE becoming UP and DEPRAVITY becoming DOWN (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003: 16). The spatial metaphors found in religious discourse also influence our understandings of hierarchies, power and morality. The perception of swearing as something that is DOWN, and therefore BAD and IMMORAL, is prevalent in the data. I discuss this orientational symbolization in more detail in 6.3.3.

Compared to the other clusters, Religiosity has far fewer metaphorical references, which was a surprise. Because of the link between swearing and the concept of blasphemy, I was expecting to see religious metaphors used more widely. This finding could indicate that the relationship between swearing and religion has weakened over time, perhaps a reflection of the decline in practicing Christianity in the UK since the mid-twentieth century (Office for National Statistics, 2020). It could also be that religion is simply too abstract in itself to create a range of widely understood source domains. I also must consider that my

education in a convent may have influenced my expectations of finding more religious metaphors. However, I believe it is important to look at how theological terminology influences discourse around swearing. In 3.4 I discussed how we draw on our experiential, perceptual and cognitive knowledge to develop two subsets of characteristics; the *distinctive*, which is the more physically present, and the *salient*, which is more abstract. We then transfer the appropriate ones to the target domain via *tension elimination* (Ortony, 1975). Religious metaphors, and other religious key words, provide a wide range of features that can be applied to swearing as the target. For example, by naming their anti-swearing campaign the Clean Up TV Crusade, the *Sunday Express* is deliberately asking the reader to map the features of a crusade across to the fight against swearing. Likewise, the *Mirror* referred to a 'crusade to clean up the airwaves' (*Article M1a*). Historically, a crusade was 'any war instigated and blessed by the church for alleged religious ends' (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021). The use of crusade as a metaphor not only has biblical tones but it also draws upon the distinctive characteristics of warriors and soldiers, as in armour, weapons, fighting and bloodshed, alongside more salient features such as bravery and honour. Indeed, the logo that accompanied the *Express* campaign was of a crusader, complete with shield, sword and chainmail armour. Therefore, as swearing is the enemy of the crusade it can be seen as dishonourable and cowardly. However, because of the nature of a battle, which involves two sides, swearing is also likely to become metaphorically associated with the former characteristics of fighting, weapons and bloodshed, thereby reiterating a link between swearing and violence.

The reason that it is important to include this cluster is because religion continues to play a role in social behaviours, especially rule-conforming behaviours, and as such religious beliefs

shape assumptions and opinions (Hommel and Colzato, 2010: 597). It is not surprising that people with deep religious beliefs are more likely to be offended by swear words, especially terms from the field of religion that are considered blasphemous, (Jay, 2000: 109).

Moreover, they are more likely to complain about swearing on the television (Hargrave, 1991: Wober, 1990). However, studies have also found a correlation between religious affiliation and authoritarianism, self-righteousness and prejudice (Wulff, 1991: Alemeyer and Hunsberger, 1992) suggesting that any narratives that create religious frames or map swearing to a source domain of religion are likely to create negative attitudes towards people who use swear words. Importantly, any perceptual bias gained through early religious experience does not require ongoing religious practice to be maintained (Hommel and Colzato, 2010: 600).

This cluster begins with the source domain of SACRILEGE. Strictly speaking this is not a conceptual metaphor because the words are not always being used metaphorically. However, the use of religious terminology is not simply a matter of semantics. It creates a subliminal symbolic frame designed to highlight and naturalise the sacred-profane dichotomy (Refaie, 2001: 360). As I discussed in 3.4, a literal utterance can still induce a metaphorical interpretation due to the conceptual frame that it creates (Lakoff, 2004: 10).

Conceptual frames do not rely on figurative speech, any word can activate it, so it is important to understand how the semantic frame SACRILEGE is activated within the discourse via a collection of cultural key words. As explained in 3.4, cultural key words are particular lexicons that are loaded with cultural and historical meaning (Wierzbicker, 1991). Certain religious terms, like *blasphemy* and *profanity*, are cultural key words that influence how we think and talk about aspects of swearing and while they may not be used

metaphorically in the data, it is worth considering how they interact with a conceptual understanding of a much broader cultural frame. As Lakoff (2004: 10) points out, the more they are activated, the stronger the frame becomes. I will then explore the conceptual metaphor SWEARING is MAGICAL POWER, which explores the link between swearing and witchcraft and superstition. Finally, I present SWEARING is SIN. Sin is a moral and religious concept that lies at the core of Christianity (Owiredu, 2021: 87). Where SWEARING is SACRILEGE could be argued to be about the externalised concept of swearing and *guilt*, SWEARING is SIN refers more to the internalised concept of swearing and *shame*. There has been wide academic debate about the differences between shame and guilt and how cultures use them as social control which I discuss in more detail in 5.2.3.

#### 5.2.1 SWEARING is SACRILEGE

Sacrilege is deeply rooted in sacramental religious practice and is related to heresy, blasphemy and witchcraft (Hunter, 2006: 111). It is described as the crime or sin of violating anything considered to be consecrated and in Western European Christianity this is based on the concept of ‘the earthly presence of a transcendent divinity’ (*ibid*: 109). Swear words are accused of being profane because they are thought to misappropriate language that is regarded as sacred. In effect, they represent an improper crossing of the boundary between the sacred and the profane (*ibid*: 109). In 5.4.3 I discuss how the conceptual metaphor SWEARING is CROSSING A BOUNDARY is linked to all three clusters, between the sacred and profane, the clean and the dirty and the safe and the vulnerable.

Studies into metaphor and religion find that religious sermons often exhibit *bursts* of figurative language underlying a central root metaphor (Corts and Meyers, 2002: 391). The

first article that I would like to analyse demonstrates such a burst. Article E13 was an opinion piece written by the then conservative MP Ann Widdecombe in response to research that suggested that the general public swore about 14 times a day. Although most of the religious terminology is not being used metaphorically, I propose that not only does the whole article become an allegory designed to create one root conceptual metaphor or frame, SWEARING is SACRILEGE, but that the excessive use of theological language is also designed to differentiate the *Self* from the *Other*. As I explained in 3.3.2, Othering is the comparison between a *superior Self* and a *demonized Other*. What is more, in order to strengthen this contrast, cultural resources, such as religion, are often manipulated (Holliday, 2011: 70). By using an overload of theological terminology Widdecombe is constructing a morality that stems from the conservative moral hierarchy that dictates that God is above man, making God the ultimate moral authority (Lakoff, 2004: 21). This also reflects Lakoff's Strict Father model who, as the head of the family, is considered to be the moral authority, who knows right from wrong and who must be obeyed (2004: 18). As both God and the Strict Father are ABOVE, swearing, then, is positioned BELOW, which as I have already noted is BAD.

In the article Widdecombe refers to the Lady Chatterley obscenity trial that occurred in the 1960s and muses about how the times and attitudes have changed, giving the article a tone of nostalgic memory bias. Her overall opinion is that the change in attitudes towards swearing has led to a lack of good manners. Manners are instilled by good parenting, so the allegation is one of poor parenting, either literally or because of a Nurturant Parent society. The rose-coloured-glasses syndrome, of previous generations being better than the present, is often found in conservative rhetoric (Charteris-Black, 2006). Moreover, the prevalence of



a problem being seen as a reflection of deteriorating standards, as in a *sign of the times*, is often indicative of a moral panic (Cohen, 2002) which I discuss in more detail in Chapter 6. Presenting like a sermon from a preacher, the article is heavily laden with religiosity with bursts of theological terminology. The use of lexical items such as *profanity, oath, puritan, solemnly, blasphemy* and *wretched* all contribute to the religious frame through which swearing is viewed.

A1. What has changed so sharply over the last couple of decades is the free use of swearing and casual profanity in front of children. *Article E13*

Resistance to social change is often found in centre-right rhetoric (Charteris-Black, 2006: 569). As a Conservative MP it is not surprising that the change (an alleged increase in parental swearing) is described with the negative descriptor *sharply*. As a description *sharp* refers to something that has a keen cutting edge that can cut or pierce, leading to figurative language such as being *sharp as a razor or needle*. A *sharp tongue* is used to refer to someone who is often unkind and critical. Its use here is to imply that the change has been sudden and abrupt, and when thinking of the salient concepts of the metaphor it extends to an acuteness, as in a sudden, intense spike of pain. By metaphorically describing the change over time as happening *sharply*, it can also be interpreted as a painful change. However, the use of *free* deviates from the concept of sharp and presents two contrasting pictures. To be free is to not be restricted, imprisoned or in servitude to another. However, figuratively it also refers to a lack of control. Its use here is to highlight the lack of moderation in the use of *casual profanity*. Casual is often used as a compound noun to create the sense of free, loose and slack. *Casual* clothes are worn informally. A *casual* labourer has no formal employment. And *casual sex* is often used in a demeaning way to refer to loose morals,

especially towards women (Piemonte et al, 2019). Casual profanity can be used to refer to swearing that happens in natural, everyday conversation, as opposed to a violent or angry outburst. However, the use of free and casual together, when referring to the use of bad language, creates the metaphoric notion of something that is out of control. Profanity is often used as a synonym for swearing, however Widdecombe chooses to use both. In doing so she differentiates between swearing, as in the use of offensive words, and profanity, which is 'the abuse of anything sacred' (Montagu, 2001: 102). This gives the sentence a much stronger sacrilegious tone. The use of profanity here is designed to highlight swearing as a religious, and therefore a moral, issue.

The use of children in this article creates a semantic frame of poor parenting and links to the metaphorical Strict Father/Nurturing Parent model that I discussed in 3.4. While the Nurturing Parent can be represented by the use of *free* and *casual*, the Strict Father becomes represented by the use of *sharply*. Both are at odds with each other because they have very different approaches to social obedience (Lakoff, 2004). Thus, the salient concepts drawn from this sentence are a sudden, painful change has resulted in an increasing lack of morals which is now threatening the wellbeing of children. The nurturance and well-being of children is a central theme in all cultures (Lakoff and Johnson, 1999) so swearing and casual profanity in the presence of children are likely to be interpreted as neglect instead of nurturance. Metaphorically it also suggests that society as a whole is failing the younger generation by not being a good, moral example. What is important to remember is that Widdecombe is making a bold assumption here that has no grounding in fact. There is no empirical evidence to support the claim that parents swear more in front of their children now than *decades ago*, however it is a powerful narrative

that is designed to blame poor parenting and poor social behaviour for the increase in swearing and draw on the universal human desire to be a good parent. As I pointed out in 3.6, when an argument is presented as if it is based on factual evidence, but the figures are exaggerated or fabricated, it can be a sign of a moral panic, as I will discuss in the next chapter.

A2. A muttered oath when you have driven a nail into your thumb will raise the eyebrows of only the most puritan but loud, coarse language in the street for no apparent reason will disgust even the most libertarian. *Article E13*

The religious tone continues in A2 with the use of *oath* and *puritan*. Neither of these are being used metaphorically but as cultural key words they contribute to the semantic field of SACRILEGE. As discussed in 2.2.1 the Puritans were a religious sect that strove for a more authentic and transparent religious practice that rejected the more liberal minded religions in favour of a far stricter regime (Burchett, 2018: 215). They considered many of the representations of religion, as in icons, rituals, priests etc., as themselves sacrilegious (Hunter, 2006: 109). However, they became characterised as being too strict and austere and today the term is more likely used in a pejorative way to characterize someone who does not appear to enjoy pleasure. It is being used here to describe someone who is more likely to take offence at the use of swearing and is contrasted against the libertarian, a philosophical belief that supports and defends free will, and as such, free speech even if it is rude. Figuratively speaking this is once again making a comparison between the Strict Father model, the Puritan, and the Nurturing Parent model, the Libertarian. However, even the nurturing libertarian apparently has limits to how much they will tolerate bad language. While on the one side Widdecombe gives permission for the use of swearing in pain, it is

only acceptable if it is *muttered*, so under the breath, or quietly. The salient mappings of being quiet would include the concepts of being shy, soft, soothing, reserved and placid. These introverted characteristics contrast significantly to the use of *loud* and *coarse*, which invoke more extroverted features such as being brash, vulgar, rude, agitated and troubled. The former represents a sense of control, the latter represents a lack of control. As I discussed in 3.5 keeping control and staying strong is an indicator of morality, UP, whereas losing control and being weak is a sign of immorality, DOWN.

As mentioned earlier, religious preaching often exhibits *bursts* of figurative language underlying a central root metaphor (Corts and Meyer, 2002: 391). The burst of theological terms used in the fourth paragraph of this article is reminiscent of a sermon.

A3. As for the Third Commandment, I doubt if anybody apart from serious practitioners of religion even knows what it is. The exclamatory use of the name of God is pretty much indistinguishable from common swear words and that of the Second Person of the Trinity is not far behind but I suspect references to the Headquarters of Perdition probably outstrip both. *Article E13*

The theological terms used here are not commonly used in everyday conversations. By creating a chain of biblical references, the article takes on an apostolic tone and cements the religious framework. The phrase *Headquarters of Perdition* is a tongue in cheek reference to the state of eternal punishment and damnation facing non-believers, more commonly known as Hell. Likewise, the use of the *Second Person of the Trinity* would normally be referred to as the Son of God, or Jesus Christ. The *Third Commandment* provides the original link between swearing and religiosity; 'You shall not take the name of

the Lord your God in vain' (Exodus 20:7). These references are not easily understood by anyone unfamiliar with scripture and so the article excludes the more secular reader. The deliberate ploy to separate the church goer from the non-religious creates the illusion of an elitist conversation and attempts to emphasise the moral credentials of the author (Tosi and Warmke, 2021). Another synonym for swearing is *blasphemy*.

#### A4. Blasphemy at breakfast is now a normal response to a dropped cornflake. *Article E13*

Blasphemy is a value-laden word to describe a crime that has allowed the persecution of religious dissent for centuries<sup>8</sup> and remained in English law until 2008 (Jeremy, 2003: 2). While blasphemy may no longer be a legal crime in the UK, there can still be heightened social anxieties about behaviour or language considered to be blasphemous and offensive. While other laws can be used in court to prosecute blasphemy, it is the control by non-legal means that can be more problematic<sup>9</sup> (Sandberg and Doe, 2008: 971). At first glance this is a simple joke that most people can identify with, especially those with children. The spilling of food or liquid, during breakfast when a family is attempting to get organised and ready for the day, can result in frustrated and angry mutterings. However, the use of *dropped*, as opposed to spilt, draws from the conceptual metaphor GOOD is UP and BAD is DOWN. Things that drop are succumbing to the force of gravity and symbolise a vertical downward motion. While the cereal itself is not directly at fault, the blasphemous reaction it causes becomes associated with the concept of something falling DOWN, which as I have discussed is strongly associated with the notion of BAD. Conceptual metaphors for morality often refer to the

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<sup>8</sup> Trials of blasphemy led to the execution of Socrates and Jesus Christ.

<sup>9</sup> The French satirical newspaper Charlie Hebdo was renowned for publishing reports and cartoons mocking all established religions, attracting world-wide controversy. In 2015 the headquarters of the newspaper were attacked by two gunmen shouting 'God is Great' in Arabic, leaving 12 people dead.

need for STRENGTH, both the strength to defeat evil but also the strength to maintain an upright and balanced posture (Lakoff and Johnson, 1999: 299). Morality is to stand above and resist the destructive force of gravity (Goatly, 2007: 199). In one sentence the analogy of a) something falling down and b) swearing about it indicates that swearing is a sign of losing control, which as discussed, is a symbol of immorality.

The kind of ethnocentric narrative found in Article E13 is designed to use religion as a means to separate the kind of people who use swear words, the *Other*, from those in society who find that language offensive, the *Self*. As I discussed in 3.3.2 the successful creation of Othering depends on a strong contrasted image between the *Other* and the *Self*. The saturation of the religious terminology signifies the *Self* as quiet, placid and devout in contrast to the imagined *Other*, who is portrayed as loud, brash and vulgar. The narrative also compares the metaphorical Strict Father, who mourns the change in society, to the liberal parenting of the Nurturing Parent, in order to establish a moral hierarchy. One of the keys to a moral panic is how the creation of a folk devil enables a moral confrontation between the respectable *Self* and the deviant *Other* (Maneri, 2013: 188) which I discuss in more detail in Chapter 6.

The theme of SACRILEGE continues with a letter from a member of the general public, written to the *Express* shortly after Sachsgate.

A5. We want BBC to adopt a more puritanical approach....we must consider our children's well-being and tighten up the obscenity laws and broadcasting code. The BBC's top managers fail to understand that most TV viewers and radio listeners are tired of lax standards and would prefer a more puritanical approach. *Article E2*

The use of puritanical is an interesting lexical choice. While its use, along with obscenity, once again creates the semantic field of religion and reinforces the relationship between swearing and sacrilege, it has a draconian tone. As I explained earlier, the Puritans were a religious reform movement that were known for living an austere life of religious piety. In modern times the concept of puritanism is more likely to refer to ‘anything which suggests strictness in morals, sobriety in conduct, piety in religion, thrift in business, diligence in work, or suspicion of pleasure’ (Burchett, 2018: 211). The standards are referred to as being *lax*, which is the opposite of a *puritanical approach*. Rather than strict and careful, lax is to be relaxed and loose, with a lack of self-control. The word lax can also be related to a loose movement of the bowels, one of many physical necessities that the Puritans found particularly disgusting<sup>10</sup> (Beck, 2008: 305). By calling for a *puritanical approach* the writer is deliberately taking a censorious moral attitude towards swearing. This is in line with the Strict Father model in that the family (society) needs protecting from the evils of the world. Moreover, he takes offence by proxy by claiming to be speaking on behalf of ‘most TV viewers and radio listeners’ (*Article E2*). As I explained in 3.7, pronouns such as *we*, *us* and *our*, can be used as a mechanism to infer a consensus amongst ‘the ordinary folk’ (Fowler, 2001: 49). This letter cautions that *we* should take joint responsibility for the well-being of *our* children. The creation of a unified group that shares concerns about the level of swearing identifies the *Self* and differentiates it from the *Other*. Similarly to Article E13, the well-being of the younger generation is being used to highlight the threat that swearing poses to society. The idea that children are at risk and need protecting reflects the Puritan

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<sup>10</sup> Physical necessities, such as urinating, defecating or menstruating, were considered by the Puritans to represent the vulnerability and depravity of the human body, which was an affront to ‘the aspirations of being transcendent spiritual creatures’ (Beck, 2008: 305).

movement as well as drawing from Lakoff's Strict Father model again. The Puritans produced major commentaries on God's will for marriage and parenting. In particular, there was often reference to children and sin with instructions on how to deal with rebellious children through strict authority and prayer (Beeke and Smalley, 2018: 232). The idea that children are born bad, because they are unable to separate feeling good to doing right, and so have to be made good through punishment is a key feature of Lakoff's Strict Father model (2004: 17). The writer goes on to qualify his credentials as the decent and respectable *Self*.

A6. I am constantly sifting through the TV listings to find something fit to watch. I cannot bear nudity, swearing and violence, but am constantly assailed by all three. Once standards slip, there is a continuous downward spiral. *Article E2*

In Chapter 2 I discussed how bad language is often conflated with other anti-social behaviours such as violence and aggression. The metaphorical use of *assailed*, which is to attack with physical violence, suggests that the three issues, nudity, swearing and violence, are physically assaulting the writer via his television. The writer becomes a victim whilst in the sanctity of his own home. The idea of swearing physically attacking the writer links it to two later conceptual metaphors; MILITARY ACTION and CROSSING A BOUNDARY, which I discuss in more depth in 5.4. As I noted earlier, morality is viewed as being upright and resisting gravity (Goatly, 2007: 199). The contrast between the laws that need to be *tightened up* and the standards that are *slipping* and continuing in a *downward spiral* are not only once again associating swearing with the conceptual metaphor BAD IS DOWN but also link to a lack of control and a lack morality.



A7. Profanity like this has no place in mainstream entertainment, it is crude and depraved. *Article E15*

This is from an opinion piece in the *Sunday Express* expressing outrage at a particular show, Channel 4's *Free Agents*, that again creates a sense of *Self* and *Other*. The use of *mainstream* is a deliberate attempt to create a sense of hierarchy. As a term *mainstream* usually refers to that of the majority. Mainstream television is ubiquitous and considered to be conventional, but it can also disenfranchise many socioeconomic and ethnic audiences (Kielwasser and Wolf, 1992). The proclamation that swearing does not belong in any television programme being broadcast to the *majority* audience is to suggest that the *majority* of people find swearing offensive. It is also, once again, taking offence by proxy and implies that swearing represents a threat to the social order by appearing where it is not welcome, thus crossing a boundary. The hierarchy between the profanity and the audience is backed up with the use of *crude* and *depraved*. *Depraved* is 'to make morally bad; to pervert, debase or corrupt morally' (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021) so its use here is designed to link profanity with immorality. The overarching concept here is that the audience of mainstream television, the *Self*, are morally superior to those who use profanity, the *Others*.

In this section I explored how the interaction between the semantic field of religion and discourses around swearing contribute to a conceptual metaphor SWEARING IS SACRILEGE. While I accept that the language was not always metaphorical I have argued that the use of analogy, cultural key words and framing also contribute to how certain characteristics become mapped to swearing through our experiential and cognitive understanding of religion as a concept. I have also explored how religious narratives contribute to *Othering*

and the conceptual metaphor BAD is DOWN and thereby reinforcing the concept that swearing is *bad language*. In the next section I look at how the source of magic, superstition and ritual are used to map to swearing to create the conceptual metaphor SWEARING is MAGICAL POWER.

### 5.2.2 SWEARING is MAGICAL POWER

Superstition and magical ritual have long roots in religion and influence powerful emotions such as fear and desire for protection from harm. The word superstition is described as ‘religious belief considered to be irrational, unfounded, or based on fear or ignorance’ (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021). However, despite the fact that superstition is generally regarded as folklore, most people have a general propensity to be superstitious. The act of knocking on wood, for example, is now one of the most common superstitious rituals in Western Society (Keinan, 2002: 102-103). One explanation for this is the illusion of control that superstitious behaviours provide. Studies show that there is a heightened need for magical ritual during times of uncertainty and stress (Carlson et al., 2009: 692). Even though people who engage in superstitious behaviours readily admit that their behaviour is irrational, they find it difficult to stop or modify their behaviour which suggests that superstition serves a particularly strong need. Research has found that this need is ‘the need for control’ (Keinan, 2002: 107). It would appear that superstition is about attempting to control situations that feel powerless or uncertain, linking it to the concept of controlling chaos and disorder.

In this section I explore the relationship between swearing and two particular sacral terms that are often associated with swearing; *taboo* and *cursing*. Taboo has an ancient

provenance that is steeped in religious superstition and, as discussed in Chapter 2, it is often used as a synonym for swearing. Its meaning at its simplest is *to forbid* in an effort to proscribe behaviours that were deemed to be demonic and dangerous in early cultures (Allan and Burridge, 2006: 5). The restriction on certain behaviours can sometimes seem logical. From an evolutionary point of view, rules against incest ensure a healthy lineage by avoiding genetic disorders. It is also a scientific fact that communities remain healthier when human waste is separated from residential areas (Allan and Burridge, 2006: 9). However, the connection between swearing and the bodily effluvia that it routinely references is incomplete as it fails to include religious cursing, references to body parts and sexual intercourse (Beck, 2009: 295). Moreover, the forbidding of sexual intercourse would be an evolutionary disaster for the human species. This suggests that the link between taboo behaviours and language is not based on science but stems from a time when words were not considered to be arbitrary, instead there was believed to be a real and substantial bond uniting the word and the meaning (Frazer, 1974: 322). Its power lies in the dread of a supernatural penalty, a danger that 'is not less real because it is imaginary; imagination acts upon a man as really as does gravitation and may kill him as certainly as a dose of prussic acid' (Frazer, 1974: 295). Indeed, the renowned anthropologist, Sir James Frazer, wrote of recorded cases 'in which persons who had unwittingly broken a taboo actually died of terror on discovering their fatal error' (Frazer, 1875: 17). This is closely linked to the power of the curse, which is based on the same principle. Ancient societies believed that magic could be inflicted upon a person just by saying their name (Frazer, 1974: 322). Likewise, the act of cursing can initiate a self-fulfilling prophecy in the victim. Both taboo and curse rely on the belief that certain thoughts, words or behaviours 'can achieve specific physical effects in a manner not governed by the principles of ordinary transmission of energy or information'

(Zusne and Jones, 1989: 13). As a result, such words were avoided so as to protect the individual and society from the unconscious and irrational anxieties of punishment from a supernatural entity (Montagu, 2001: 302). It is widely accepted today that the relationship between signifier and signified is arbitrary however, the belief that a word is somehow *dirty* or *dangerous* because of its denotative meaning persists.

A8. He was obviously trying to keep up with fellow potty-mouthed chef, Gordon Ramsay...the very title of whose hit show, the F-word, seeks to celebrate his casual and repeated use of a word that was once completely taboo. *Article E3*

A9. In the Fifties and Sixties it became common-place to hear the word “bloody” but it was mainly used by men and seldom uttered in mixed company. The f-word was like the atom bomb, kept strictly under wraps and was only threatened to be deployed in absolute emergencies, while the c-word was taboo. *Article E20*

Taboo is being used here in the literal sense of something that is forbidden but it creates a clear mapping between the use of swear words and the threat of supernatural penalty. The articles also use other theological terms such as *Hallelujah*, *tempted*, *profanities* and *obscenity*, creating a semantic field of religion that reinforces the concept of swearing being something irreligious. In both these instances a previous era is once again being referred to as a time when life was politer and thus, somehow, better. However, nostalgic memory bias can be deceptive (Morewedge, 2013). The reflection here to the Fifties and Sixties chooses to overlook other activities that were considered to be taboo at the time, such as homosexuality and abortion, which are more readily accepted in modern society.

Taboo has a close relationship with the concept of the curse because they both stem from an ancient fear of the supernatural (Montagu, 2001: 36). Cursing is so often used as a synonym for swearing that it has become interchangeable (*ibid*: 35). However, there is a difference between the two. The curse, in its literal sense, is to utter a malediction designed to consign a person or thing to the mercy of the Gods and is infused with the same religious force as the spell and the charm (Hughes, 1998: 4). As Montagu so elegantly puts it, swearing is from the lips but cursing is from the heart (2001: 35). It is the difference between *Damn it!* And *Damn you!* The ritualistic appeal to a higher being to invoke a punishment on someone does not necessarily rely on foul language. However, just as spells no longer hold much power in these more secular times, the curse is now demystified into mere words for most of Western society (Hughes, 1998: 5).

A10. Stop curse of obscenity. *Article E9*

A11. Swearing has now become the curse of modern British life, with the vast majority of us no longer offended by bad language, according to shocking new research. *Article E10a*

A12. How swearing is now the curse of modern Britain. *Article E10b*

In these examples *curse* is being used metaphorically. In context it is being used as a social problem that needs controlling, but the basic meaning of curse is an utterance designed to cause physical or spiritual harm. It is also being used as a pun in that there is a double meaning to the word. On the one hand it can be read as a synonym for swearing. However, it is simultaneously drawing on the magical cursing of spells, which is where it risks becoming problematic. When a source domain becomes so conflated with the target domain that the mapping process changes from metaphoric to literal, it can lead to

dangerous misinterpretations (Cunningham-Parmeter, 2011: 1556). Because curse is such a well-known synonym for swearing the metaphor risks being interpreted as literal by the reader. Metaphorical language has the power to control how we think about a subject (Winter, 1988: 1383). If swearing becomes conceptualised as a literal curse, it creates a source domain of something that is accepted as a means of doing harm to someone. Like taboo, the curse survives from an ancient belief in word magic that makes it powerful and dangerous (Hughes, 1998: 7). When curse is used in its literal form it is considered to be serious and threatening (Wajnryb, 2005: 18) reinforcing the view that swearing is dangerous and subsequently something to be feared. The examples above create a conceptual metaphor SWEARING is PLACING A CURSE. Our conceptual understanding of a curse is that it has the power to cause harm, which leads to the concept that SWEAR WORDS CAUSE HARM. When considering the old adage, sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me, conflating swear words with placing a curse gives them the force of the sticks and stones. In Chapter 2 I discussed how attitudes towards swearing are often based on making certain inferences about the person using the swear words, from social class to level of education to emotional state (McEnry, 2006: 1). The risk of uniting swearing with the source domain of CURSE is that it inevitably leads to dangerous and harmful characteristics being applied to a person who uses swear words. Of course, swearing can be used in intimidating and threatening situations but this fact should not be extended to a belief that everyone who uses swear words are out to intimidate and threaten. Moreover, in modern times we know for a fact that the words themselves are incapable of inflicting physical harm. If the source domain of CURSE leads to a PERSON WHO SWEARS is DANGEROUS and someone to be FEARED it risks demonising people who happen to use swear words as part of their everyday speech, creating the *Other*. The use of *modern* in A12, therefore, is

slightly ironic given our current understanding of superstition and magic and the arbitrariness of language. It also presents another memory bias that suggests that modern Britain is somehow worse off than the past.

Having explored how swearing is associated with the concept of magical ritual, which can stimulate fear and suspicion of swearing, I would finally like to illustrate how the link between swearing and behaviour that is considered a violation of a divine or moral code creates a conceptual metaphor SWEARING is SIN.

### 5.2.3 SWEARING is SIN

Religious ethics dictate that any sin, that is any transgression of God and divine law, is punishable by being condemned to Hell. However, there does not need to be a religious affiliation for sin, and its punishment, to exist. Morally, we are expected to obey certain rules and laws, and the failure to do so dictates another kind of punishment. Rather than the external concept of Hell, the punishments for moral violations are internal; that is shame, guilt and compromised self-respect (Lakoff and Johnson, 1999: 321). Some scholars argue that there is a difference between shame and guilt. Shame-related values were seemingly introduced during the Christianization of England and are more closely linked to the fear of being separated or ostracised from our care takers (Creighton, 1990: 285). Guilt, on the other hand, is motivated by a fear of punishment and retribution, rather than abandonment (*ibid*: 285). This suggests that shame precedes guilt, likely because it is experienced early in infancy. It would appear that child rearing sanctions that are grounded in separation, such as being removed from an activity and left for a time, are more shameful than physical reprimands such as smacking. The real or expected threat of being distanced

from a group, and thus being placed in an inferior position within that group, is enough to stimulate shame. Guilt follows if this deviation from the group standards comes to the attention of group members, resulting in punishment (Diaz-Vera, 2014: 286). While both emotions can be attributed to using bad language, I propose that the conceptual metaphor SWEARING is SACRILEGE is drawing from a threat of an external punishment from a higher source, thus *guilt*, whereas SWEARING is SIN is an internalised feeling of inadequacy within a social group, thus *shame*. Extreme levels of guilt and shame can be maladaptive and there can be consequences in trying to shame members of a group, especially for things out of their control, such as hair colour, eating habits or whether they are right or left-handed.

In this section I explore the use of terminology designed to create the concept of swearing being ‘a violation of some religious or moral principle’ (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021) and thereby mapping swearing with the stereotype of a sinner. As discussed in 3.6 stereotypes can be problematic because they structure a knowledge and an expectancy about some human social group (Mackie et al., 1996: 42).

A13. Barrage of swearing that shames Britain. *Article E21*

A14. Roll call of shame. *Article E7b*

As discussed earlier, shame stems from a fear of being ostracised. Its use in these examples initiates the concept that the use of swearing should be driven out of society. A13 is the headline of an article reporting another market research study that revealed that a third of us were subjected to a swear word every five minutes. Although the study reported that 83 per cent of the 1000 people polled found swearing offensive, it also confirmed that 9 out of 10 people admitted swearing ‘at least occasionally’ (*Article E21*). In 3.4 I noted that



metaphors can be used to mislead as well as to enlighten (Cunningham-Parameter, 2011: 1556) and this headline is a good example of how the use of hyperbole can reinforce an argument. When taking into account the low number of participants in the survey (1000 people out of a population of over 60 million) the claim of a *barrage of swearing* can be seen as a slight exaggeration. As I will discuss in 6.3.1, exaggeration and distortion are key elements to a moral panic.

Shame can be accompanied by physiological changes, such as a redness in the face, a lowering of the head and upper body and a cognitive confusion (Diaz-Vera, 2014: 79). In A13 Britain is used metonymically to represent the UK culture, and also as a personification, and shame is being used as a verb creating an easy mapping between Britain as a person and the physiological reaction to swearing as if the country itself should *hang its head*. The need to lower the body and become smaller is also mapping to an orientational metaphor of going DOWN, which as I discussed in 3.5 can link to the conceptual metaphor of DOWN is BAD. A14 was reporting an investigation that the *Sunday Express* undertook into television standards. Over the timescale of two and a half hours the reporter watched a variety of comedy programmes whilst recording instances of bad language. The tabloids have a tendency to create lists as a rhetorical strategy that is easy for the reader to absorb (Conboy, 2006: 16). The *roll call of shame* was referring to a list of shows with swear word use totals. Five shows were listed with a total of 81 swear words recorded, however, the listing was ambiguous. The list identified between three and four offenses per show with totals in bold, so that a skim read would result in thinking that they all referred to swearing. However, within the text of the article the categories were clarified as the 'f-word' (16), 'other swear words' (18), 'sexual innuendos' (26), 'graphic sexual references' (9) and 'other

comments of an offensive nature, including jokes on paedophilia, immigration and sexual harassment' (13). The other swear words are not identified so the reader is unable to distinguish whether that count includes the less offensive terms such as *bloody* or *damn* (OfCom, 2016: 40). Moreover, the identified programmes were all adult comedy shows which ran after the watershed and had reputations for rude and controversial humour, so the use of sexual innuendo and sick jokes was unlikely to offend the typical viewer.

However, by creating a list in this way it catches the eye of the reader, delivers ambiguous statistics on the use of swearing on television, and disguises the reality within the copy of the text. The offences are also referred to as 'uncensored scenes', suggesting that they should have been edited, and state that the 'TV bosses should have been ashamed to broadcast' the shows (*Article E7b*), reiterating the whole sense of shame.

*Roll call* was originally a military term, referring to the calling off a list of names in order to check attendance. Its use here, alongside *shame*, is to call off a list of shows that have ignored 'the public's demands to clean up programmes' (*Article E7b*). This combination creates an intense sense of rule breaking and moral wrongdoing, like children being presented to an assembly before they get expelled. The result was presented as 'television executives...cynically disregarding the public outcry over falling standards' singling out Channel 4 as the worst offender, with the BBC a close second with '36 instances that were highly likely to offend normal, decent people' (*Article E7b*). The use of *falling standards* once again links to the conceptual metaphor DOWN IS BAD. The use of *public outcry* creates the effect of unity between the paper and the public and the use of *normal, decent people* implies that anyone who does not find the programme offensive is not normal or decent. Once again, *Othering* is occurring between the normal, decent *Self* and the not so decent

*Other.* The shame theme continues with a direct link to the presenter that was involved in Sachsgate.

A15. Russell Brand's Ponderland on Channel 4 was the ultimate sinner with 25 appalling incidents in just 30 minutes. *Article E7b*

The use of *ultimate sinner* reinforces the concept of sin and shame. When something is ultimate it is final and there can be no further development, and the ultimate sin, blasphemy against God, is considered to be unforgiveable leading to an eternity in Hell (Matthew 12: 31-32). While it appears that the programme *Ponderland* is being accused of being the sinner, the presenter is deliberately mentioned so that he is guilty by association. It is not surprising that they have named him as the 'findings come just weeks after the Russell Brand and Jonathan Ross Radio 2 scandal' (*Article E7b*). However, the *appalling incidents* are not identified. Instead the article claims that '16 of the words he chose are considered by OfCom, the TV watchdog, to be the most offensive language in the English dictionary' (*Article E7b*). The use of *English dictionary* gives authority to the statement and links to the notion that people who use swear words lack education. OfCom received one complaint for offensive language regarding Ponderland, which was not upheld (2008: 63).

A16. A generation ago, it was regarded as shameful when even mild expletives were said in public. *Article E9*

A16 uses the adjective *shameful* to intensify the level of shame. Again, the memory bias is evident in the comparison between generations with the implication that the younger generation is worse. Similarly to the previous example, the words are not identified but are instead referred to as *mild expletives* which leaves the interpretation to the reader. As I

discussed in Chapter 2 levels of offensiveness are subjective and can vary widely between generations so it is difficult to make assumptions about which expletives would be considered mild twenty or thirty years previously. However, the sentence makes its message clear. Using swear words, however mild, is shameful behaviour and does not belong in the public domain. Moreover, the alleged increase in swearing rates is blamed on a generational divide, implying that the younger generation do not have the respect and manners of their predecessors. As I shall discuss in the next chapter many moral panics stem from the concept that the younger generation is at risk somehow and that this 'presents a problem for social regulation and the reproduction of social order' (Thompson, 1998: 43).

A slightly surprising find, considering that swearing is portrayed as a violation of a religious or moral principle, is that the word *moral* only appears once in the data.

A17. Is there a chink of moral daylight on the horizon? *Article M6*

This is taken from another letter written in by a member of the public. As I explained in 3.7 letters pages illustrate the assumed community between the reader and the newspaper institution. They are also often used to seemingly construct a dialogue between the readers and the newspaper whilst simultaneously ensuring that the ideological position of the paper is legitimised (Conboy, 2006: 20). This particular letter was one of several that were editorially themed around the issue of swearing on television with the headline *End foul-mouthed TV*. Seven letters were published, with a total of 324 words, five supporting the paper's position and two questioning the issue. Key words such as *decency*, *taste* and *wholesome* are used to motivate an ideological frame of good behaviour versus the *foul* and

the *bad* behaviour that is causing all the *uproar*. This ensures that the reader not only understands the moral issues at stake but is more likely to identify with the morally good behaviour of the *Self* as opposed to the immoral behaviour of the *Other*.

The use of daylight on the horizon builds an image of the sun rising, implying that the dark of night is passing. The perceptual symbols of dark and light are deeply established conceptual metaphors that stem from ancient religious writings (Beeke and Smalley, 2018). Light and white are associated with happiness and purity, while dark and black is linked to sadness and impurity (Goatly, 2007; Yu, 2015). Dark is also considered to be dirtier and more contaminating than light (Kubie, 1932). In line with the theory of conceptual metaphors, this is arguably based on a physiological reality. The change in seasonal light directly affect our levels of serotonin and melatonin, bringing on depression and melancholy during darker months and dispelling the gloom as spring returns (Rifkin, 1987: 42-53). We are also diurnal as a species so we are at our most vulnerable during the night when we cannot see as well, reinforced with media reports of an increase in criminality at night, leading to a justifiable concern regarding the dark. However, here the daylight is being associated with morals, linking it to an ideology that LIGHT is GOOD and DARK is BAD. This ideology is often played upon within the visual arts, with scenes designed to scare us being darker, representing 'the visual image of the conflict between good and evil' (Arnheim, 1969: 313). The use of *moral daylight* draws a neat parallel between swearing and things that lurk in the dark, creating a sense of danger and threat, reinforcing the grounding that swearing is fundamentally IMMORAL and BAD and something to be feared.

To conclude this section, I have argued that the cluster of religiosity stems from a conceptual mapping of the source domains SACRILEGE, MAGICAL POWER and SIN to the target

domain of swearing. I have also evidenced how the use of a religious narrative strives to shame people who swear which contributes to a sense of *Othering* by dividing those who find swearing offensive (*Self*) from those who do not (*Other*). In terms of ideology and attitude, the conceptual metaphors based on religious authority and fear of supernatural punishment is likely to create a stereotype of swearing as behaviour that is defiant of the Establishment, that is God and/or the Strict Father. I will discuss in Chapter 7 whether the creation of an insubordinate *Other* might have problematic consequences such as encouraging discriminatory attitudes towards people who swear. The old proverb *cleanliness is next to godliness* is often used to highlight the intricate link between religious practice and the act of washing, both ritual and actual. As such, the next section looks at how metaphors related to hygiene and cleansing contribute to the discourse around swearing.

### 5.3 Hygiene

Hygiene relates to the maintenance of all aspects of sanitation and preserving good health. It stands to reason then that challenges to hygiene, such as filth and dirt, would become a threat to hygiene and become a cause of concern for a civilised society with developed rules around hygienic practice. As I discussed in 3.5 there is a strong link between hygiene, or bodily purity, and morality that stems from religious ceremony and ritual (Zhong and Lijenquist, 2006: 1451). Thus, any challenges to hygiene also become a challenge to moral order (Douglas, 2002; Lizardo 2012). The link between cleanliness and moral judgements leads to the conceptual metaphor GOOD is CLEAN and BAD is DIRTY (Gibbs, 2011: 542).

The cluster of Hygiene includes the source domains of FILTH and FOUL, both of which also provide the conceptual basis for SWEARING is DISEASE. In this section I will also introduce the source domain of CONTAINER that is under threat of being exposed to contamination, which also links to the conceptual metaphor SWEARING is CROSSING A BOUNDARY, which I discuss in 5.4.3.

### 5.3.1 SWEARING is FILTH

*Dirty or filthy* words have been a descriptor for swearing for centuries (Montagu, 1967, Hughes 1998, Silverton 2009). Our concept of dirt and filth centres on two things; the need for hygiene and also, the need that conventions are respected (Douglas, 2002: 8). When considering how metaphorical language stems from a physical and cultural background it is clear that our understanding of dirt and filth is driven by our early years when we are routinely reminded that clean is rewarded and dirty is punished. As young children most of us will happily explore our environment with our hands, plunging them into mud and soil to feel, and sometimes taste. This is a crucial function in growing resistance against disease (Bogard, 2017). But as we grow older we are taught that there are times when dirt is not acceptable. We are instructed to wash our hands before eating and we are reprimanded for bringing something dirty into a home, like muddy wellies or a decaying frog. We begin to learn that the term *filth* is a form of condemnation and an intimate relationship develops between dirt and the concept of danger, contamination and shame (Kubie, 1932: 393).

In modern times, hygiene and dirt avoidance is dominated by the knowledge of bacterial transmission of disease that developed in the nineteenth century (Douglas, 2002: 44). This created a cultural norm in the West to use the threat of impaired health to the younger

generation to encourage adherence to cleanliness routines. However, early perceptions of dirt and contagion had little to do with a fear of pathogenic organisms and a lot more to do with more profound themes such as 'being to non-being, form to formlessness, life to death' (*ibid*: 7). Many things that are considered to be dirty are simply things OUT OF PLACE; 'food is not dirty in itself, but it is dirty to leave cooking utensils in the bedroom, or food bespattered on clothing' (Douglas, 2002: 45). Filth is as much about disorder as it is about dirt. I discuss the relationship between filth and dirt being MATTER OUT OF PLACE in more detail in 5.4.

Filth was repeatedly found in the headlines. As discussed in 3.7 headlines are used to dictate the narrative and form 'the lens through which the remainder of the story is viewed' (Bell, 1999: 152). And it is sometimes the case that the reader chooses not to read the whole story but forms an opinion simply by decoding the headline (van Dijk, 2009: 144).

A18. Shared fury at that telly filth. *Article M4*

A19. Viewers' fury at TV pair's filthy language. *Article M13*

The use of filth in both these examples is figurative and, because there is a more basic current-contemporary meaning (the transference of dirt or unclean matter) to its use here as a synonym for bad language, it can also be agreed as metaphorical (Pragglejaz Group, 2007). The reader is able to process that the filth referred to is not a washing commercial or other cleaning product but is referring to language, and behaviour, that is considered offensive. The use of *fury*, rather than other synonyms such as anger, is not necessarily metaphorical as no doubt some viewers were indeed furious. It also creates stylistic alliteration for the headline. However, fury is an extreme, out of control form of anger



described as a 'frenzied rage' (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021) thus once more associating the filth, or swearing, with out of control, aggressive behaviour. Moreover, the frenzied rage appears to be a justified reaction to the filthy language because it is a reflection of the core disgust that filth induces (Rozin et al., 1999: 575). Both headlines create a sense of *Othering* by alluding to a consensus amongst the infuriated and highlighting the unity between the general public and the newspaper campaign. In A18 the use of *shared* creates an in-group made from people in *high places*, listing politicians, telly stars and 'ITV supremo Michael Grade' (*Article M4*) lending the piece a sense of authority and power. In A19 the *Self* is the viewers themselves and the *Other* is referring to a well-known and popular presenter duo known as Ant and Dec. The couple are normally known for family friendly, prime time shows which the article refers to as 'family favourites famed for their squeaky-clean image' (*Article M13*), a direct contrast to the filth. However, in this particular instance the presenters were accused of 'turning the air blue' with a 'foul-mouthed live telly outburst' (*Article M13*). As I discussed in Chapter 2, the use of swearing by someone who is normally perceived as morally upstanding can cause more offence.

A20.        Negligent C4 bosses must pull the plug on this filth. *Article E15*

As I discussed in 3.5 the concept of a container is often used to distinguish between the threat and the threatened. In A20 the image-schema of a bath being emptied is used to metaphorically cleanse the television. A plug is used in a sink or bath (a CONTAINER) to retain water in order to wash or bathe. This obviously has a close relationship with the concept of filth as water can literally wash it away. It is also another crossover with the Religiosity cluster as many major religions consider that the act of physical washing with

water can purify the soul (Zhong and Lijenquist, 2006: 1451)<sup>11</sup>. The act of cleansing in water transfers the dirt from the person to the water and thus it is the water, and not the person, that is dirty and requires throwing away. In most developed countries, the water that leaves the container then travels along a series of drains and conduits, invariably in a downward trajectory, to the sewer. The metaphors of filth and muck relate more towards the concept of dry filth; dirt and mud that can be washed away. However, the next two metaphors that I explore, *gutter* and *sewer*, enter the realm of wet filth, a slimy dirt that harbours pollution and contamination.

A21. An investigation by the Sunday Express reveals more than 80 instances where standards slumped to the gutter as producers desperately tried to boost viewing figures. *Article E7b*

A22. From the gutter straight to your living room. *Article E10b*

A gutter is either a 'shallow trough fixed under the eaves of a roof' or a 'hollowed channel running at the side of a street' (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021) both of which are designed to carry away fluid and other waste products. The gutter has a long history with filth, both literal and figurative. Things that end up in the gutter become worthless or damaged which has led to it being used to refer negatively to ruination, failure or waste. Being *in the gutter* is an idiom for failing in life. The *gutter press* is often used to refer to the more sensationalised tabloid newspapers. A *gutter snipe* is a low-class child, a street urchin, probably homeless and invariably a criminal. Things that metaphorically end up in the

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<sup>11</sup> It is worth noting that washing the body with water was not always seen as a sign of hygiene due to fears of waterborne plagues and contagions entering the body through the skin (Cohen and Johnson, 2004: xviii), but as sanitation systems evolved so cleansing the body with water grew in popularity.

gutter need to be removed for the physical and moral health of civilised society. Its position on the street also lends itself to the orientational metaphor of *slumped* used in A21, as opposed to the use of *boost*, which once again links to the conceptual metaphor DOWN is BAD. The living room, a room with walls and a ceiling, can also be seen as a CONTAINER that is being invaded. Our conceptual knowledge of a gutter is such that anything said to be coming from it is bound to be rather unpleasant. Therefore, the conceptual mapping suggests that the living space, which should be safe and hygienic, is under threat from something that could contaminate and cause harm. I will discuss the risk to boundaries in more depth in 5.4.3.

Wet dirt is deeply embedded in Judeo-Christian traditions as being associated with evil and sin, with bogs and quagmires often used in literature as symbols of danger and doom (Duncan, 1996). The sixteenth century preacher and writer John Bunyan described the Slough of Despond in his book *The Pilgrim's Progress* as a slimy bog where scum and filth and sin descend. The main protagonist, a Christian, is slowly absorbed by the bog until he is saved by a character called Help, symbolizing 'the state of moral turpitude into which an individual has sunk' (Duncan, 1996: 133). Associating swearing with the sewer provides an inextricable link between swear words and filth, but also with sin, loss of control, being devoured and repulsion. As discussed in 3.7 headlines influence how a story is interpreted, so the use of sewer in a headline is certain to create a swift mapping between swearing and filth.

A23. TV's in the sewer. *Article M8a*

A24. Language of the sewer. *Article E22*

Our basic social knowledge of the sewer is as an underground space that deals with waste disposal. While it undoubtedly offers potential benefits for preserving public health by controlling and containing human waste, the sewer is also seen as a contaminant because of the matter it deals with. Anything that is said to be *in the sewer* is to 'define it as a waste product of the world above it' (Pike, 2005: 51) and as such it will also stimulate visceral reactions of disgust and revulsion, both of which are powerful emotions (Ekman, 2003). The sewer has a long-established symbolic link with the criminal underworld and is often used as a metaphor for social outcasts and other disadvantaged members of society, such as prostitutes (Lewis, 2016: 271). Therefore, the feelings of disgust for the sewer as a CONTAINER of human waste are easily transferred to those who already find themselves marginalised from society. Again, the location of the sewer as underground, so beneath civilisation, creates a link between the disgust towards the sewer and the orientational metaphor DOWN is BAD. The use of sewer was found repeatedly in the data because of a statement made by the MP Denis MacShane during a debate in the House of Commons.

A25. An angry MP blasted TV chiefs yesterday for turning our airwaves into a "sewer" of bad language. *Article M8a*

A26. Why has British broadcasting got to be in the linguistic sewer of our great language? *Article M8a*

A27. In the Commons on Monday Labour MP Dennis MacShane blasted TV chiefs for the amount of bad language on our airwaves. He asked: "Why has British broadcasting got to be in the linguistic sewer?" *Article M9*

A28. Defying MPs who have accused broadcasters of turning the airwaves into a "sewer", C4's programming boss was unrepentant yesterday. *Article M10*

A29. Broadcasters have been accused of dragging TV into the sewer. *Article M11*

A30. Senior Labour MP Dennis MacShane last week said TV had been turned into a “sewer” of bad language. *Article M13*

In 3.7 I considered how the credibility of a voice and level of authority can be established by the use of empowering titles. The use of a *senior* member of parliament in the above examples is designed to create an authoritative message around swearing. The statement occurred during a Commons debate around the digital switchover that began in 2007 and concerns regarding language after the watershed. As I also discussed in 3.7, journalists and editors will make decision regarding which quotes to embed in their narratives and this can often reflect the political leaning of the paper. While the *Mirror* chose to run with the quote by the labour MP Dennis MacShane, the *Express* chose a different quote from the same debate by the conservative MP John Whittingdale, which I discuss in 5.4.1 (Example A43). Although the statement in the Commons happened once, the persistent embedding within narratives over several days is a typical tactic of journalism to create the illusion of new information and thus imply a ‘wave of incidents’ (Maneri, 2013: 184). And while the journalist has used descriptors such as *blasted* to describe the MPs tone of voice, linking the target domain to the later conceptual metaphor of MILITARY INVASION, the exchange was arguably one of the more civilised Commons debates with his statement referred to as being ‘eloquently expressed’ (Hansard HC Deb, 10 November 2008). The reader is encouraged to draw from the salient concepts of a sewer, with connotations of filth, contamination and disease, but the use of the verb *dragged* creates a deliberate image-schema metaphor that intensifies the schematic mapping of a sewer. The act of dragging something often involves some kind of physical force, either because the thing is awkward

or heavy, or it is being dragged without consent. Animals drag their prey to dens. The visual of a human being dragged is one of violence and punishment. Thus, the metaphor of the television being dragged into the sewer not only creates an image of something being forcibly taken but also, because the sewer is literally below the streets, it once again links to the concept of DOWN IS BAD. I will discuss how positions of authority are used to highlight the gravity of the problem of swearing in more depth in 6.4.

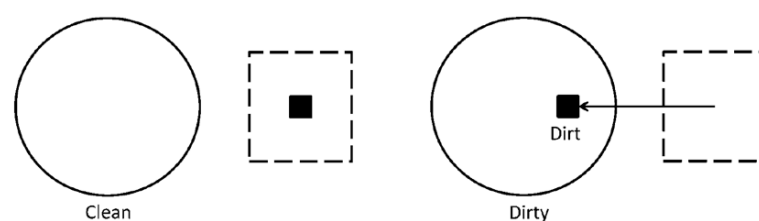
The blurring between swearing and filth creates the concept that the control of swearing will result in a cleaner, and thus more moral, society. In the next section I consider a word that has a close association with filth but, as I will argue, has slightly different connotations.

### 5.3.2 SWEARING IS FOUL

The etymological roots of the English word *foul* lie in the German *faul* and *faulnis*, which refers to decomposition, putrefaction and decay (Hamlin, 2005: 4), leading to the rather visceral description of being ‘grossly offensive to the senses, revolting, loathsome, stomach-churning’ (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021). However, unlike its synonym filth, which as a structural metaphor can be physically touched and seen, such as mud or litter, foul is a more abstract concept. Rather than a physical representation of filth, foul tends to be a descriptor. Smells, foods, places and people can all be described as foul with an instant understanding of what is meant. In figurative context foul is often used to reference ‘moral or spiritual corruption’ (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021) and when language is referred to as foul it means that it is ‘offensive or obscene’ (*ibid*). In the data swear words are often referred to as *foul language* (13) and *foul talk* (1) and the people who use the words are often referred to as *foul-mouthed* (12).

For a conceptual metaphor to be successful there has to be a central knowledge about the source domain that is widely shared and accepted (Neagu, 2013: 35). Similarly to filth, the mapping between the source domain of foul and the target domain of swearing is designed to create an association of something grossly offensive to the senses. However, I propose that there is a difference between these two source domains. In 3.5 I considered the conceptual metaphor the BODY is a CONTAINER. The human body 'is an entity with an interior and an exterior separated by a boundary where the preponderant movement is to come in and out of the container' (Poppi and Urios-Aparisi, 2018: 297). Filth exists outside the container and only becomes problematic when it either crosses a boundary or comes into contact with something that is clean. For example, soil is an imperative part of our ecological system brimming with essential nutrients for life as well as providing stimulation for our immune systems (Bogard, 2017). However, once it is on the hands or brought indoors it is transformed into filth or dirt. It becomes MATTER OUT OF PLACE.

*Figure 2: Filth as MATTER OUT OF PLACE*



*A previously neutral ENTITY becomes dirt once it crosses a BOUNDARY and enters a CONTAINER which it does not belong to. The container is now dirty and the entity becomes MATTER OUT OF PLACE (Lizardo, 2012: 37).*

Metaphors that relate to the risk of contamination, such as filth and dirt, are then to be repelled and viewed as a violation of the sacred boundary of self. However, I argue that, when referring to language, the target domain of foul moves in the other direction. As I

discussed in 3.5, when the human body is represented as a container, the language that leaves it can also be conceptualised as individual containers that physically move and are unpacked by the recipient (Charteris-Black, 2006: 575). Rather than being external to the container, as in filth, when the source domain of foul is mapped on to the target of language it suggests that foul language exists within the container and is omitted via an aperture; the mouth. In opening and deciphering the foul language, the recipient is then at risk of contamination. In his paper *The Fantasy of Dirt*, Kubie describes the human body as a *cistern*, with avenues of approach that are 'dirty holes leading into dirty spaces' (1932: 394). With the exception of tears, he argues that Western society has developed a view that anything that travels through these dirty avenues becomes tainted and foul. This is clearly displayed in social attitudes towards bodily fluids such as excrement, phlegm, menstrual blood, semen etc., which, upon leaving the body, becomes something 'filthy, shameful, and private' (Cohen and Johnson, 2004: xiv). Whereas, because tears are not related to the bodily functions of procreation or digestions they are seen as symbols of purification and cleansing despite still leaving the body via an orifice (Douglas, 2002: 155). The obvious crossover between swearing and foul is the fact that swear words very often refer to the previously mentioned bodily fluids that modern society considers to be distasteful, for example, *shit* and *piss*. However, other bodily fluids, such as *puke* or *spit*, do not register as a swear word despite the activity also risking the spread of disease. Moreover, the fact that there are polite synonyms, such as excrement and urine, highlights the disparity between words considered to be foul and words that are acceptable.

A31. We applaud the decision to cut out the foul talk next time Oliver makes a programme. *Article M18*



A32. Now it is common to hear the foulest terms uttered quite casually by people who neither know nor care that they are causing offence. *Article E9*

A33. The rise of foul language is one of the vilest aspects of modern life. *Article E22*

In these three examples *talk*, *terms* and *language* are all described as foul, all of which exit the CONTAINER via the mouth. In A31 the call for the foul talk to be *cut out* loans the metaphor a medieval mapping. The removal of a tongue, either as punishment or torture, ensured that the victim was rendered mute. Indeed, under the Puritan laws of Cromwell people paid dearly for swearing. One such case was that of a man by the name of Boutholmey who, when found guilty of uttering a profanity in March 1649, 'was condemned to have his tongue bored with a red-hot iron' (cited in Montagu, 2001: 167). The metaphorical mapping here is designed to suggest that swear words should be *muted*. The piece, which is an editorial, continues to say 'our campaign to curb swearing on television gives a voice to decent people who are fed up at the abuse beamed into their homes' (*Article M18*). There is a clearly defined *Self* with the *voice* being given to *decent* people, as opposed to the *Other*, who uses *foul talk* and thus should be *muted*. Again, the abuse is being beamed into their homes, suggesting the crossing of a boundary, which I discuss in more depth in 5.4.3. The use of the verb *utter* in A32 not only refers to the sound of people swearing but also creates a link to the idea of the BODY is a CONTAINER, from which the words leave. The use of *foulest terms* to describe the language being used ensures a mapping between swearing and a source domain of something unhygienic, stomach churning and revolting. And the *Other* is presented as someone who is socially inept for not realising that their language is offensive.

A33, another opinion piece, displays a classic example of Kubie's (1932) cistern metaphor, where the CONTAINER is overcome by the rise of foul language, spilling over into modern life and causing harm. Foul is accompanied with the adjective vilest, a term which is 'despicable on moral grounds; deserving to be regarded with abhorrence or disgust' (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021), thereby ensuring a successful mapping between swearing and a threat to moral order. This is affirmed with the later line 'a country full of people who cannot keep a civil tongue in their heads can hardly regard itself as civilised' (*Article E22*), thereby implying that swearing is the language of primitive, uncivilised societies; the *Other*. The tongue is also inside another container; the head. I will discuss the metaphorical mapping of something bursting out of a container or breaching a boundary in 5.4.3.

The avenue of approach that allows this foul language to escape, rise and be uttered is the mouth itself. The mouth is an important orifice in the body, allowing us to ingest food and to verbally communicate. The taste receptor cells located within the mouth enable us to detect anything that might be harmful to the body. Idioms such as leaving a *bad taste* in the mouth or something being an *acquired taste*, reflect the behaviour of the mouth. *Bad mouthing* is often used in sports as a means to taunt and insult the opposition (Adams, 1977: 3). What we choose to ingest is also used metaphorically in phrases such as *you are what you eat* or *eating humble pie*. However, these refer to the conceptualisation of something entering the mouth, thus being ingested, but foul language or words move in the opposite direction, they *leave* the container. When language is referred to as foul it is an abstract concept, but the metonymical description of someone as *foul-mouthed* is associating that person with particular behaviours that are considered to be offensive. The term *foul-mouth* also implies that it is the orifice itself that is foul. The earlier metaphor of

*potty-mouth* to describe Gordon Ramsay describes the mouth as a CONTAINER designed for the bladder and bowel movements that are considered to be disgusting. The idea of people having foulness inside them is found in idioms such as *rotten to the core* and this can be problematic for self-esteem (Robinson et al., 2006: 148).

A34. End foul-mouthed TV. *Article M6*

A35. Horrified viewers complained to TV watchdogs yesterday after a foul-mouthed live telly outburst by Ant and Dec. *Article M13*

A35 is from the same article about the presenters Ant and Dec using an offensive word whilst hosting *I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here*. The language occurred after the watershed and was used in the style of a joke whilst discussing a participant eating a kangaroo testicle. Referring to the viewers as being *horrified* echoes a broader concept of both being afraid and of finding something grossly offensive. In 3.6 I discussed how exaggeration is often a key element of a moral panic discourse. The use of *viewers* and *complaints*, plural, can be seen as an exaggeration considering that Ofcom (2008) only registered one complaint for offensive language about the programme in question, which was not upheld. However, the reader is unlikely to know that and will believe that the language in the programme had inspired multiple complaints. I will discuss the use of exaggeration in more detail in 6.3.1. Despite the language being used within the context of a joke, which is normally deemed more acceptable (Jay, 2009b: 90), describing it as an outburst associates it with an angry or vehement utterance. It also creates the notion of something leaving a CONTAINER, like the eruption of a volcano, which I discuss further in 5.4.3.

A36. Listen on the street to groups of boys and girls as young as 10 and their conversations are littered with profanities (*Article E15*)

In A36 swearing is being mapped with MATTER OUT OF PLACE. As discussed earlier, things only become filthy, and therefore a threat to an orderly world, when they move out of their designated place (Burriss and Rempel, 2004: 38). Rubbish only becomes litter when it is OUT OF PLACE, linking to the concept of disorder and contamination. Behavioural observations have found that litter is associated with other negative social aspects, such as graffiti, vandalism and feeling unsafe, and that there is a widely shared perception that littering is a result of 'poor parenting and a decline in respect among younger people' (Keep Britain Tidy, 2013: 6)<sup>12</sup> mapping back to the earlier concept of swearing being a result of poor parenting. Combining *littering* with *profanities* creates a semantic frame within which swearing is mapped to a conceptual field that includes anti-social behaviour. It also creates the semantic frame of religiosity once again, so mapping swearing with immoral behaviour. The use of *on the street* is also designed to be metaphorically derogatory. While the children might be literally walking along the street whilst using swear words, *on the street* pairs the perceptual experience with the slang that refers to the homeless (*on the streets*), prostitution (*walk the streets*) and feral behaviour of unruly youths (*street urchin*, *street art*, *street cred*). In another article Sir Terry Wogan speaks of some presenters thinking that 'they will have more *street cred* with the "youth" if they eff and blind' (*Article E5*). The reference to *boys and girls as young as 10* implies that they are too young to be out unaccompanied, which questions the standard of parenting. The Strict Father model is less

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<sup>12</sup> See <https://www.keepbritaintidy.org> for more detailed information on behaviour and littering, in particular this paper <https://bit.ly/3GQBQm0>

likely to allow the children out at an unsuitable hour linking back again to the previous presumption that litter (and swearing) is a result of poor parenting, both literally and metaphorically.

So far, I have explored how the conceptual metaphors of filth and foul have been used within the campaigns to frame an ideological concept of CLEAN is GOOD and DIRTY is BAD. Conceptual metaphor theory identifies that our attitudes towards dirt stems from a cognitive model that tells us that dirt is MATTER OUT OF PLACE and that clean is ORDERED ARRANGEMENT (Lizardo, 2012: 1). These attitudes towards dirt are then mapped across to the concept of swearing being something that is OUT OF PLACE. As I discussed earlier, dirt avoidance today tends to be a matter of aesthetics or hygiene (Douglas, 2002: 44) and our knowledge of the bacterial transmission of disease informs us that the latter can be a risk to health. It is of little surprise then that disease metaphors lead to a genuine fear of contamination and a threat to health and well-being. As such I will now look at how the feared consequences of a lack of hygiene, infection and disease, is also utilised within the campaign to create the conceptual metaphor SWEARING is DISEASE.

### 5.3.3 SWEARING is DISEASE

Today the word filth tends to be associated with dirt and anything unclean that is considered disgusting, but the original meaning was more closely linked with decaying bodily fluid and tissue. Objects that rot and decay risk polluting and infecting and thereby become something to fear. This was an understandable fear; the spread of contagious diseases, such as the notorious cholera, was once rife due to poor sanitation and polluted water (Cohen and Johnson, 2004: xix). However, there is no evidence to suggest that words

are contagious or that their spread will lead to physical harm. Given the relationship between filth and the risk of contamination I expected to find plenty of metaphors related to disease in the data. A few months before the campaigns started the *Express* ran a headline 'Why Britain is so blighted by bad manners' (28 April 2008) which opened with the lines 'the blight of bad manners is the biggest problem in Britain today, most people believe. It is the root cause of the loutish behaviour that is plaguing society' (*Daily Express, Why Britain is so blighted by bad manners, 28 April 2008*). Blight and plague both have biblical overtones. While a plague is also an epidemic of disease or disorder it is widely interpreted as a sign of divine anger or justice thus linking once again to the cluster of Religiosity. I will discuss blight in more depth shortly. However, when it came to the campaigns there was surprisingly little use of disease metaphors.

A37. Channel 4, like other broadcasters, has opened the floodgates and allowed verbal sewage to seep into modern society. Our daily lives are infected by it. *Article E20*

In A37 swearing is seen as something that *infects* daily lives. Infections occur when bacteria or other microbes manage to enter a body and multiply, in this case by verbal sewage linking it directly to the filth of the sewer as discussed earlier. This suggests that if swearing is allowed to multiply uncontrollably, like an infection, there will be a risk of further contamination and a threat to the health of society. I discuss this particular sentence in more detail in 5.4.1.

A38. Swearing now the blight of Britain. *Article E10a*

A39. Swearing blight: Parents should lead by example. *Article E12*

Blight is described as ‘any baleful influence of atmospheric or invisible origin, that suddenly blasts, nips or destroys plants, affects them with disease, arrests their growth or prevents their blossom from setting’ (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021) and as I discussed earlier, it has biblical overtones. In Deuteronomy it states that should anyone disobey the Lord he will ‘strike you with wasting disease, with fever and inflammation, with scorching heat and drought, with blight and mildew’ (28:22). As I discussed in 5.2, swearing is deeply engrained with religious beliefs and a fear of punishment. The use of blight is deliberately designed to create the conceptual metaphor SWEARING IS DISEASE, leading to other mappings such as infection, contamination, contagion and threat. In this case, the threat is to social norms and civility.

In 3.7 I explained how headlines have to be interpreted and decoded by piecing together the overall meaning, and that if the reader does not continue to read the story opinions can be formed or reaffirmed by the headline alone. A38 was the main headline on the front page of the *Express*, taking up over half of the page, with the opening line ‘swearing has become the curse of British life’ (*Article E10a*). The headline is written as a statement of fact with the use of the word now. Alongside the article was a warning of 80mph gales, a picture of the Hudson River airplane crash that had occurred the day before and a picture of a sheep dog that had been beaten to death by burglars while defending its family, the combination of which contributes to a strong sense of negativity. Such a dramatic headline, within other negative stories, gives the story a pessimistic undertone that is likely to be picked up by the reader and transferred to the concept of swearing. It goes on to say ‘this sort of language is damaging our culture’ (*Article 10a*) to reiterate the concept of how blight causes damage; to crops, to society and to the soul. A39 was chosen as *letter of the day* a

few days later. As I discussed in 3.7, letters pages provide an ideological link between a newspaper and its readers and are also useful in creating a sense of unity. By choosing this submission as letter of the day the editor is highlighting the support from the public in their campaign against swearing.

A40. Bad language has reached epidemic proportions (*Article E10b*)

An epidemic is the widespread occurrence of something, usually an infectious disease, within a community at a particular time. At the time of writing this thesis the whole world is living through Covid-19, a widely prevalent virus. But there have been previous epidemics of diseases such as influenza and AIDS (Sontag, 1989) thus we have a concrete understanding of the concept of an epidemic. The mapping here suggests that swearing is infectious and spreading uncontrollably. Naturally, it then represents a significant threat to the well-being of society.

The cluster of hygiene has shown how swearing is routinely mapped to the source domain of FILTH, FOUL and DISEASE, which creates salient crossovers to other concepts such as *infection, contamination and threat*. The association between cleanliness and morality also creates a link to the earlier cluster, Religiosity, inducing a fear of supernatural punishment. This metaphorical language confirms the stereotype of swearing as filthy and contagious. In the final cluster I explore how the concept of swearing is seen as something that threatens to invade society and thus cause damage to social norms.



## 5.4 Invasion

When considering the name for this particular cluster I struggled to come up with one that covered all of the conceptual metaphors. Initially I used the term *destruction* because the metaphors involved suggest an end result of ruin and carnage, both physically and mentally. However, it did not fit all the metaphors involved. I then considered *threat*, because the metaphors can be considered as something that is intimidating and dangerous. When we consider the concept of being under threat, it is to feel vulnerable, oppressed or at risk of damage or violation. Studies into the way negative events are neurologically processed have found that bad things elicit stronger cognitive responses than good things, and that fear inducing events leave ‘indelible memory traces in the brain’ (Baumeister et al., 2001: 336). These memories create a pattern that is remembered and cognitively referred to any time we feel under threat. Conceptual metaphors that are related to a sense of threat not only activate our need for self-preservation but also perpetuate a resistance to the concept of change (Charteris-Black, 2006: 569). In order to prevent changes that threaten harm, either physically or socially, control is required.

However, as my research progressed I realised that swearing was being seen as something that was either threatening a boundary or actively crossing it. Figuratively speaking an invasion can be seen as ‘a harmful incursion of any kind, e.g. of the sea, of disease, moral evil’ (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021). The metaphors that I present in this cluster are understood as something that threatens to breach moral boundaries and, indeed, the crisis that sparked the two campaigns was a non-metaphorical invasion of privacy. As such, I renamed the cluster Invasion. This cluster is divided into three parts. The first part looks at how the experientialism of MASS OF WATER creates the conceptual metaphor SWEARING is

MOVING WATER. The second part looks at how our experiential knowledge of being physically attacked is used within the data to map the target domain to SWEARING is MILITARY ACTION. Finally, I look at how the metaphorical breaching of boundaries are used to create the concept that SWEARING is CROSSING A BOUNDARY.

#### 5.4.1 SWEARING is MOVING WATER

The physical experience of water is one of our earliest encounters. We naturally drink water to quench our thirst and we are taught that it healthy for us. We are bathed in water as babies and learn that it helps us to keep clean and disease free. These cleansing properties led to Christianity using water to transfer spiritual purification via baptism (Davidko, 2012: 40). We learn that water moves, sometimes slowly like a stream or rapidly like a waterfall. We know that while some water movement can ebb and flow, like a tide, on the whole water tends to only move in a downward direction, like waterfalls, rain and water from a tap. Eventually we learn about the complexities of water and how when liquid water reaches a low enough temperature it will freeze and become solid. And that as it warms up it will melt and move again but if it heats up further it will evaporate and become a gas that rises up, called water vapour. We experience these changes in everyday life, from using ice cubes in drinks to watching a kettle boil. We further learn that water, as a liquid, is often stored in a container, which helps to control it and allow for it to be transported (Hurtienne, 2017: 2). Containers also help to keep water clean from pollutants. So, water has a close relationship with Hygiene and Religiosity, in that it cleans and maintains good health, both for body and soul.

Over time we gain more experiential knowledge of water. We learn from our experiences of containers that water, like any liquid, can spill, overflow and become out of control. We understand that water can be presented as an aquatic space, like a sea or an ocean, that has depth and boundaries (Davidko, 2012: 42). Most of us will learn to swim in water, either at a swimming pool or at the beach. We learn that not only can we move through water by swimming but we can also float and sink. Our experiences of the beach teach us about high and low tides which leads to an understanding that water can rise and fall. As we learn about waves and currents beneath the surface we begin to understand that water can also be a source of danger. Water can drown and destroy, especially when it is out of control or has breached a container. The sea, in particular, is important in the cultural and historical identity of Britain as an island and can become an engrained and familiar symbol in our sense of belonging (Charteris-Black, 2006: 572). All of these everyday experiences with water contribute to our understanding and processing of water-based metaphors. As I mentioned in 4.3, September 2008 witnessed a series of terrible flooding across the country that was often reported on in the media, feeding our experiential knowledge of the *danger* and *destruction* that water can represent.

There has been significant academic research into how the conceptual metaphor WATER is used to map to a variety of target domains. For example, money and the economy are often presented as the conceptual metaphor of WATER, in that both can *rise* (inflation), *fall* (interest rates), *flow* (cash) and *freeze* (assets, prices and wages) (Davidko, 2012; Hurtienne, 2017). The behaviour of water is also linked to several emotions in that we can sometimes have a sudden *surge* or *wave* of emotion (Omori, 2008). Anger is often characterised by WATER metaphors, especially hot water and its natural force of *rising*, *boiling* and *exploding*,

leading to the conceptual metaphor ANGER IS THE HEAT OF A FLUID IN A CONTAINER (Kovecses, 1986: 13). Problems and challenges are often conceptualised as water, for example whilst writing this thesis I often felt *out of my depth* and sometimes worried that my research might be *against the current*. This can also lead to problematic behaviour and other social concerns being conceptualised as water. Immigration, for example, is often presented as a social problem in need of control via figurative language such as *flooding*, *swamping* or arriving in *waves* (Charteris-Black, 2008; Musolff, 2011).

When we are presented with water metaphors there can be a variety of different frames in process. For example, the volume of water (a raindrop versus a large ocean), the velocity of movement (a steady stream versus rapids) and the behaviour of water (seeping or flooding). In this section I will initially look at water that is considered to be a natural force, like *torrent* and *tide*, and how these relate to a sense of threat, before looking at metaphors related to controlling water courses in an effort to regulate swearing.

A41. End torrent of foul TV says MP. *Article E7a*

A42. A senior MP has criticised the government for failing to tackle the “torrent of gratuitous bad language” on TV. *Article E7a*

A43. Mr Whittingdale...said broadcasters seemed to view the 9pm watershed as a free-for-all with “a torrent of gratuitous bad language on programmes ranging from comedy to cookery”. *Article E7a*

The above examples are all from a double page spread in the *Sunday Express*. The headline of the article is written in one horizontal headline across both pages with white text on a black banner. Accompanied with the campaign logo and a picture of Russell Brand, the 921-

word article refers to the need for ‘a root-and-branch reform of the editorial guidelines’ (*Article E7a*). The article opens with reference to a conversation between the journalist and the Tory MP John Whittingdale in which he lends his support to the paper’s Clean Up TV Crusade, stating that ‘there is a very widespread feeling among the public that things have gone too far’ (*Article E7a*). The MP’s social credentials and authority are verified by the use of *senior* which thereby lends authority to the campaign. Both papers use the MP of their own political leaning to back their campaigns. The *Express* uses a Tory MP whereas the *Mirror* uses a Labour MP to support their campaign, both of whom are used to give political credence to their narratives that swearing does not belong in polite, civilised society.

In reality a torrent is a mass of uncontrollable moving water that travels at great speed and can cause significant damage. When used figuratively it implies ‘a violent or tumultuous flow, onrush or stream’ (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021). The repeated use of torrent in the above examples is designed to map swearing to a source domain that represents something uncontrollable and destructive. And while the original quote from the MP refers to *gratuitous bad language* this is shortened to *foul* for the headline, which instantly maps the *torrent* to the concept of filth and contamination. The verb *end* is also used in the headline to give a sense of abrupt finality and power. The government is accused of failing to *tackle* the torrent which creates a slightly different mapping. We understand the concept of a tackle as ‘to grip, fasten upon, attack, encounter physically’ (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021), involving strength and power. The term is often used in physical sports such as rugby and football, and it is also used metaphorically to describe dealing with a difficult problem. While the problem here is presented as the increased use of swearing, the connection to the physical movement of a *torrent* suggests that the use of tackle is being used

metaphorically, mapping to the concept of swearing as something that needs to be physically challenged and forcefully fought.

A44. British TV comedy shows continued to broadcast a tide of lewd and offensive material last week. *Article E7b*

Because the UK is an island we are more likely to have first-hand experience of a tide from visits to a beach<sup>13</sup> giving us a physical and social experience to strengthen our understanding of the metaphor (Lakoff, 1987: xiv). A tide is found where the sea meets the land, but this boundary perpetually changes as sea levels rise and fall. We know that a tide behaves differently to a torrent because instead of flowing in one direction, a tide appears to reverse as it goes back and forth. This ebb and flow is commonly used figuratively to describe anything that can increase and decrease. As discussed earlier, maritime metaphors such as *wave*, *surge* and *tide* are often found in narratives around emotion such as LOVE and ANGER (Kovecses, 2008: Omori, 2008). In addition, the bi-directionality of a tide is often used within discourses around immigration (Charteris-Black, 2006: 572). On the whole a tide represents fun and childhood memories but we also learn that high tides can lead to flooding and that sea water can cause environmental damage in stormy conditions. While a tide does not necessarily invade the land in the same way as a torrent might, it is still capable of crossing a boundary, evidenced by the wide use of sea walls, breakwaters and other types of defensive methods taken against tidal rise. The Thames Barrier is arguably one of the most iconic flood defences that reminds us that tidal rises can be a very real threat of invasion in the form of flooding. Flood based metaphors are pertinent to the UK

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<sup>13</sup> This is example of a culturally specific metaphor as landlocked cultures are less likely to have the experiential knowledge of how a tide behaves.

because they fit in with an underlying concept that as an island Britain has historically come under threat by invasion from the water (Charteris-Black, 2006: 572). Experience can also lead us to discover that some creatures that live in the sea can sting or bite and strong currents can cause death by drowning, thus linking the sea to the source domain DANGER. Tides are notorious for occasionally bringing in unpleasant maritime debris such as swathes of seaweed, algal foam or evidence of raw sewage so the use of *lewd and offensive material* in A44 is metaphorically creating the schematic visual of a polluted tide, linking it back to the Hygiene cluster. By comparing swearing to toxic waste and pollution it draws on a universal human drive to avoid the risk of contamination and disease (Cunningham-Parameter, 2011: 1568). Another way that water can invade the land and cause a threat to life is by the tidal wave.

A45. This tidal wave of profanity is a poor substitute for manners. *Article E13*

While normal tides and torrents are certainly capable of breaching boundaries, the tidal wave is much bigger and more powerful so the invasion is going to be quicker and more catastrophic, presenting a far more serious threat to life. Tides are caused by a gravitational force exerted by the moon and the sun. Occasionally this pressure is intensified, causing an unusually high sea wave to travel at rapid speeds towards the coastline. Tidal waves can sometimes be confused with a tsunami, which is caused by a geological pressure beneath the water, such as an underwater volcano or earthquake. Tsunamis more often than not go unnoticed, however, if a tsunami does reach the coast it behaves like a tidal wave, which explains why they are easily confused. Metaphorically they both refer to a MASS OF WATER that is moving rapidly and dangerously, giving the concept of MOTION and FORCE. This combination leads to the source domains of DESTRUCTION and POWER.

The first-hand sensory experience of a tidal wave might not be available to all of us and instead we rely on embedded knowledge garnered from images and reports of various disasters that have happened because of the movement of a MASS OF WATER. A few years prior to the two campaigns the deadliest tsunami in recorded history rose from the Indian Ocean following an underwater earthquake with a magnitude of over 9.1 (Jaffe, 2014). The waves travelled at a speed of approximately 500mph and caused disastrous damage to land and life when they hit the shore. The destruction and devastation of the MASS OF WATER was televised across the globe. As it happened on Boxing Day it became even more poignant for viewers to watch the unfolding disaster while enjoying the season's festivities. This arguably made the scenes more memorable. In all nearly 230,000 people were killed across 15 countries. As discussed earlier, while in oceanographic terms a tsunami is different to a tidal wave, the two are often merged in metaphoric representation. In most minds that witnessed the horror of the Boxing Day tsunami, a tidal wave will represent the same experiential process, which is a MASS OF WATER being out of control and causing widespread devastation.

The tidal wave metaphor is a good example of how conceptual metaphors can be realised as symbols and myths (Lakoff, 1993; Kovecses, 2010). Mythologically, water has often been used as a symbol of destruction and power. The story of Noah's Ark and the worldwide flood is a well-known biblical passage that is used to demonstrate the destructive power of water. In Greek mythology Poseidon was the God of the Sea who was renowned for being bad tempered and moody. However, he was also the God of earthquakes, horses and bulls alongside the ocean, all things that are large objects that can cause significant force on people and their environment. While this list might initially appear arbitrary they



all signify events that are considered to be uncontrollable and thus Poseidon should really be the god of uncontrollable external events (Kovecses, 2010: 66).

A46. Now it seems to be a guarantee of obscenity the moment 9pm is reached – not so much a watershed as a sluice gate letting in a tidal wave of foul language.

*Article E3*

In A46 we see the use of tidal wave alongside a metaphor of a means of controlling a MASS OF WATER. A sluice gate is a barrier designed to control water levels and flow rates in rivers and canals, by either impounding or releasing the water, and as such the salient concepts drawn from are barriers, dams, channels and, most importantly, control. Figuratively it is designed to refer to the flowing or releasing of something, in this case the *tidal wave of foul language*. But another salient concept to emerge is that of a BOUNDARY that is designed to maintain control, which I discuss in more depth in 5.4.3. The use of *in* identifies an outside and an inside of a container, through which the tidal wave is travelling. The identification of a clearly defined container ‘implies a conscious controlling entity that fills or empties the container’ (Charteris-Black, 2006: 576). While the sluice gate may have simply mechanically failed it is more likely an implication that an external entity has deliberately or negligently opened the sluice gate, in this case the broadcasters. The whole sentence creates the concept of a sudden rush of something that is out of control, which we understand as dangerous and a threat. As a result, swearing is presented as something that needs controlling if we are to avoid the catastrophic damage represented by a tidal wave. When identifying a lexical unit as a metaphor it is important to ‘take into account what comes before and after the lexical unit’ (Pragglejaz Group, 2007: 3). The metaphor is *tidal wave*, but it is important to note how this influences the way foul language is perceived as a

synonym for swearing. A tidal wave is not your average maritime surge, it is bigger, more powerful, moves with force and threatens to be overwhelming. The syntactic construction creates a schematic image of swearing moving in the way a MASS OF WATER moves when it is out of control and under considerable force. If we consider the denotative meanings of some swear words, the tidal wave becomes a rush of bodily fluids and other such polluting products. The cognitive translation is that swear words are not just powerful but that they are a forceful, contagious, disgust-inducing threat.

The conceptual metaphor SWEARING is MOVING WATER has helped to explain how swearing can be conceived as a threat to social or moral order by the force and movement of natural disaster. This threat is built on our culturally specific understanding of the damage caused when water invades land. The combination of the MOVING WATER and the notion of foul and filth results in the notion that swearing is disgusting and polluting. Next, I explore how the cluster of Invasion expands into man-made activities of military action.

#### 5.4.2 SWEARING is MILITARY ACTION

Any kind of military action is conceptually understood as a threat to normality. Animals are constantly in a state of competition. In order to establish or defend their territory, attract or keep a mate, find and consume food or water, they often have to fight with competitors. The same can be said of the human species, in that challenges are issued in order to intimidate and territories are won and lost by attack, defence, retreat and surrender (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003: 62). However, as a rational animal we are aware that physical conflict risks physical harm. As a result, we have developed more sophisticated techniques of challenging competitors and settling disputes (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003: 62).

The evolutionary development from the physical to the cognitive might also explain the connection between swearing and violent expression that remains today. As I discussed in Chapter 2 it is proposed that our earliest sounds resulted from pain, annoyance or surprise and, similar to the growl of an animal, stem from a need to communicate a warning or defence (Montagu, 2001: 5). The theory that swearing originates from the more primitive areas of the human brain is supported by neurological research into traumatic brain injury and other diseases and disorders of the brain, such as encephalitis, dementia and depression. Studies into patients suffering from aphasia have observed that swearwords remain articulate when other forms of speech have been severely compromised (Van Lancker and Cummings, 1999: 84).

The verbal argument is designed to avoid being exposed to physical harm, although it can degenerate into violence and there is some debate to be had over the psychological damage that can be inflicted during a verbal battle. While the verbal argument is designed to minimise physical damage, it shares many similar qualities to a physical battle such as intimidation, threat, belittling, bargaining and invoking or challenging authority (Lakoff, 2003: 62). And ultimately, any battle whether physical or verbal, is settled when it is won or lost. Lakoff uses this similarity to explain how the conceptual metaphor ARGUMENT is WAR is grounded in our experiential knowledge of physical combat.

Even if you have never fought a fistfight in your life, much less a war, but have been arguing from the time you began to talk, you still conceive of arguments, and execute them, according to the ARGUMENT is WAR metaphor because the metaphor is built into the conceptual system of the culture in which you live (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003: 63-64)

While we may not have first-hand experiential knowledge of a war we gain a conceptual understanding of WAR as a source domain by the reports on armed conflicts occurring across the world. Growing up I became aware of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and as I write this thesis the country of Ukraine is under attack from Russian armed forces. Military metaphors are designed to trigger our fear of being attacked. They are also often used in order to identify the gravity of the problem whilst simultaneously offering the solution. However, because the target domain is construed as an adversary that requires defeating it can potentially lead to negative consequences. Examples are WAR ON TERRORISM leading to islamophobia and WAR ON DRUGS leading to addicts being demonised rather than the drug barons (Semino, 2008: 100). By mapping the target domain of swearing to military type source domains, with strongly negative literal meanings, it can lead to people who use swear words being considered aggressive and violent and thus a threat. They are also closely connected to the concept of crossing a boundary, which I discuss in the following section.

A47. Will I once again sit and watch some wholesome television without foul-mouthed “entertainers” and cocky so called “experts” invading my living room with their gutter language? *Article M6*

To invade is to ‘enter in a hostile manner’ (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021). Floods are said to *invade* homes and disease is said to *invade* a body. By referencing the gutter, it not only links to Hygiene but also gives an orientational cue; those invading the home are surfacing from down below, and as I have been evidencing DOWN is BAD. Again, if we consider Ortony’s subset of characteristics that I reviewed in 3.5, the use of gutter brings forth other salient features of things that might be linked to the gutter, such as rats and sewage,

thereby mapping swearing to an *invasion* of rats or a *flood* of sewage. The use of inverted commas around the “entertainers” and “experts” is designed to indicate that the writer is questioning their credentials. In doing so he gives a figurative element to the descriptors, suggesting that he is not using the terms in their literal sense. An invasion can also be seen as something that takes over and traps.

A48. Labour MP Jim Devine is behind the official Westminster protest at the way bad language is taking over our screens. *Article M11*

A49. Parents feel increasingly under siege as children are able to watch shows with bad language in bedrooms or on the internet. *Article M3*

A50. And people find there is no escape on the streets, over the internet or when we are driving. *Article E21*

To *take over* something is also related to an invasion, for example weeds take over gardens. However, to take over is also to gain possession, for example in business or chess, and when someone is taken during war they are held captive and imprisoned. So, when something is taken over, it surrenders its power and control. Being *under siege* is a military movement designed to surround and isolate a town or castle, in order to invade and take it over by force. Anything that is under siege is likely to feel under threat with no exit available. Like invasion, these metaphors trigger a need to fight or flight and when flight is unavailable, as in *no escape*, it results in feeling trapped which requires a solution of fight. All of these metaphors are contributing to the idea that the use of swear words is a threat that could lead to harm. When something is under attack or the threat of invasion the response is normally one of defence and fight.

A51. WAR ON TV SWEARING. ITV boss Grade blasts too much use of f-word. *Article M1a*

Example A51 was the front page in the *Mirror* on November 4<sup>th</sup> 2008, the day before they launched their Stop the Swearing on Telly campaign. A forceful defence to the threat of any invasion is arguably a reasonable reaction. Not only does this headline declare war on swearing, but the military theme continues in the by-line with the use of *blasts*. A blast is a 'destructive wave of highly compressed air spreading outwards from an explosion' (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021). The journalist might also be attempting a pun on the use of blast, which was once widely used as a means to 'strike or visit with the wrath or curse of heaven' (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021), so very much a swear word. However, here it is being used figuratively to signify a severe and violent reprimand.

As I said earlier, we do not need first-hand experience of a warzone to develop a fundamental knowledge of war as causing mass destruction and loss of life, similarly to the out-of-control movement of a mass of water. This enables us to construct an idea of war by drawing from a subset of characteristics through Ortony's (1975) reconstructionist view. The salient subsets from the use of war as a metaphor range from weapons such as guns, tanks and bombs through to the human cost such as prisoners of war, injured military and mutilated or dead bodies. Thus, as a metaphor WAR creates a very powerful image.

A52. Outraged ITV supremo Michael Grade last night vowed to wage war against "indiscriminate" foul language on the box. *Article M1a*

Wars involve armies, on the land, sea and air. We also know the ranking characters involved in war, such as cadet and lieutenant (lower) through to captains and colonels (higher). The

use of *supremo* (rather than boss) in the opening line is designed to keep the military feel by suggesting a position of the highest military or political authority. The article continues this ranking hierarchy with *station chiefs* and *top tv figures*. The use of *outrage* to measure Mr Grade's reaction to the increase in swearing on television indicates a high level of anger that coupled with *vowed to wage war* creates an extreme reaction that is not wholly in line with the actual speech made by Mr Grade. The speech marks indicate the one word taken from the speech, that the use of bad language 'seems indiscriminate now' (*Article M1a*).

However, the speech did not appear to be outraged or vowing to wage war with lines such as 'the prevalence of bad language, such as the F-word, is a little bit unrestrained' (*Article M1a*). I will discuss how exaggeration in reporting is indicative of a moral panic in 6.3.1. The next day the *Daily Mirror* followed the story with another dramatic headline.

A53. SWORN IN. Top politicians sign up to our campaign to stamp out the F-word on television. *Article M2*

The use of *sworn* is undoubtedly a play on words, and a good example of some of the challenges that the data gathering faced as discussed in Chapter 4. As well as bad language, swearing can also be used to describe a solemn declaration, or to make a promise by an oath, usually to God. The allegiance here is being made by *top politicians* which, like the use of *supremo* in A52, highlights a consensus amongst the elite, once again reflecting the conceptual metaphor UP is GOOD, DOWN is BAD. Size, and height in particular, have become symbols of success, achievement, importance and power (Goatly, 2007: 36). The hierarchy of the *upper class* and *upper crust* symbolise a status of importance. Similarly, anything that is elevated is seen as more successful or powerful than those below, such as *high-powered*, *high up*, people in *high places*. Since biblical times, a tall building has been seen as a symbol

of power<sup>14</sup> and to the present-day skyscrapers are seen as representing political and economic power (*ibid*: 37). To be at the very top – *top dog*, *top of the bill*, having the *top job* – is seen as the most important of all (*ibid*: 36). Thus, the use of *top politicians* is designed to reinforce the concept that those in power (the politicians) can control those in need of controlling (the broadcasters, presenters and entertainers). The disparity between position is also highlighted with the use of use of *stamp out*. To stamp out something is to extinguish it by trampling over it, but it also refers to the suppression of unsocial behaviour or a rebellion ‘by vigorous measures’ (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021). The act of stamping is to bring a foot down heavily in order to crush something or to make a noise that serves as a signal of emphasis. Fires are stamped out to stop further spread. Children stamp their foot as a sign of a tantrum. However, there is also a salient association with violent behaviour, such as a thug stamping on a victim’s head. The metaphor of stamping out bad language is found several times in the data.

A54. Tory culture spokesman Jeremy Hunt compared bad language on television to football hooliganism which “people said you could never stamp out, but we did”.

*Article M2*

As I said earlier, stamping out can be associated with thuggery and assault. The reference to football hooliganism in A54 associates bad language with violent anti-social behaviour and disorder, reinforcing the concept that bad language is an uncontrollable threat. The blurring

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<sup>14</sup> Then they said “Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the whole earth” – Genesis, 11, 1-9



between swearing and anti-social behaviour like hooliganism could also have implications for attitudes towards people who use swear words.

A55. Following the Manuelgate scandal, the Mirror has joined ITV chief Michael Grade to call on TV bosses to stamp out the “unrestrained and indiscriminate” use of the F-word. Politicians plus hundreds of you, have expressed your support. *Article M6*

Again, the use of *chief* to describe the ITV Executive Chairman gives the position an authoritative tone because a chief is ‘the head man or ruler of an indigenous community, clan, tribe etc.’ (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021). This time the general public is also included in the battle against swearing, with the publication of a series of letters written in support of the campaign under the heading End Foul-Mouthed TV. *Bob Allen of Great Barr* expresses his relief that ‘someone with authority has spoken up about this nasty phenomenon on our TV screens which is getting increasingly worse in this country’ (*Article M6*). *Joyce Fell of Liverpool* writes ‘It’s great that Michael Grade, Culture Secretary Andy Barnham and the Mirror are speaking out against the foul language on TV’ (*Article M6*). Within a few days of the campaign’s launch an in-group has been created that backs those in power and highlights the problem of swearing as something that belongs to the *Other*.

Another metaphor that often appears in the data is the word *barrage*. Whilst this is also a means of controlling water, in this concept it is being compared to the military meaning of a continuous, overwhelming round of artillery concentrated in one area. In many respects it can be compared to the other terms found in the data, such as *blasts*, *bombard* and *attack*, as they all threaten some kind of onslaught.

A56. Barrage of swearing that shames Britain. *Article E21*

A57. The barrage of four-letter words comes from our families, colleagues, people we pass on the street and from television, a study shows. *Article E21*

A58. MPs are to question the BBC chiefs about the barrage of bad language on the box. *Article M9*

The use of *barrage* implies that something is under attack. The cognitive and perceptual features salient to the metaphor of barrage is one of war, in particular the heavy use of gun fire in order to stop the advance of an enemy. This mapping lends itself to bad language causing extreme damage by a constant and relentless round of bullets, the consequences of which would be harm to society. As I discussed in 5.2.3 the use of shame in A56 creates the conceptual metaphor SWEARING is SIN, and the use of four-letter words as a synonym for swearing tend to imply the more offensive swear words, such as *fuck* and *shit*, which intensifies the level of misdemeanour. Once again, the theme of the military hierarchy is created with the use of chiefs in A58.

A59. Barrage of bad behaviour is destroying family values. *Article E19*

Example A59 is a letter written in to the *Express* by a member of the public. The use of barrage is taken a step further with the concept of *destroying*. The salient features of something being destroyed, that is something being crushed and demolished, is a far stronger threat, and the fact that it is family values under threat of being destroyed links to my earlier discussion on the family, and parenting in particular, being used as a symbol of the problem. This is reinforced with the author's claim to 'do my best to lead by example and to set standards of behaviour that will hopefully help my offspring mature into pleasant,

polite, caring and hardworking adults' (*Article E19*). The war theme continues throughout the letter by referring to *losing the battle* and her children being *bombarded* once again linking swearing to the concept of parenting and children being at risk. The letter also refers to the *powers-that-be* and 'those in high-profile positions of influence and power' (*Article E19*) as the people with the power to control the use of bad language.

A60. It's the effing and blinding brigade who seem to reap the rewards from their foul language. The more you pepper your shows with expletives the more your bosses will think you are on the same wavelength as the young audiences you are desperately trying to attract. *Article E20*

Effing and blinding was a phonetic disguise for swearing that originated around the time of the Second World War (Hughes, 1998: 12) so its use here alongside *brigade* is an interesting crossover between swearing and the concept of the military. A brigade is a subdivision of an army but can also be used to refer to a group of people organised in order to fight something, such as the *fire-brigade*. When considering the salient concepts to come from the phrase *effing and blinding brigade*, it is obvious that swearing is once again mapped to the earlier concept of crusades and the features mentioned earlier, such as weapons, soldiers, tanks etc. However, the context of war also influences the way the metaphor pepper is interpreted. The article has a photograph of the chef Gordon Ramsay with a diamond encrusted F on his tongue, with the caption *foul-mouthed*. In the context of cooking the understanding of pepper would be the concept of a pungent spice used to flavour dishes. However, in military terms, to pepper something is 'to pelt with small missiles, to bombard with shots, bullets or pellets' (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021). Because of the context here, the interpretation of the word pepper can shift from a culinary

term to a military term, thereby comparing expletives to ammunition, which obviously comes with further connotations of bullets, guns, damage and danger.

A61. Broadcasters have been accused of dragging TV into the sewer by letting the celebrity chef and other stars pepper shows with expletives. *Article M11*

This time the word pepper is being used as a pun and, instead of small missiles it is referring to the general act of sprinkling grains of pepper. However, pepper as a spice can also cause salient concepts, in that it can be too hot or it can make you sneeze. It is interesting that in both these examples of pepper being used metaphorically it is paired with *expletive* as a synonym for swearing, which is an alliteration of *explosion*. Phonetically, this alliteration transfers the power of an explosion to the concept of an expletive. The concept of an explosion is also found in the use of synonyms for swear words such as *f-bomb*.

A62. The f-word was like the atom bomb, kept strictly under wraps and was only threatened to be deployed in absolute emergencies. *Article E20*

A63. When you pick up a time bomb one day it will explode. *Article E5b*

The atom bomb is a nuclear weapon. Its explosion causes mass damage through heat, blast and radioactivity. In the hierarchies of bombs, the nuclear weapon is probably considered to be the most lethal because of the extent of damage and the fallout of radiation disease. Here the f-word is being afforded the same kind of destructive and long-lasting power, like the synonym f-bomb. A frequently used political euphemism for war is a *state of emergency* so the military narrative is reinforced with the use of *deployed* and *emergency*.

A time bomb is often used metaphorically to refer to something being out of control and unpredictable, and while it might not have the same explosive power as an atom bomb, it nevertheless has catastrophic potential. Many a block buster film has centred around a ticking time bomb that is threatening to detonate at any minute. Hopefully, most of us have not experienced the explosion of a bomb first hand but we gain a cognitive understanding of the deadly power of bombs either via fictional blockbusters or the reality of terrorism and war portrayed in the media. This gives us the salient concept of shrapnel, smoke, deafening noise and utter destruction. When swearing is compared to something as destructive as a bomb it transfers the explosive power of the weapon, and the ensuing damage and disaster it creates, to swear words.

Both the natural disaster of MOVING WATER and the man-made disaster of MILITARY ATTACK are related to the concept of something dangerous and threatening entering a safe zone that is identified, and protected, by boundaries. These concepts create the notion that swearing is invading society. The crux of any kind of invasion is the breaching of a boundary and, as such, the final section in this chapter explores how swearing is conceptualised as something that is capable of breaching and crossing boundaries.

#### 5.4.3 SWEARING is CROSSING A BOUNDARY

A boundary is a real or imagined border or line that indicates the edge or limit of something. In effect it divides one area from another. We all have an experiential understanding of boundaries from a variety of sources, both physical and cognitive. As young children we will be taught where we can or cannot go, with some form of reprimand if we disobey, from being told off, physically punished, or in the extreme, run over by a car if we cross the

boundary from the pavement into the road. We understand the reality of a physical boundary from our cultural existence. The prototypical Westernised family normally resides in a home that is secured against intruders because it has boundaries in the shape of walls and a roof. Sometimes a house will have a garden that has boundaries in the shape of fences or hedges. As children we learn that inside the boundaries of home and garden is safe and crossing them to leave might be dangerous. We also discover that an intrusion is when something unwelcome crosses the boundary to come into our home and garden. As we grow older we learn that this extends to our physical body.

As a result, anything that goes from one side of the border to the other side can be seen as MATTER OUT OF PLACE, as I discussed in 3.5. The need for a boundary, both physically and metaphorically, stems from our concept of territorial power and our instinct to categorise our experiences (Goatly, 2007: 31). As I mentioned in 3.5 containers are metaphorically conceptualised as something with a boundary indicating a clear inside and outside, creating a source domain of IN and OUT. As well as being crossed a boundary can also become *blurred* or *smudged* which can lead to a *grey area* or something being described as being *borderline* (*ibid*). As I will show, boundaries are important within the concept of power and control and can motivate social anxieties about the need for security and protection from the *Other* (Charteris-Black, 2006: 578).

In 5.3.1 I considered how the metaphor of sewer is used as a source domain to create the conceptual metaphor SWEARING is FILTH. Our experiential knowledge of a sewer is that it is underground and kept away from civilised society by walls. If we have deeper knowledge of a sewer we might visualise the walls as being built of brick and creating a tunnel. Whatever our knowledge of the concept of a sewer, we understand that its unsavoury contents are

kept away from society by a boundary. Most of us do not give the sewer much thought until we hear stories of the boundaries being breached by flooding, whereupon we learn more about the consequences of untreated human excreta and food waste entering society.

A64. Channel 4, like other broadcasters, has opened the floodgates and allowed verbal sewage to seep into modern society. Our daily lives are infected by it (*Article E15*)

Example A64 is a crossover between FILTH (sewage) DISEASE (infected) and MOVEMENT OF WATER (seep). A floodgate, as the name suggests, is designed to prevent the intrusion of flood water during heavy rainfall or a storm surge that might otherwise overwhelm and saturate the land. Referring back to the biblical story of Noah and the Ark, the ‘floodgates of the heavens were opened and rain fell on the earth for forty days and forty nights’ (Genesis 7, 11-13) so it also channels the concept of religiosity. Like a tidal wave, a flood of water can cause catastrophic damage. How fluids leave a container and flood the surrounding area is an experiential knowledge gained during growing up, whether it is with a fluid in a cup or in a bath. We understand that when water leaves a container it is no longer under our control. However, media images of how a MASS OF WATER can flood and destroy homes and lead to people being evacuated also contribute to our understanding of the catastrophic damage that can be caused. The summer before the campaigns became the wettest summer on record in the UK, which the media covered extensively. Thousands of towns and villages were cut off with no power or clean water, and 10,000 motorists were stranded on the M5 (Wright, 2017).

Figuratively a floodgate is used to indicate the restraining of some event, action or decision. So, literally and figuratively, a floodgate is a BOUNDARY that is used to control and when a metaphorical floodgate is opened it indicates losing control. In this case the MASS OF WATER in need of control is referred to as verbal sewage. Sewers can overflow in flood conditions because there is too much burden on the wastewater treatment works, resulting in sewage escaping through manholes and drains (Ashley et al., 2005). However, in this incidence the opening of the floodgate does not result in a surge or flood of the sewage but instead it seeps and infects. To seep is a much slower movement, it is an oozing or a trickle of fluid. Because the sewage is not moving rapidly it is more likely to cause stagnation, leading to the risk of contamination and infection. Moreover, the floodgates have not been breached but have been deliberately opened, suggesting a recklessness on behalf of those responsible.

One of the many casualties of bad flooding are buildings and properties and the news media are quick to fill their pages with images of homes flooded with contaminated water and slurry. Our homes provide the physical boundaries that keep our personal territories safe and protected. Anything that threatens to breach these boundaries, from natural disaster to burglary, is considered to be an invasion.

A65. Television is a far more intrusive medium than cinema as it is pumped directly into the home. *Article E3*

While swearing is not directly accused of being the invader here, it is found in an article debating about bad language on television, so it becomes guilty by association. The metaphor *pumped* is implying that the contents of the television (such as bad language) is a fluid that is moving via a conduit to cross the boundary into the home. Pumps are often



used to remove flood water from properties but in this case the movement is in the opposite direction. Moreover, the use of *intrusive*, which is characterised by ‘entering in an encroaching manner, or without invitation or welcome’ (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021), presents the television as an uninvited guest. Yet for many, especially the elderly and people with physical and mental health problems, the television can be seen as an important lifeline that can help with feelings of loneliness and isolation (Pemberton, 2019). The notion of intrusive also creates a sense of force behind the boundary breaching, suggesting that the occupants of the home are helpless victims of the invasion. Yet, the journalist chooses to overlook the power that the remote control or the off switch has over any television intrusion.

While boundaries can be visualised as edges and border such as walls and fences, the word can also be used metaphorically to suggest a cut-off point to acceptable limits. References to ‘appropriate boundaries of standards and taste’ (*Articles M16, E5b*) were found in the data creating a boundary as something that can indicate a measurement between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Boundaries were also said to be *tested*, *pushed* and *eroded* as if they could be physically moved under force.

A66. Not just the swearing but the incessant eroding of previously agreed boundaries of good taste in general. *Article E3*

The metaphorical use of *eroding* combines the crossing of a boundary with the earlier conceptual metaphor SWEARING IS MOVING WATER. Erosion is the geological process that gradually wears away the surface of the earth by natural elements such as wind, water or ice. It is different to weathering in that the product that is eroded is moved to a different

place, thus becoming MATTER OUT OF PLACE. For most of us the salient features of something being eroded is a destructive movement of the earth, be it soil, rock or sand, causing images such as cliffs falling or riverbanks collapsing. However, it might also include man-made objects such as the masonry of old buildings being worn away. The consequences of erosion are understood as dramatic, environmentally damaging and, following the revelation in the late seventies regarding a precipitation issue called acid rain, it is often considered to be a result of human activity (Herrick and Jamieson, 1995). In its metaphorical sense to erode is to wear down and displace particular values. It also demonstrates how a slow process like erosion can have a large-scale destructive effect. If a physical boundary is eroded it is at risk of collapse, highlighting the importance of controlling boundaries. Here, the boundary is a metaphorical distinction between good and bad taste. While the writer admits that swearing is not the only thing responsible for the erosion, it is clear that it is seen as a significant factor in the problem. As erosion is also subject to gravity this metaphor once again contributes to the overall concept of GOOD is UP, BAD is DOWN. The conceptual frame is that society is at risk of deteriorating if the boundary is breached, and that would lead to a downward trajectory, thus it would be BAD. The concept of standards declining if the integrity of the boundary is compromised is repeated in the following example.

A67. Like children testing their parents' discipline, entertainers will never cease testing the boundaries, and if those boundaries are not strictly policed, standards will decline. *Article E2*

Example A67 is a second excerpt from the earlier letter calling for the BBC to adopt a more puritanical approach to controlling swearing. Once again children are used in the narrative

but this time their lower position in the hierarchy of authority is used to suggest that the entertainers behave like undisciplined children. As I discussed in 3.5, there is a moral hierarchy of God above man, man above nature and adults above children (Lakoff, 2004: 21). The children, or entertainers, are accused of testing the boundaries, which suggests a more sophisticated, cognitive behaviour. To test something usually means to assess and analyse before attempting, in this case, to cross a boundary. This is different to the brute force required to push something. The lexical choice of *policed*, as opposed to controlled or regulated, coupled with strictly, once again draws upon the authoritarian traits of the Puritans and the Strict Father model. Obedience is demanded, not encouraged, reflecting the difference between the Strict Father and the Nurturing Parent (Lakoff and Johnson, 1999; Tosi and Warmke, 2021). When we consider the concept of something being policed there is obviously the visual image of a police force, with uniforms, and weapons like batons, and sometimes guns. That might filter into types of police officer, such as constable, inspector or detective, and other sources such as private detective, that is linked with more covert surveillance behaviours, leading to the concept of Big Brother and a nanny state. There are also other salient features such as the detection of crime, law and order and judicial processes such as courts, judges, sentences and jails, all of which lead to a source of social order and control of criminal activity. The prediction, which I discuss in more detail in 6.3.2, is that standards will decline if the boundaries are crossed, echoing the metaphorical language found in religious texts of GOOD being UP and BAD being DOWN (Xie and Zhang, 2014: 172).

## 5.5 Summary

In this chapter I have demonstrated how the metaphorical representations of swearing have led to conceptual metaphors that can be separated into three clusters. Religiosity included source domains of SACRILEGE, MAGICAL POWER and SIN, creating a framework that maps swearing with a fear of punishment from a supernatural being. The second cluster, Hygiene, demonstrated how the source domains FILTH, FOUL and DISEASE create a salient mapping between swearing and a fear of becoming ill through a lack of hygiene. The final cluster, Invasion, explored how the source domains of MOVING WATER, MILITARY ACTION and CROSSING A BOUNDARY lead to swearing being represented as a dangerous threat to society and personal well-being. I acknowledge that in some instances the conceptual metaphors drew from two or more clusters, for example CROSSING A BOUNDARY spans all three, as a comparison between the *sacred* and *profane* (Religiosity), the *clean* and the *dirty* (Hygiene) and the *safe* and the *vulnerable* (Invasion). However, categorising the conceptual metaphors into three clear themes helped to demonstrate how swearing is represented in the media. Swearing was also mapped to the source domain of MATTER OUT OF PLACE and throughout the data the conceptual metaphor BAD IS DOWN was persistently utilised to reaffirm that swearing is bad language. In terms of attitudes, all three clusters create a stereotype of swearing as a threat to the social and moral norm established by the *Self*, or in-group, which I will discuss in more detail in Chapter 7. Having established how swearing is represented within a conceptual metaphor framework I will now consider whether the discourse generated a moral panic as outlined in 4.4.1.

## 6 Swearing and Moral Panic

### 6.1 Introduction

As discussed in Chapter 3, for a moral panic to occur there must first be ‘a threat to societal values and interests’ (Cohen, 2002: 1) that leads to a ‘heightened level of concern’ (Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 2009: 37). In 4.2 I described how a heightened level of concern emerged within two British newspapers that established the data for this study. In the previous chapter I showed how the threat to societal values was expressed through specific conceptual metaphors, such as SWEARING is FILTH, and that these metaphorical mappings heightened the level of concern by establishing palpable threats. Religiosity suggested the threat of a supernatural punishment. Hygiene suggested the threat of contamination and illness. Finally, Invasion suggested the threat of boundaries coming under attack and loss of control. In this chapter I will expand on how this discourse led to a moral panic by firstly identifying the folk devil, before considering the media inventory. This consists of how the narrative was exaggerated and distorted, what predictions were made and how swearing became symbolized. I will then look at how the moral panic was legitimised through the use of moral entrepreneurs and experts in the Consensus stage before considering if the reaction was *disproportionate* to the alleged issue of an increase in swearing. Finally, I examine what happened afterwards.

### 6.2 Stage 1 - Emergence - Establishing the folk devil

When establishing the folk devil Critcher outlines three questions for analysis:

- In what form does the ‘problem’ emerge?

- What is perceived as novel about it?
- Why and in what ways is it perceived as a threat to the moral or social order?

There were two problems to emerge. The first was the scandal that became labelled Sachsgate and the second was a series of polls, as discussed in 4.2.1 and 4.2.2. Both of these problems triggered a moment of crisis that led to a heightened level of concern. At first glance Sachsgate would appear to have all the elements for a moral panic. The badly-behaved presenters were the folk devils and there were instant accusations of the ensuing outrage being disproportionate, even by Sachs' granddaughter herself (*Article M2*). Both newspapers identified Sachsgate as the reason for the media campaigns. However, despite the fact that only one swear word had been used, and that there was a bigger concern over invasion of privacy, both campaigns focused on 'four-letter-word swearing' (*Article E4*) and 'too much bad language' (*Article M1a*) as the folk devil. Moreover, the incident occurred on the radio and yet both campaigns shifted to swearing on the television as the core of the problem, begging the question as to why both papers reconfigured the original folk devil to another that had little to do with the original incident? The answer is that swearing was simply more newsworthy (Thompson, 1998: 38). As discussed in 3.7 journalists and editors will consider certain values when deciding if an event should become news. While Sachsgate had the personality, sex and scandal it did not have the relevance or proximity to the general public. Intrusion of privacy does not affect many ordinary citizens, and in this incident, it was two celebrities invading the privacy of another celebrity. While the presenter's behaviour may have angered many people, and while the overarching concerns around sexist behaviour and elitist wages may have rumbled in the background, neither topic was sufficiently scary enough to affect the general public. There was no social impact

to be had by taking on two brash and loud-mouthed presenters who had already been punished, or the BBC as an institution. Despite its flaws the BBC remained a much beloved and respected institution. YouGov data analysed that year revealed that BBC news journalists were more trusted than those who worked for Channel 4 and ITV (Barnett, 2008). The protests that occurred outside the offices of the BBC also made it apparent that both presenters had significant support. Voices that joined the resulting furore about swearing, such as Sir Terry Wogan, were quick to defend the presenter's wages, arguing that it wasn't their fault that they were paid such an inflated amount (*Article M7*). However, the single use of one swear word fitted into a pre-established discourse around risk to society that had originated in the Seventies following the long-standing campaign by Mary Whitehouse and NVALA, as discussed in 2.2.2. So, even though Sachsgate triggered the campaigns, swearing was identified as the deviance. Jenkins (1992: 10) refers to this as the *politics of substitution*; whereupon claims makers draw attention to a specific, and possibly irrelevant, part of the problem as a symbol for the real issue which, for one reason or another, cannot be directly attacked. As I discussed in 3.6, a moral panic will single out a 'cultural scapegoat' (Garland, 2008: 15) because of certain characteristics that can highlight the difference between the good *Us* and the deviant *Them*. However, it is important that the scapegoat does not have the power to deny or downplay any accusations of deviance (Cohen, 2002: xi). The BBC was not a suitable folk devil because, as a dominant broadcasting channel, it had the ability to bypass any claims of their culpability. Swearing, on the other hand, offered a suitable scapegoat for the concern around presenters being handsomely rewarded for behaving badly and also gave the scope to indirectly attack all the broadcasting channels. It was also what Cohen referred to as a 'soft target' (2002: xi), something that was already established as a social problem with a ready-made consensus within the public. There were

unlikely to be experts or legitimate pressure groups to stand up and support swearing. One lone voice attempted to defend swearing at the beginning of the campaigns, bemoaning that 'our masters, and those would be our masters, itch to control what we watch in the privacy of our homes' (*Article E3*). Being offended by something on the television is not an automatic right to clamour for censorship, he argued. However, his voice was soon overpowered and there was little media room given to any opinions that questioned the narrative that swearing was a threat to societal values.

### 6.2.1 The emergence of swearing

With Sachsgate taking a back step, the campaigns were quick to identify the threat to the moral and social order. The *Mirror* launched their campaign on November 4<sup>th</sup> with a front-page headline 'WAR ON TV SWEARING' (*Article M1a*). The article was referring to a speech made by the ITV Executive Chairman Michael Grade to the Broadcasting Press Guild where he was quoted as saying 'the prevalence of bad language such as the F-word is a little bit unrestrained' (*Article M1*). On November 9<sup>th</sup> the *Sunday Express* launched their Clean Up TV Crusade calling for a Decency in TV charter that would see a £100,000 fine for 'four-letter-word swearing' (*Article E4*).

As discussed in Chapter 2, swearing has been considered a social problem for centuries. However, the novelty around this particular panic was an alleged increase, both on television and within the general public as a whole. One of the biggest concerns for critics of moral panic is the question of proportionality. The scale of the issue has to be realistically appraised before the scale of the response can be established (Waddington, 1986: 246). Two main concerns were identified. Firstly, swearing was allegedly on the increase on television and this had generated an increase in swearing within the general public (*Articles*



*E9, E10a, E10b, E11, E13*). Secondly, the explosion in mobile technology and the internet meant that children were able to access unsuitable programmes at any time, arguably making the watershed irrelevant (*Article M3*). The latter problem was arguably the bigger threat, although the two were inextricably linked. Thompson (1998) stresses the importance of risk to familial hierarchies in understanding moral panics. Morality as a concept can be too abstract to understand (Lakoff and Johnson, 1999: 290), however, the traditional family unit is a concrete image that involves hierarchies and community. As I discussed in 3.5, the family unit can be metaphorically seen as a moral order and as such, any risk to the family unit is a risk to moral order (Thompson, 1998: 89). This was seen in the NVALA moral crusade in the Eighties which centred around the importance of family and community as the bedrock for their campaigns against swearing. Children in particular were singled out as being at risk of being ‘pressured into alien patterns of behaviour’ (Whitehouse, 1972: 134). A similar theme is seen in the 2008 campaigns. Letters from the public spoke of family values being destroyed (*Article E19*) and the well-being of children being at risk (*Article E2*). Parents were blamed for not protecting children from their own bad language (*Article E12, E13, E14*). Editorials referred to *slack parenting* and *Sixties liberals* as the reason that swearing had become such a social problem (*Article E9*) and the Clean Up TV Crusade was deliberately named to echo the NVALA campaign of thirty years prior (*Article E5a*). As I discussed in the previous chapter, this draws heavily from the Strict Father (family values) and Nurturing Parent (Sixties liberals) conflict.

With the problem established and realistically appraised the response needs to be considered. Critics argue that a response cannot be considered disproportionate if the judgements rest on a subjective analysis of the threat (Thomson, 1998: 10). However, one

way to look objectively at this threat, rather than subjectively, is to explore the core of the public concern via the complaints themselves. The Sachsgate incident was offensive on many levels and audiences were entitled to express concern regarding the standards of the BBC, which is considered by many to be the 'gold standard' (OfCom, 2005: 7). As one journalist wrote the 'BBC are meant to be among the guardians of morality here; champions of taste and decency' (Edge, 2008: *no page*). Another issue to arise was the fact that it was not a live broadcast meaning an editor had given the prank the go ahead, making the BBC as culpable as the presenters. A distinction is made between live programmes, which are considered to be closer to real life, and pre-recorded programmes, which should have a higher standard (OfCom, 2016: 29). While Ross and Brand may have been overexcited and childish while recording the show it was reasonable to expect the broadcaster to take a censorial position before broadcasting it (OfCom, 2005: 16). The *Voice of the Mirror* argued that 'producers must ask themselves if it is really necessary instead of just nodding through expletives' (*Article M3*). The fact that the incident happened during a radio show, as opposed to on television, may also have had an impact. Audiences report that they are less concerned about swearing on the radio as there is a belief that it is more strictly regulated than television (OfCom, 2005: 2).

Taking the swearing as the issue, it could be argued that it was not the swear word per se, but the fact that it was used in its more literal sense, that caused offence. Rieber et al. found that 'obscenities used denotatively can be considered far more harsh and offensive than those used connotatively' (1979: 221). There is a deep familial ideology behind panics about sexuality, as in what is considered to be normal and natural, and therefore moral (Thompson, 1998: 72). The word *fuck* is more popularly used for emphasis or as a general

expletive (McEnery and Xiao, 2004: 261) so the use of the word *fucked* in its literal sense was likely to break the code around sexuality. The word is referring directly to a behaviour that is considered to be taboo, thus it instantly makes the behaviour immoral, generating more public concern and fear than the more traditional familial concept of sex. If Ross had simply used the words *made love* or *had sex* with there may not have been such a backlash. However, the situation was made worse by the way Baillie was portrayed in the media after the event. Her efforts to establish her side of the story backfired. Photographs of her in her underwear were published and she became branded a *Satanic Slut* because of her membership of the burlesque troupe of the same name (Kelly, 2010: 116). Her position as victim of a cruel prank swiftly shifted to someone with a *deviant* sexuality that broke the code of normal and natural.

The Ofcom sanctions report was able to establish the seriousness of the event, outlining the incident as 'having a cumulative effect which resulted in it overall being exceptionally offensive, humiliating and demeaning' (2009: 5). The failings were threefold: editorial control, editorial judgement and compliance systems (Ofcom, 2009: 5). Concern was expressed about the conflict of interest between Russell Brand's independent production company and the BBC editorial power. The decision to implement a financial penalty was based on the failure to observe the privacy standard, which resulted in harm and offence being caused (*ibid*: 35). There was no mention in the report about swearing. This then suggests that the risk to moral order was the 'unwarranted infringement of privacy' (*ibid*:3) rather than the use of swearing. An apology broadcast on Radio 2 on November 8<sup>th</sup> referred to the incident as 'a grossly offensive and unacceptable intrusion into the private lives of Mr Sachs and Ms Bailie' (*Article M7*). Despite this, the reaction to the incident was the creation

of two anti-swearing campaigns claiming to be the 'voice of decent people' (*Article M18*). A few months later polls would reveal that public attitudes towards swearing were not as concerned about swearing as the campaigns predicted. While swearing as an offensive phenomenon is initially singled out as the deviance that needs addressing, the revelation from the polls sees a shift from bad language as the folk devil to the people who fail to find swearing offensive. The narrative changes so that the decent *Self* is presented as those 'who do not like casual and consistent swearing and are offended by it' (*Article 10b*) and who are calling for a 'zero-tolerance policy to stamp out the swearing' (*Article E11*) as opposed to the *Other* who is 'no longer fazed by the use of expletives' (*Article E11*). The lack of correlation between the original folk devil, swearing, and the backlash from the two newspapers, that appeared not to be supported by public opinion, would suggest a disproportionate reaction indicative of a moral panic. However, I will review this in 6.7

### 6.3 Stage 2 - The media inventory

Stage one of a moral panic will display concern about a particular someone or something and it emerges to become a deviant or a folk devil. As I have outlined in 6.2.1, the concern was about an increase in swearing, both on television and in the general public. Stage two sees the panic escalate as the threat becomes amplified. Cohen (2002) and Critcher (2006) call this stage the *media inventory*, where the nature of the threat is articulated in a 'stylized and stereotypical fashion by the mass media' (Cohen, 2002: 1). McEnery observes that the intentional manipulation of language used within the media inventory develops into what he calls a 'moral panic rhetoric' (2006: 9). The stage is a 'preliminary explanation of the nature of the threat and those who pose it' (Critcher, 2006: 17) and it involves three strategies. *Exaggeration and distortion* will see what Cohen referred to as *over-reporting*.

This, he explains, is when the media begins to use rhetorical tropes such as misleading headlines, melodramatic language and manipulated reporting (2002: 21). There will also be a *prediction* of what might occur if the problem is not addressed and resolved. Lastly, there is the *symbolization* process whereupon stereotypes are confirmed (2002: 27). I will now explore all three.

### 6.3.1 Exaggeration/Distortion

The right to privacy is a fundamental human right and as such, if the campaigns had concentrated on the 'unwarranted infringement of privacy' (Ofcom, 2009:3) as the *threat to societal values* there would have been little scope for a disproportionate reaction. Likewise, the objectification of Baillie, both during the interview and the following media attention that saw her characterised as a *Satanic Slut*, could be seen as misogynistic sexism which has proved to be problematic for centuries. However, what actually occurred during the *Russell Brand Radio Show* was distorted by the media into an issue about bad language.

Being averse to the use of bad language is not a moral panic on its own. However, a moral panic is identified when something that was previously considered to be a relatively benign problem is intensified and/or rises through the ranks to suddenly become a much more dangerous threat to society (Thompson, 1995: Cohen, 2002: Hall, 2013). There was no evidence to suggest that swearing had intensified either on television or within the general public, or that it was a threat to society and in fact, opinions differed. The same month that the campaigns were launched the broadcasting watchdog OfCom stated that 'it had no plans to review its guidelines on bad language...the amount of swearing in a programme was an editorial decision' (*Article M9*). The following January the *Express* published a poll that revealed that 'ninety per cent of the adult population [were] no longer fazed by the use of

expletives' (*Article E11*). A few months later the BBC released a survey of viewers' attitudes on taste and decency that showed that 'the public is more relaxed than ever about swearing on TV' (*Article E16*). If neither the regulating watchdogs nor the general public felt that the alleged increase in swearing was a threat to societal values it begs the question as to why there was such a *heightened level of concern* by the two newspapers.

The disparity between public attitudes and the two campaigns would suggest that swearing as a serious threat to societal values was a distortion. Both campaigns claimed to be taking on the voice of the people. Grade was quoted as saying that 'a very large section of the audience...don't want to hear such words' (*Article M1a*). Viewers were referred to as being *horrified* (*Article M13*) and there was talk of the *public rising up* (*Article M6*). There is an alleged 'outpouring of public protest' (*Article M11*) and a 'public outcry' (*Article M24*). Moral entrepreneurs spoke of a 'deep public concern about "swearing, taste and bad language" on telly' (*Article M13*). A letters page dedicated to the issue claimed that 'politicians, plus hundreds of you, have expressed your support' (*Article 6*). Yet, despite these many claims, the ensuing polls did not reflect the same sentiment. Attitudinal surveys found the public were not overly concerned about swearing on TV (*Article E16*) with nine out of 10 adults admitting to swearing every day (*Article E10a*). Moreover, the *Mirror's* claim that 'horrified viewers complained to TV watchdogs' (*Article M13*) was found to be an exaggeration as OfCom only received 1 complaint about offensive language (2008: 86). This would suggest that the public concern that the campaigns were built upon was exaggerated indicating that a moral panic was being instigated.

There was further evidence of distortion in the mode and style in the narrative which follows Cohen's over-reporting. Many of the headlines were misleading. A good example of

this is the launch of the *Mirror's* campaign where a statement saying that swearing was *a little bit unrestrained* was translated into the sensationalistic *waging war* headline (*Article M1a*). The typographical decision to use a large font and capital letters, on the front page, highlighted the sense of threat and ensured the public understood the gravity of the situation. While the newspaper was reporting on a speech given to the Broadcasting Press Guild the whole story became an *over-assertion*, as in while not an outright fabrication, the evidence was lacking and the story had been twisted to sound more dramatic, thus magnifying the news value (Bell, 1999: 2). Likewise, an article about children copying swearing from the television referred to a statistic of 45,000 11-year-olds being suspended for 'bad behaviour' (*Article M21*), however, this is not broken down to reveal what behaviour led to the suspension, making a spurious link to children being suspended for swearing. Another way of distorting the situation is to misrepresent the source of a claim. An article with the headline 'Swear? You're sacked' (*Article M22*) referred to a 72-page report that the BBC published in June 2009 in response to the Sachsgate incident claiming a victory for the *Mirror's* campaign. The opening line read 'The BBC has announced its biggest clampdown on swearing...with TV and radio hosts facing the sack if they slip up' (*Article M22*). However, while the article was deliberately designed to imply that the 72-page report was the source, thereby giving it more authoritative credibility, there was no mention of contract sanctions within the 72-page report. Instead, the article was referring to a senior BBC source who said 'anyone caught out of line won't work at the corporation much longer' (*Article M22*) that was buried later in the text of the article.

The *Sunday Express* launched the Clean Up TV Crusade 'in the face of a deepening crisis in trust over standards in broadcasting' (*Article E5a*) alongside a 600-word piece on Russell

Brand with a headline calling him 'a time bomb who urinated in his studio' (*Article E5b*).

According to a source, the piece reports, Brand would often 'run amok' and be 'out of control' but would get away with his behaviour because he was seen as 'the poster boy of Radio 2' (*Article E5b*). The emotionally charged double page spread also included a voting poll 'should all swearing on television, at any time, be banned now?' (*Article E5a*). Again, the concern over a presenter's inappropriate behaviour is misrepresented as concern over bad language. The results of the poll were never published.

Throughout both campaigns the exaggeration continues with bad language being compared to 'football hooliganism' (*Article M2*) and described as reaching 'epidemic proportions' (*Article E10b*). Cohen notes that the 'shotgun approach' (Knopf, 1970: 17) of distortion, bias and misinterpretation has become so accepted within the media and the public that meaning of the words are often lost in translation (2002: 20). In other words, metaphorical language can become blurred with reality, generating the question; how many swear words does it take to become an epidemic?

### 6.3.2 Prediction

Prediction is the assumption that the deviance will continue to be a threat, and there will be worse outcomes to come, unless it is challenged and overcome (Thompson, 1998: 34). The assumption that permeates the discourse around swearing is that, if not challenged, it will destroy family values and risk an increase in other anti-social behaviour such as violence, vandalism and littering. Such concerns echo the earlier campaign of NVALA, as discussed in 2.2.2. These assumptions are presented in a variety of ways. Firstly, the concept of family is established as a bed rock to good manners and civilised society. They are said to eat together, switch the TV off at mealtimes and are polite and respectful to each other (*Article*



*E19*). They are likely to be offended or embarrassed by bad language on the television (*Article M2*). In 3.5 I explained how there is a metaphorical mapping between moral nurturance and the type of parenting, whether the Strict Father or the Nurturant Parent (Lakoff and Johnson, 1999: 313). The Strict Father will demand zero tolerance for swearing and be rewarded with an expletive free community, whereas the Nurturing parent is deemed to be more liberal in their attitudes (*Article E18b*). The prediction, therefore, is that the failure to parent correctly, whether literally or as society in the role of the parent, will result in moral family values (society) being destroyed.

As discussed in 5.4.3, the threat of swearing is also presented as something that crosses a boundary that separates the good from the bad. The next prediction is that without tightening of regulations and more self-control, the boundaries will be breached leading to social and moral standards *declining* (*Article E2*) or being *ruined* (*Article E10b*). One of the assumptions that the Strict Father model outlines is that the world is a dangerous place that the family needs protecting from (Lakoff, 2004: 17). This leads us to understand the use of boundary in the metaphorical sense that creates the *Self* as a container, so that those outside the *Self* become the unfamiliar and threatening *Other* and that the Strict Father, the authorities, will strive to protect us. Moral panics are often seen as a boundary crisis, where confrontations occur between socially deviating groups, and so society's official agents are brought in to define where the boundary lies between right and wrong, permitted and not permitted (Boethius, 1995: 46). The boundaries referred to here are those of 'standards and taste' (*Article M14*) and 'decency and modesty' (*Article E6*) which, as I discussed in 5.4.3, are under threat of being *eroded, broken or invaded*. The boundaries are also being

*tested* and *pushed*, so they should be *controlled* and *policed*, which I discuss in more detail in 5.10.

Central to the family within the boundaries are the children. Another prediction at this time is that the moral integrity of the younger generation is at risk. This, in turn, threatens the wellbeing of society as a whole because ‘the next generation comprises the nation’s future’ (Boethius, 1995: 48). Good offspring are said to develop into ‘pleasant, polite, caring and hardworking adults’ (*Article E19*) whereas bad children behave *wildly* and are ‘badly behaved and disobedient’ (*Article M21*). A crisis amongst parenting is implied with some parents said to be feeling overwhelmed by the responsibility (*Article E19*) and there are accusations of parents swearing in front of children (*Article E12, E13*) with one headline claiming that ‘9 out of 10 parents swear in front of children (*Article E14*). Claims are made that children ‘as young as four, five and six are copying’ (*Article E10b*) bad language either from their parents or from the television, and that ‘boys and girls as young as 10’ (*Article E20*) are swearing in the street. One lady interviewed about the issue stated that ‘the younger generations are being brought up on swearing and it has become the norm’ (*Article E11*). In line with Cohen’s explanation of the prediction stage, statements about the gravity of the situation emerge from authoritative figures (2002: 26). The claims makers around the risk to children either come from professional teachers, who are often found in the vanguard of moral panics (Boethius, 1995: 48), or from other important figures such as representatives of regulatory pressure groups such as Media Watch and the Campaign for Courtesy. One teacher quoted as saying that ‘children are using more bad language than ever’ is reported as from a Church of England school, reinforcing the moral and religious element (*Article M21*). The Chairman of the Campaign for Courtesy states that ‘there are

some age groups now who can't say a single sentence without the F-word in it' (*Article E14*).

Another level of authority is provided by quoting people with British noble titles. Dame Joan Bakewell blames a culture of 'yob-speak' (*Article E24*) for the increase in swearing among schoolchildren. Lord Alfred Dubs, the former chairman of the Broadcasting Standards Commission, writes of the power of the television as something that 'young people watch, listen, learn and set their standards by' (*Article M2*). The narrative assumes a clear consensus amongst authoritative and professional people who have the wellbeing of the next generation at heart. I discuss the use of authoritative figures in a moral panic rhetoric in more detail in 6.4.

The consensus continues with the public. One published letter notes how children 'copy their elders, and it's common to hear youngsters swearing in public' (*Article E12*). There are calls to 'consider our children's well-being and tighten up the obscenity laws and broadcasting code' (*Article E2*). The children are also unlikely to accept discipline; 'It's no good telling those youngsters to wash their mouths out. They would just look mystified and tell you to f-off' (*Article E20*). One of the polls published in the January claims that two thirds of the 3000 11-year-olds questioned have been 'disciplined at school because of their use of bad language' (*Article E14*). The broadcasters are blamed for being 'too scared to exercise proper authority' (*Article M4*) in their bid to attract younger audiences. Concern is also about the public being 'too fearful to challenge those who [swear]' (*Article E10a*). This prediction is closely related to the Strict Father/Nurturant Parent conundrum. If children are not disciplined sufficiently there is a risk of an immoral, disrespectful upcoming generation. By focusing on children as innocent victims the deviant behaviour instantly

crosses a higher threshold of victimization than had the problem just been about adults (Jenkins, 1992: 11).

Moral panics are anchored in clashes between the younger generations and the older guardians who look to advise and control those who challenge and provoke them (Boethius, 1995: 49). While the panic partly expresses concern about the moral wellbeing of the younger generation, it simultaneously blames them for the situation. Younger producers are accused of thinking it 'cool to upset viewers with foul language' (*Article M4*) and *yooft*<sup>15</sup> audiences are blamed for embracing such programmes and having a 'tolerance of obscene language' (*Article E9*). People who swear are accused of thinking 'they will have more street cred with the youth if they eff and blind' (*Article M7*). There is a prediction that the trend to appeal to the younger generation is alienating older people (*Article E7b*) which then feeds the social anxiety experienced by older generations as they grow to resent their sense of powerlessness (Thompson, 1998: 68). Authority is given to the claims makers by quoting the director of Mediawatch, and a member of the British royal family, Prince Charles, who asks broadcasters 'not to forget the over 50s' (*Article E7b*).

To surmise, the prediction is that an increase in swearing is a threat to the moral fabric of society, and the younger generation, that will only get worse if left unchallenged; 'We ignore the insidious creep of profanity at our peril' (*Article E18b*).

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<sup>15</sup> The term 'yooft' is a colloquial and jocular, sometimes derogatory, term for youth that are considered to be rebellious or dissatisfied young people (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021)

### 6.3.3 Symbolization

Symbolisation is when certain key symbols are used in the narrative to evoke a negative connection between the folk devil and other behaviours or deviances (Thompson, 1998: 34). Cohen suggests that these symbols will create a 'hard core of stable attributes' (2002: 40) that enter a mythology around the deviance. The media provides the symbolic vocabulary and the general consensus between the media and elite groups regarding the deviance, gives an authority to the symbolic language. The basis of conceptual metaphor theory is how it makes us think of one thing in terms of another (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003). This stage of Cohen's moral panic theory is very similar to this concept, in that it creates emotive links between the folk devil and other symbolic objects. The easier the mapping the more conventional the symbol becomes. Ultimately both contribute to a cumulative effect that ends in the affirmation of an already established stereotype. While there is a general tendency to associate swearing with unruly and anti-social behaviour of young males, the use of bad language transcends gender, age, class and economic standing (McEnery and Xiao, 2004). However, in order for the moral panic to be successful the newspapers had to create a symbolic representation of swearing that would be easily recognisable and reaffirm the stereotype of swearing.

Cohen refers to attributes that are little more than guilt by association but which still contribute to the symbolization phase (2002: 41). Hall refers to this as *convergence* 'when two or more activities are linked in a process of signification as to implicitly or explicitly draw parallels between them' (2013: 220). While the symbolism that occurs during the media inventory can be directly linked to the conceptual metaphors as outlined in 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 there is further evidence of how swearing is linked to other anti-social behaviours in

order to reiterate the composite image that swearing is offensive to polite, decent people and a threat to the moral integrity of society as a whole.

In 5.3 I discussed how metaphors such as *sewer* and *gutter* create the conceptual metaphor SWEARING is FILTH. However, another aspect of these metaphors is the orientational concept of DOWN. As discussed in 3.5, spatialization metaphors are rooted in our physical and cultural experiences of physical movement and have led to such conceptual metaphors as HAPPY is UP, SAD is DOWN and HEALTHY is UP, SICKNESS is DOWN. It also leads to GOOD is UP and BAD is DOWN as well as VIRTUE is UP and DEPRAVITY is DOWN (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003: 16). The socially available knowledge about the sewer and the gutter is that they are both underneath or below, so DOWN, and that they deal with areas of human life that a civilised society finds *disgusting* (Cohen, 2005). Thus, the convergence between swearing and the sewer ensures that swearing is also considered to be DOWN and as such, it can be considered disgusting, leading to the conceptual metaphor SWEARING is DISGUSTING. The concept of FILTH is extended to other unhygienic behaviours that have easily available characteristics with which to judge bad language. Signifiers such as *littering*, *dog fouling* and *spitting* are used to link swearing to anti-social behaviours that symbolise a risk to the health and well-being of society. The stereotypical character of dog excrement on a path, and the consequences of coming into contact with it, is readily available knowledge that is easy to transfer across to swearing. Likewise with the consequences of spitting that is not only a physical attack but, like dog excrement, can also lead to the spread of disease. The convergence between swearing and these types of activities reiterates the idea that swearing is contagious and dangerous, thus SWEARING is DISEASE and SWEARING is a THREAT.

The lifestyles of those who swear are also converged to stereotypical characteristics of conduct that represent a 'threat potential' (Hall, 2013: 220). Descriptors such as *depraved*, *lewd* and *shameful*, are used to create a link between swearing and behaviour that is considered to be morally bad and corrupting, thus creating a sense of moral superiority for people who do not swear (*linguistic snobbery*). The guilt by association continues in the choice of images. Imagery is an effective tool to symbolise a deviance and maintain a stereotype (Hall, 1973: 176). A picture of Debbie Gallagher, from the series *Shameless* about a dysfunctional family in Manchester, to reinforce the headline 'Vulgar truth about obscenity TV' (*Article E18a*), is used to link swearing with an underclass that is socially marginalised. The same article also shows a still image of the Sex Pistols infamous outburst on the Bill Grundy show, depicting the rude lack of respect of the younger generation (although it occurred over thirty years previously). A picture of the footballer, Didier Drogba, losing his temper with a referee, and an image of Gordon Ramsay pointing his finger and clearly gesticulating a rude word, associates swearing with aggressive and abusive behaviour. In contrast, an image of Mary Whitehouse, with the caption, the guardian who 'foresaw TV's ugly future' (*Article E18b*), creates a neat symbol of good versus bad.

The image of Gordon Ramsay, a chef renowned for his 'infamous foul-mouthed outbursts' (*Article M5*), is often used in the data as a symbol of swearing. One picture has his mouth obscured to imply that his swearing is being censored (*Article E10b*). A promotional picture of Ramsay with his tongue out and a diamond encrusted F placed strategically on it is used twice in the *Express* campaign (*Article E3 and E20*). The signifying cues of a tongue being poked out suggest rude behaviour and a lack of respect. Likewise, the use of bling, in the

diamond encrusted brooch, is evidence of vulgarity and a lack of class. The use of *rants* as the caption indicates a loss of control. Another photograph shows the pop star Madonna sticking both middle fingers up in a clear effort to be disrespectful to authority (*Article E10b*). In contrast, images of the other chef in the firing line for his language, Jamie Oliver, is more often depicted in a friendly manner and one double page spread interview has a photograph of him with his wife and children, presenting him as the patriarch of a family, instantly making his position more wholesome and harmonious (Hodge and Kress, 1999). Moreover, the two presenters who kick started the crisis, Jonathan Ross and Russell Brand, also tend to be shown in images of them smiling or laughing. One article discussing the tougher rules for swearing on television continues with a piece about Brand falling in love, with an image of him with his then current girlfriend, Katy Perry (*Article M27*).

Unsurprisingly, as swearing is a phenomenon of language, another symbol to permeate the data was that of *vocabulary*. Bad language is seen as uncreative, unimaginative and lazy speech and controlling it on television would ‘work wonders for our youngster’s vocabulary’ (*Article E8*). However, there are also several references to the Poverty-of-Vocabulary myth that I discussed in Chapter 2. Peter Foot, chairman of the Campaign for Courtesy, said that swearing ‘shows a limited vocabulary’ (*Article E21*) and the MP Ann Widdecombe refers to ‘an absence of more colourful, precise, creative vocabulary’ (*Article E13*). In one article the playwright and author, Alan Bennett, is quoted saying ‘Don’t swear, boy. It shows a lack of vocabulary’ (*Article E20*). The association between swearing and a lower verbal prowess has been a long-established myth that was finally debunked in Jay and Jay’s (2015) paper. However, this link can lead to more discriminatory language. The use of the descriptor ‘inarticulate’ (*Article M8 and E11*) has more sinister connotations of a lower socio-



intellectual status and the neologism 'yob-speak' (*Article E26*) has instant connotations of criminal like behaviour, linking again to aforementioned aggressive and abusive behaviour. This also links to the theory of *Othering*, as discussed in 3.3.2, where the members of the *Other* are often seen as less capable and more aggressive than the *Self* (Holliday, 2011: 10).

However, there are contradictory symbols at times. Swearing is sometimes referred to as *boring*, *tiresome* and *tedious*, which would suggest that it is not as offensive as it is mundane and uninteresting. The chairman for the Campaign for Courtesy is quoted as saying 'people need to think that when they are using these foul words they are boring those around them' (*Article E11*). The patron for the Campaign for Courtesy stated that 'the use of the F-word on television was becoming 'ludicrous and banal' (*ibid*). Being bored by something is not necessarily equivalent to being offended. There are also some descriptors that sit better with the middle-classes, such as *arrogant*, *obnoxious* and *cocky*; 'the metropolitan elite conspired to think that effing and blinding was relevant, cool, contemporary and something to applaud.' (*Article E20*) which reiterates the earlier observation that swearing transcends all classes.

#### 6.4 Stage 3 - Consensus

The consensus stage is when the moral panic gains momentum because of the clearly defined agreement and support from the moral entrepreneurs, pressure groups and other people in power, such as politicians. The ideology of consensus assumes that within a grouping, or population, there is an understanding that their interests are united, that they subscribe to a certain set of beliefs and that their beliefs are legitimate and universal (Hall, 2013: Fowler, 1991). It is crucial to the media, in that it manages the relationship between

the institutions and the individual (Fowler, 1991: 49) and it naturalises ideological hegemony by making 'the rules of the few disappear into the consent of the many' (Hall, 2013: 213). However, as I will discuss, consensus can shift from a general social cohesion to a more sinister, coercive management of an issue (Hall, 2013: 215).

Once the folk devil had been established there was a focused drive to highlight the problem with voices of authority, with both newspapers claiming to have their *backing* and *support*. The voices of authority were referred to as *top TV figures*, *top* or *senior politicians*, *the three main/big political parties* and *telly stars*. Those in 'high-profile positions of influence and power' (*Article E19*) were deemed to be responsible for changing the problem. The use of *top* and *high* reflects the UP is POWER/CONTROL conceptual metaphor discussed in 3.5. Anyone who was reticent in showing support was described as being 'out of touch with public feeling' (*Article M11*) and accused of risking 'the wrath of station supremo Michael Grade' (*Article M13*). As discussed in 3.7, the use of hierarchal titles can lend authority to a statement. A range of peerage titles were highlighted to reinforce the sociolinguistic indicator of power, formality and authority (Fowler, 1991: 99). Lord Alfred Dubs wrote a column piece claiming that the BBC and other channels need to 'reflect the mood of the country' (*Article M2*). Lord Rees-Mogg 'backed plans to crack down on offensive language on the BBC' (*Article M14*). Dame Joan Bakewell expressed concern about an increase in swearing amongst schoolchildren (*Article E24*). Sir Terry Wogan, also referred to as the 'broadcasting legend' (*Article E5a*) cementing his position as a popular as well as authoritative figure, described Sachsgate as unforgiveable and unprofessional, branding the worst offender 'inarticulate' (*Article M7*).

Other claims makers were presented as authorities, such as John Beyer, director of MediaWatch, Esther Rantzen, patron of the Campaign for Courtesy, and Peter Foot, chairman of the Campaign for Courtesy. Academic authority was brought in with Tony Thorne, a language consultant at King's College London and described as an author of multiple books on language, who explained a linguist's point of view on attitudes towards swearing, surmising that 'there is a big difference between people resigning themselves to hearing bad language on television and liking it' (*Article E18a*). Political figures were also frequently used to stamp an authority to the campaigns. Culture secretary Andy Burnham, Liberal Democrat spokesman, Don Foster and Tory culture spokesman Jeremy Hunt are all reported as supporters. Labour MPs Jim Devine and Rosemary McKenna, alongside Tory MP John Whittingdale, ensured a cross party consensus. Then further down the hierarchy were well-known celebrities and TV figures, such as X-factor's Louis Walsh, Midsomer Murder's star John Nettles and his co-star Tim Pigott-Smith. The public wrote in to express their support and thanks for people with authority speaking up 'about this nasty phenomenon' (*Article M6*).

Another indication of the consensus stage is how other non-event stories appear to enhance the problem, despite the spurious links. These were often linked via the campaign logo to give credibility to the concern. The original article claiming to be waging war against swearing also included a large feature on a tasteless joke made on Top Gear by the controversial presenter Jeremy Clarkson about lorry drivers murdering prostitutes<sup>16</sup> (*Article*

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<sup>16</sup> While undertaking a task of driving a HGV lorry Clarkson joked about the challenges facing lorry drivers. "You've got to change gear, change gear, change gear, check mirror...murder a prostitute. Change gear, change gear, murder'. The BBC said "This reference was to comically exaggerate and make ridiculous an unfair urban myth about lorry driving" (*Article M1b*)

*M1b*). Other dubious claims included Gordon Ramsay giving up swearing because of the alleged uproar, when in reality he was simply getting fed up with being bombarded at book signings by fans requesting that he sign the books with expletives (*Article M5*). And when Ant and Dec left viewers horrified because they had used offensive language to joke about animal genitalia during a bushtucker trial on *I'm A Celebrity Get Me Out of Here*, the article moved on to an afternoon feature on Scott Mills show on Radio 1 called *Badly Bleeped TV*, where inoffensive words beginning with f were edited in such a way that they suggested they were the f-word. The incident had occurred in August but OfCom had recently ruled it in breach of the broadcasting code. The BBC said the feature belonged to the 'saucy seaside postcard tradition of comedy', but later accepted it had made an 'error' (*Article M8b*). These stories might not have made it into print had the campaign against swearing not already been in full swing.

As discussed in 3.7, another means of establishing consensus is the use of pronouns, such as *our*, *us*, and *we*, as a mechanism to assume, and sometimes affirm, the unity in the interests and values of the population and the correctness of certain specific beliefs (Fowler, 1991: 49). The campaigns are often referred to as *our* campaigns and statements are made such as 'we applaud the decision to cut out the foul talk' (*Article M18*) both of which are designed to include the reader as being on the right side of the fight. The stylistic manner of determining consensus ensures that anyone who might have a different point of view is relegated to the *Other*.

## 6.5 Stage 4 - Reaction

This stage is where diagnoses and solutions for the deviance are offered by the authorities and claims makers, some of which could be considered extreme or distorted (Thompson, 1998) when compared to the level of deviance. This stage is crucial to the success of a moral panic as how society reacts to the concern can either amplify it or silence it (Maneri, 2013: 182). As previously discussed, one of the keys to a moral panic is the moral confrontation between the consensual ideology of the decent people, the *us*, and the immoral ideology of the social deviants, the *them* (Maneri, 2013: 188). This stage offers a sound platform to expose the fragile border between the decent *us* and the demonised *them*, giving a power to the claims makers and moral entrepreneurs and justifies their calls for control and punishment. This is obviously closely related to the moral *Self* and immoral *Other* that I discussed in 3.3.2. Over the weeks and months that followed Sachsgate many voices from television, politics and other prominent public figures reacted by calling for action. The deviance of swearing was an easy target and a consensus was rapidly established about the legitimacy of the public outrage. Any counterclaims were few and far between. The decent people were prepared to 'rise again up again' (*Article M6*) and 'take a stand' (*Article M12*). A unity was established between the claims makers and the public with descriptors such as *shared fury* and *viewer's fury*, and legitimisation was offered in the shape of authority and power, with MPs said to be *furious*, *appalled* and *angry*. However, the reactions themselves caused further debate with one editorial in the *Mirror* bizarrely changing tack and stating that they were 'not calling for the extreme sanctions that more prudish and old-fashioned voices are bellowing for' (*Article M15*).

Like the conceptual metaphors, the responses can be classified into three forms; a call to banish and control (Religiosity), a need to cleanse (Hygiene), and a demand to fight and punish (Invasion). However, there are many crossovers, such as moral cleansing and fighting evil. The need to banish and control is the reaction that would be expected of the Strict Father. To call for the removal of bad language and for tighter control over its use is a compelling response to the deviance. There are repeated references to a *clampdown* or a *crackdown*, both of which refer to taking stronger measures in order to implement stricter discipline. The word banish has religious and political connotations. Adam and Eve were banished from the Garden of Eden for eating the forbidden fruit. Politically, being banished is to be exiled from one's home country. The headline 'banish filth from our screens' (*Article E5a/b*) was presented in a black banner across a double page spread. The issue was referred to as 'a deepening crisis in trust over standards in broadcasting' (*Article E5a*) to enhance the seriousness of the problem. The solution, the paper argues, is a new *Decency in Television* charter that would ban all swearing 'before and after the 9pm watershed with a £100,000 fine for offending broadcasters' (*Article E5a*). Moral panics can be identified by reactions considered to be disproportionate to the issue (Cohen, 2002). The idea of banning all swearing from television, before or after the watershed, presents as an authoritarian and disproportionate reaction to the original Sachsgate incident.

The cleanse response is primarily related to the conceptual metaphors of FILTH, FOUL and DISEASE. The typical reaction to something unhygienic, such as the sight or smell of something decaying, or bodily waste such as faeces, urine and vomit, or anything that appears sticky and slimy, is the elicitation of disgust (Royzman and Sabini, 2001: 38). As the MP Ann Widcombe states 'it is almost impossible to get through an evening's television

viewing without hearing “strong” language on the screen. Strong, of course, is a euphemism for disgusting’ (*Article E25*). Physically, disgust is characterised by holding one’s breath, wrinkling of the nose or turning up the lower lip, and proximity will intensify the reaction (Royzman and Sabini, 2001: 38). The key to most recent theories around disgust is that it is a notion of *offensiveness* (Rozin et al, 1999; 2000) which goes some way to explain why words that are deemed to be disgusting are also labelled as offensive. However, dirt and filth are not simply a matter of hygiene. When we reflect on the concept of dirt and filth, we are also considering the relation between order and disorder and respect for conventions (Douglas, 2002: 8). Our instinct, therefore, is to seek a means to maintain order and encourage a respect for conventions. While the need to cleanse is most closely related to the concept of hygiene, it can also be related to religiosity in the concept of a moral disgust. Theorists behind the idea of a moral disgust propose that the emotion of shame stems from a disgust with oneself and a sense of boundary-violation, where the boundary is that which separates humans from the rest of the animal world (Rozin et al, 1999; Royzman and Sabini, 2001). This is reminiscent of the Puritan attitudes discussed in 2.1, where reminders of our animal ancestry, such as bowel movements and sexual activity, violated the human-animal boundary and as such were considered to be disgusting and offensive, calling for a ritual cleansing of the soul. This suggests that disgust, and the need to cleanse, is rooted in the way humans sees themselves as superior to the animal kingdom and the importance of maintaining a boundary between the two (Rozin and Fallon, 1987: 28). Thus, the conceptual metaphor SWEARING is CROSSING A BOUNDARY is likely to elicit the same disgust response as SWEARING is FILTH. However, others argue that the physiological reaction to moral disgust is more akin to contempt or anger, rather than the emotion elicited from decay and bodily fluids, and as such should be treated with care. Creating too

tight a link between socio-moral behaviours and a reaction of disgust, even if it is considered to be metaphorical, runs the risk of leading to other emotional phenomena such as shame, worthlessness and clinical depression (Royzman and Sabini, 2001: 54). I will discuss the problematic use of disgust as a descriptor for the use of swear words in more detail in Chapter 7.

The overwhelming response to the conceptual metaphor SWEARING is FILTH was an appeal for a clean-up which, on the face of it, was quite rational. The act of physical cleaning has been seen as a purification of the body and the soul for centuries (Zhong and Lijenquist, 2006: 1451). The *Sunday Express* called their campaign a 'crusade to clean up television' in a nod to 'Mary Whitehouse's Clean Up TV campaign' (*Article E5*). References to cleaning often occurred in the headlines; 'A fine time to clean up TV' (*Article E4*), 'Clean up, move on' (*Article M17*), 'Is it time we cleaned up television?' (*Article E3*), and 'A clean up at the BBC' (*Article M25*). The term clean-up is also reminiscent of the conceptual metaphor CLEAN is UP and DIRTY is DOWN discussed in 3.5.

The call for the clean-up persistently came from authoritative figures. The culture spokesmen of all three main political parties 'added their voices to the Daily Mirror's call to clean up TV' (*Article M3*). Labour MP Jim Devine praised the Mirror's campaign to 'clean up telly' (*Article M11*) and there was a 'plea to PM: clean up TV' (*Article M16*). MPs were urged 'to sign up to TV clean-up campaign' (*Article M11*) and presenters were challenged to *clean up* their acts or face disciplinary measures (*Article E23*). TV chiefs were said to be facing 'mounting pressure to clean up the airwaves' (*Article M9*). The consensus expanded into the general public who agreed with the need to 'clean up the language that the public's had to endure on TV' (*Article M6*). However, calling for a clean-up is a curious response. The



ritual of cleansing is normally a physical activity that tends to involve water or some other cleansing solution. While there are strong links between bodily purity and moral purity, as discussed in 5.3, what the claims makers are actually asking for is the *removal* of swearing from television. The use of clean-up is metaphorical and designed to map the removal of swearing with the concept of the removal of physical dirt. While it is not the process of using soap and water, it is, nevertheless, calling for a sanitisation.

Throughout the data there is a narrative of fighting and punishing. Prototypical emotions such as fear and anger are considered the most basic and primitive of emotions. They have their evolutionary roots in signs of danger such as territorial intrusion and physical attack (Royzman and Sanini, 2001: 1). The repeated use of descriptors such as anger and fury in the data suggests that swearing represents *danger* and a *threat*. As I noted at the beginning of this chapter, the three clusters represent a threat; the threat of a supernatural punishment (Religiosity), the threat of contamination and illness (Hygiene) and the threat of boundaries being crossed (Invasion). It is logical then that the response to metaphors such as being *under siege*, *losing a battle* and being *bombarded* was to take some kind of combatant stance. This is demonstrated by the repeated metaphorical use of *campaigns* and *crusades*.

B1. In the face of a deepening crisis in trust over standards in broadcasting, the Sunday Express has launched a crusade to clean up television (*Article E5a*)

B2. Outraged ITV supremo Michael Grade last night vowed to wage war against “indiscriminate” foul language on the box (*Article M1a*)

A *deepening crisis* is often used to describe a diplomatic breakdown between countries that may lead to war. If relations break down irretrievably this might lead to the *launching of a crusade*. While campaign can be seen both as a military operation and a movement for political or social resistance, the use of *crusade* has the more sinister undertone of a religious war as discussed in 5.2, with salient features such as fighting, bloodshed and weapons. The use of *launched* suggests the discharging of missiles or rockets echoing the concept of weapons. By launching a campaign and waging war, the reader's attention is directed to the subset of characteristics of combat.

As I discussed in depth in 5.4.2 our understanding of WAR as a conceptual metaphor is dependent on our cultural and geographical experience as well as age and gender. References might be drawn from real wars, such as both World wars, or Vietnam, or the Falklands or Afghanistan, or more recently the Russian and Ukrainian war. Or we might consider war from more fictional situations, such as films or video games. Some readers might be from the armed forces and have first-hand experience of warfare, others may have experience of war as a civilian. Both experiences will undoubtedly refer to similar, and different, characteristics of war. There is also our understanding of why we go to war; on the one hand it could be seen as something that is used to protect and defend, so has noble qualities. Others might think that the catastrophic consequences of war are unjustifiable. So, it is clear that there are many different characteristics of war, both distinctive and salient, that our own experiences and cognitive knowledge will draw upon.

B3. A survey published yesterday claims that more than 90 per cent of people are not offended by swearing, with tolerance of obscene language particularly marked

among the young. If that really is the case then it is a sad comment on the state of the nation – but no reason to cease fighting for decency and civility (*Article E9*)

B4. ITV boss Michael Grade kicked off the campaign when he vowed to wage war on the “unrestrained, indiscriminate’ use of the F-word on the box (*Article M2*)

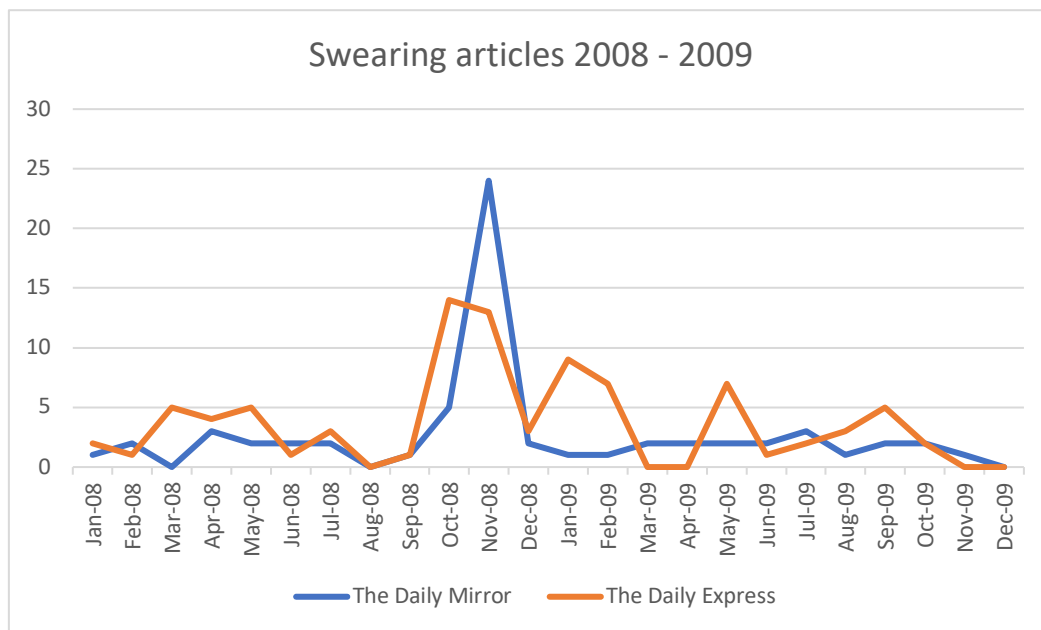
Again, our own experience of physical fighting will have some impact on how the metaphors are interpreted. The use of *kicked off* is another way of saying started, begin or launched. However, it is also capable of mapping to the concept of fighting. To kick something is to strike out with a foot and can often be a sign of ‘temper, annoyance, defiance and dislike’ (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021). Incidents of violence are often said to *kick off* and its use in this particular context of waging war is likely to direct the reader to the more salient features of fighting, riots and other forms of violence that suddenly emerge. While kick off can also be associated with the beginning of games such as football, because of the context it is more likely that the term kicked off here will be associated with football hooliganism and match disturbances. Another sporting term used that lends itself to the concept of fighting is *tackle* (*Article E7a*).

However, it is worth remembering that the deviance that has stimulated the waging of war is simply language. While fear and anger can be stimulated by the threat of danger, our responses are not always measured. For example, we can be under responsive to distant dangers, such as lung cancer from years of smoking, and over responsive to threats that while closer to hand are not realistically as dangerous, such as horror films (Royzman and Sabini, 2001: 37). This disparity in response to danger is closely linked to how a moral panic relies on an overreaction to an issue that is not as big a threat as initially portrayed

## 6.6 Stage 5 - Latency

The final stage sees the issue fall rapidly from the public eye and thus leads to the end of the narrative and the closure of the panic. This can happen for a variety of reasons; counter-facts may arise that delegitimize the moral entrepreneur, a law or a change in process may occur or the media may simply feel that the public's appetite is waning (Maneri, 2016: 182). As discussed in 4.2 the frequency of the articles around swearing diminished swiftly during 2009.

Figure 3: Swearing Articles 2008-2009



The last article for the *Mirror's* Stop the Swearing on Telly campaign appeared on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2009 declaring victory for the 'campaign to cut excessive swearing' (*Article M25*) which was almost a year to the day after its launch. The article reported that the BBC had 'toughened the rules on swearing and violence on TV with a crackdown on the casual use of the F-word' (*Article M25*). This came a few weeks after the *Mirror* claimed another victory in getting 'C4 to curb its swearing' (*Article M24*) where it was also mentioned that ITV had

agreed to stricter guidelines. In line with why a moral panic subsides, these changes in processes and regulations were deemed sufficient to address the concerns around swearing. However, the *Express* took a different view on the changes in guidance. An editorial with the headline ‘TV finally gets tough on obscene language’ (*Article E20*) questioned the motives behind the rule changes and demanded an apology; ‘I don’t think they have a genuine belief about swearing. It’s just that, finally, they have realised that large swathes of the British public regard bad language as a turn-off’ (*Article E22*). The polls and surveys that created the second moment of crisis for the *Express* seemed to undermine the argument that *large swathes* agreed with this stance and in this case, it seems more likely that the moral panic subsided either because the polls delegitimized the moral entrepreneurs or because there simply was not much appetite left within the public domain around swearing. Either way, swearing was no longer considered to be newsworthy and the general discussion around swearing returned to usual journalistic norms.

## 6.7 Summary

In this chapter I have explored the data with regards to the framework outlined in 4.4.1 which I now update.

*Table 9: Moral Panic Theoretical Framework Updated.*

	Stage	Evidence
1	Emergence	Although the initial incident was about invasion of privacy, the folk devil that emerged was bad language. The threat to the values and interests of the social and moral order was presented as an increase of swearing on television.

2	Media inventory	The threat was depicted in the form of conceptual metaphors designed to retain a link between swearing and a range of negative concepts. The narrative was often composed in an exaggerated or distorted manner and the predictions repeatedly expressed concerns that without increased control, swearing would endanger the moral integrity of future generations. Idiomatic and stereotypical language was used to speak to an already established ideology that swearing is BAD, with rhetorical tropes permeating the narrative. An increase in hostility towards the folk devil became evident in the disproportionately high coverage of the issue when compared to usual journalistic norms. The sensationalized manner in which the two newspapers reacted to the incident of Sachsgate, and the polls that followed, were evidence of a moral panic.
3	Consensus	A clearly defined consensus emerged between politicians, pressure groups and other people in high positions of power and authority. Combined with the consensus with members of the public who wrote into Letters pages to express their concerns, a narrative of <i>them</i> and <i>us</i> developed, which is often present during a moral panic.
4	Reaction	The solutions presented were to banish and control (Religiosity), cleanse (Hygiene) and to fight and punish (Invasion). The clear consensus in <i>solutions</i> , with little alternative point of view permitted, would also suggest that this discourse created a moral panic.
5	Latency	The coverage reduced significantly towards the end of 2009 and the panic receded with no significant changes in legislation, despite the attempts to instigate a Decency in Television charter. However, the stereotype of swearing as something filthy, contagious and threatening was confirmed.

As I discussed in 3.6, the concept of a moral panic can be contentious because of ascertaining the element of disproportion. I believe that this chapter has established that the threat to societal values and interests of the social and moral order did not warrant the *disproportionate* media fall out that followed and, as such, a moral panic did occur.

## 7 Conclusion

### 7.1 Goals and Research Questions

The primary aim of this thesis was to investigate how the discourse around swearing develops and sustains certain attitudes towards swearing that maintain an overarching concept that bad language is *bad*. I chose to explore this discourse within the analytical lens of a critical discourse study of the British news media. However, as the study progressed a snapshot in time appeared to warrant closer inspection and in doing so two areas of research manifested as fundamental in explaining how attitudes towards swearing develop. In critically analyzing how swearing is discursively represented in the media it became evident that the use of metaphorical language has a significant impact on attitudes towards bad language. Lakoff and Johnson's (2003) Conceptual Metaphor Theory provided the principal framework with which to examine this metaphorical language, the findings of which were outlined in Chapter 5. The thesis then went on to explore whether this discourse had created a moral panic around swearing, which was discussed in Chapter 6. The purpose of this concluding chapter, then, is to reflect on these findings within the scope of the main goals and research questions as outlined in Chapter 1.

In answering my first research question, what conceptual metaphors are found in the discourse, I identified three clusters in the data that were used to discuss swearing. When considering Lakoff and Johnson's (2003) proposal that conceptual metaphors stem from our lived experiences within the world, these three themes are relatively easy to identify with. The cluster of Religiosity reflects the engrained Christian traditions within Britain, whether you consider yourself a Christian or not. For most people in the UK, the concept of a



religious deity is established at a young age, either within a family network or during the early years of school education. The popularity of Christmas as a symbol of national unity is evidence of how religion remains pervasive in British society, despite the decline in church attendance (Office for National Statistics, 2020). The conceptual metaphors that link swearing to SACRILEGE, SIN and MAGICAL POWER generate a powerful narrative that suggests that swearing is a threat to the soul, or moral health. This is arguably going to be less effective on people who are either atheist or who, while maintaining a faith, understand that words are not capable of cursing and harming others. The mapping between swearing and religious conceptual metaphors relies on the understanding that swearing is something to be afraid of, based on an ancient belief in a supernatural punishment for using taboo words, which might help to explain why reactions to swearing can involve *fear*. It is less likely in modern times for people to believe that they have been genuinely cursed when someone uses a swear word to abuse them. The fact that Religiosity was the smallest cluster out of the three suggests that the link between swearing and its etymological roots in blasphemy and profanity is weakening. Yet, the connection between swearing and these ancient beliefs remains, in part because, as this study has shown, the discourse around swearing perpetuates the concept.

The second cluster, Hygiene, remains a central cog in the way swearing is viewed.

Regardless of religious persuasion, every single human being understands the concept of being cleaned and keeping clean from a very young age. People with a religious background may well associate elements of cleanliness with morality and spiritual health. However, far more influential in the concept of Hygiene is the reality of growing up and developing self-containment and personal hygiene. Moving from the restrictions of a nappy to the freedom

of bowel and bladder control informs our understanding of CLEAN is GOOD and DIRTY is BAD. Prior to this thesis, the relationship between swearing and filth would have been reasoned as simply the denotative connection between the swear words and the activity or body parts they represent. However, this study has evidenced how the mappings between swearing and the conceptual metaphors of FILTH, FOUL and DISEASE significantly contribute to the notion that swear words are *dirty* or *bad*, which explains why other synonyms for the same activity or body part remain acceptable in polite society. This is revealing, because it goes some way to explaining why people report finding swear words *disgusting*. As I explained in 3.5 disgust is a pre-cognitive reaction to something we perceive as dirty or rotten that is mostly beyond our control. It is a primal instinct driven by a human necessity to avoid toxic or contaminating dangers in order to stay healthy. More recently it is suggested that disgust elicitors have expanded from hygiene to the social order (Haidt et al., 1997), meaning that certain socio-moral violations, such as the use of bad language, will also cause disgust. This is further evidenced by the demand to *clean up* swearing or to *wash* your mouth out as discussed in 6.5. Future research into whether some people experience a physiological reaction to swear words, such as disgust, would be beneficial in further understanding of attitudes to bad language.

The final cluster of Invasion was perhaps the most surprising of the three themes and led to some interesting findings. This section identified how there is a conceptual relationship between swearing and our experiences of coming under attack and feeling threatened. We are constantly reminded of the importance of boundaries, from young children to owning our own home. Like the threat of contagion, the threat of being invaded is a very real concept. The media reports on natural disasters and military invasions regularly. But

invasion does not have to be on a grand scale. We understand that our bodies can be invaded by viruses and that our homes can be invaded by burglars. The need to keep ourselves safe and protected will then stimulate reactions such as *anger* (burglary) and *fear* (disease). Alongside these three themes were other conceptual metaphors, such as SWEARING IS MATTER OUT OF PLACE, that indicated a need for control, and BAD IS DOWN, which highlighted the association between swearing and the term *bad language*.

The second part of RQ1 considered how these conceptual metaphors contribute to the (negative) representation of swearing. Chapter 5 demonstrated that broadly speaking swearing is perceived as a *threat*. Religiosity is a threat to the soul, and also morality, that might result in a punishment from a supernatural entity. Hygiene is a threat to cleanliness and health which then leads to a risk of contamination, which might result in ill-health. Invasion presents the danger of an unwanted violation of our boundaries, that something might take over our territory resulting in a loss of control. The threat of a boundary being crossed spanned all three conceptual clusters: between the sacred and the profane, the clean and the dirty and the safe and the vulnerable. Moreover, the threat is to the well-being of the moral *Self* while swearing is presented as something that belongs to the immoral *Other*. The concept of the *Self* and *Other* is closely related to the *in-group/out-group* of a moral panic which brings us to my next research question.

My second question asked, to what extent did this discourse contribute to a moral panic? Chapter 6 provided evidence to indicate that a moral panic around swearing was established at this time. Moral panics do not result simply because they have instigated a degree of concern about a problem, rather that the concern goes beyond what is reasonable and becomes completely disproportionate to the problem faced (Cameron, 1995: 82). In 4.4 I

defined three means of identifying whether a reaction could be considered as disproportionate to the problem. Firstly, I considered how the journalistic practices created a perception of a new and threatening social problem that was not an accurate representation of the primary problem. The prank call that happened during a radio programme on a Saturday evening sparked a reaction that was, I believe I have shown, inappropriate and disproportionate. Firstly, the initial issue was a) an invasion of privacy and b) the use of one swear word, in its literal sense. A more appropriate reaction would have been a discussion of the celebrity's right to a private life and, perhaps, a concern about misogynistic attitudes towards the celebrity's grand-daughter, and women in general. The knee-jerk reaction that saw two nationwide anti-swearing campaigns, with demands for £100,000 fines, the banning of all swearing on television and for people to be sacked for the use of swear words, does not appear to be a rational response to the reality of what happened. A moral panic can be identified 'when some social phenomenon or problem is suddenly foregrounded in public discourse and discussed in an obsessive, moralistic and alarmist manner' (Cameron, 1995: 82). Even though only one swear word occurred during the telephone prank, it was bad language that was suddenly foregrounded and discussed within an alarmist and moralistic narrative. Another important element in identifying a moral panic is how they 'owe their appeal to finding points of resonance with wider anxieties' (Cohen, 2002: xxx) and thereby create a 'wave of incidents' (Maneri, 2016: 184). Alongside swearing, the panic was also concerned with poor parenting, vandalism, graffiti, littering, football hooliganism and dog fouling. The narrative drew heavily from the Strict Father, who would establish a zero-tolerance stance to swearing, and the Nurturing Parent, who's liberal behaviour was partly responsible for the situation. However, due to the unique timing of the campaigns, this study was able to demonstrate that the polls that were

released a little later did not align with the persistent war cry from both newspapers; that it was the general public itself that had concerns about swearing and that they were merely giving the *decent public* a voice. The polls undermined the underlying assumption that the newspapers had wide public support. Goode and Ben-Yehuda argue that the level of concern about a folk devil can be 'manifested or measurable in concrete ways, through public opinion polls' (2009: 37). Other scholars disagree because 'polls commissioned during panics (often by the media themselves) tend to reproduce the frame used by the media and to confirm it' (Maneri, 2013: 185). This is what makes these polls so pertinent. Despite the alleged concern around swearing the polls did not reflect the stance taken by the two newspapers, suggesting that, despite their attempts to be the champions of social order, they were totally out of touch with public opinion. Hall et al. (2013) argues that moral panics stem from a discussion being defined and controlled by people in authority and power, which then sets a limit to any subsequent discussions around the topic because of the way it has been framed (Lashmar, 2013: 52). This framework, they suggest, 'then provides criteria by which all subsequent contributions are labelled as "relevant" to the debate, or "irrelevant" – beside the point' (Hall et al. 2013: 59). The results from the polls and reports were decried because they did not suit the narrative that had already been established by the claims makers and moral authorities. Comments such as, 'If that really is the case then it is a sad comment on the nation – but no reason to stop fighting for decency and civility' (*Article E9*) attempted to make the polls irrelevant to the argument. And interestingly, while the *Express* did address the results, the *Mirror* ignored their publication altogether, instead concentrating on publishing the claim of victory in their campaign. The media inventory outlined how both newspapers *exaggerated* and *distorted* their claims and reports (6.3.1), *predicted* dire consequences if the issue was not controlled (6.3.2), and

*symbolized* swearing in the shape of recognizable images and words designed to define a stereotype of people who use swear words (6.3.3). The second definer of disproportion that I discussed in 4.4 is how the reaction of politicians, experts and public officials contribute to the growing coverage. As I demonstrated in Chapter 5, the moral panic drew heavily from a consensus among those in authority; the elite and the powerful, all of whom contributed to the concerns before offering solutions for controlling the problem. Both the journalistic practices and the use of authoritative figures helped to amplify the coverage on the grounds of 'the greater the coverage, the greater the significance and proportions of a given phenomenon' (Maneri, 2013: 184). Lastly, did the language itself amplify the panic? The sensationalized publicity, that was replete with figures of speech, prominent headlines and a campaigning rhetoric that conveyed a sense of exceptionality, demonstrates that there was a significant amplification occurring and, as such, the discourse can be considered to have been disproportionate to the initial issue. Finally, in line with how a moral panic behaves, it disappeared almost as quickly as it had arrived. While there was no evidence to indicate that the use of swear words, either on television or within the general public, had reduced or been eliminated by the two campaigns, the campaigns simply melted away. However, there is evidence to confirm that public opinion was not swayed by the two campaigns. A more recent survey into public attitudes towards offensive language on TV and radio revealed 'an ongoing trend of increasingly relaxed attitudes about the use of swear words' (OfCom, 2021). While individuals will always be entitled to have an opinion on swearing, and to find it offensive or dirty, the fact remains that the two campaigns, and the alarmist narrative, was disproportionate to the reality of public opinion.

So finally, to my last question, what can the combination of the two theories reveal about attitudes towards swearing? RQ1 demonstrated that conceptual metaphors are instrumental in developing and sustaining particular attitudes towards swearing, as in swear words are *immoral* (Religiosity), *dirty* (Hygiene) and *out of control* (Invasion). In doing so it revealed that it is the way that we *speak* about swearing that shapes what we *think* about swearing, something that has not been considered before in research into swearing. RQ2 confirmed that this discourse created a moral panic about an increase in swearing on television and within the public, that was not an accurate reflection of the general public's overall opinion. In line with Moral Panic Theory, this discourse established a *folk devil* (swearing and/or people who swear) and then distorted the media rhetoric in a stylized and stereotypical manner that overstated the problem, whilst simultaneously embellishing the panic with an alleged consensus from a range of supporting actors of authority. While moral panics will no doubt have a range of conceptual metaphors in the rhetoric, the presence of conceptual metaphors do not indicate a moral panic. However, it could be argued that when a moral panic is permeated with conceptual metaphors in the way that this thesis has demonstrated, it creates an even bigger disparity between the in-group and out-group. The combination of these two theories offers an insight into how the *linguistic snobbery* and *ensorious attitudes*, that I discussed in Chapter 1, manage to prevail. While the conceptual metaphors provide the foundation for how swearing is perceived, the presence of a moral panic can legitimize the attitudes that are based on them by highlighting the moral, good *Self* (in-group) whilst demonizing the immoral, bad *Other* (out-group) through a structured, media-driven narrative. A hard-core stable of attributes is then applied to the deviance (swearing and/or people who swear) creating a stereotype that is then reaffirmed by the consensus of those in power. In terms of social judgements, this

then confirms the use of expletives as a sign of lower socio/economic standing (poverty of vocabulary, lack of education etc.) and as such is lower in the hierarchy of acceptable language (*linguistic snobbery*). Moreover, the conceptual metaphors that were outlined in the cluster INVASION endorse the idea that swearing must be controlled to protect society from further harm (*ensorious attitude*).

There are several conclusions that can be drawn from this study. Firstly, the patterns that have emerged within the conceptual metaphors help to explain why swearing is perceived as *bad language*, something that is dirty and disgusting, but also immoral and out of control. This is not, as some try to argue, because of the activities and body parts that these words represent, but because of the *language* that we use when discussing bad language. Secondly, the ubiquity of these conceptual metaphors results in a naturalizing of the rhetoric, leading to a blurring of the boundaries between the literal and the non-literal. When the connection between the source domain and the target domain becomes so entrenched in our conceptual system it can lead to a literal interpretation that becomes accepted as 'commonsense representations of reality' (Refaie, 2001: 354). However, as this study has shown, these representations stem from ancient beliefs about the power of language, and as such, are not based on any reality but are instead based on long-term socially engrained attitudes towards swearing that are fueled by conceptual metaphors. As I discussed in 3.3.1, attitudes that develop from a reaction to behaviours that appear to challenge the values and norms of an in-group can lead to the creation of negative stereotypes. While the negative stereotype was initially defined by the association between swearing and the conceptual metaphors outlined in Chapter 5, the moral panic narrative reproduced and legitimized it.



## 7.2 Limitations and further research

This thesis has examined the way conceptual metaphors influence attitudes towards swearing, and how a moral panic rhetoric can legitimize these attitudes and reinforce the stereotypes and mythologies around swearing, and as such has provided solid grounding for research into bad language and conceptual metaphors and moral panic to continue.

However, there were limitations. Firstly, by restricting the data to the discourse around the two incidents outlined in 4.2 the final corpus was smaller than originally anticipated. It was also limited to two specific newspapers, both of which were tabloids and mid to lower market. It would be interesting to see the data extended to a broader range of newspapers, especially the broadsheets, and even social media if the scope allowed, to see if the conceptual metaphors are as prevalent outside the *Mirror* and the *Express*. It would also be useful to see if the blurring between conceptual metaphors and the concept of swearing could be evidenced in more controlled experiments, especially when considering the emotional reaction of disgust to swearing. More research into how and why attitudes towards swearing might be influenced by physiological responses would be invaluable in understanding the way some people react to swearing, and hopefully in time, encourage a new narrative about bad language. Finally, further research into how mythologies around swearing are perpetuated by moral panics would be useful in explaining why attitudes towards swearing are passed down from generation to generation.

## 7.3 Final considerations

At the beginning of this study I asked another question, why does swearing matter? The aforementioned conclusions are problematic and demonstrate how attitudes to swearing

can lead to narrow-mindedness. As I pointed out in 3.3.1, attitudes towards language varieties invariably spread to attitudes towards the groups of people who use that language, leading to prejudice and discrimination (Garrett et al., 2003: 12). Moreover, constant repetition of metaphors can create a frame in which events and groups of people can be perceived (Refaie, 2001: 368). The perpetuation of a narrative that persistently stereotypes swearing as something that is a threat to the social and moral order of the *Self* can, and often does, extend to the stereotyping of the *Other*, those who use swear words. Or even, those who simply do not find them overly offensive. The association between swearing and the concept of religiosity is straightforward, given that blasphemy and profanity are the forefathers of swearing. Likewise, the affinity between swearing and hygiene was historically based on their affiliation to activities and body parts that were once considered to be taboo. However, I believe that these representations should be evaluated in the light of our more recent knowledge that, in the Western world at least, words are now understood to be arbitrary and that any literal link between swear words and religiosity and hygiene are no longer valid. This is important because religious orientation can lead to a desire to discriminate (McFarland, 1989). While privately held prejudices may seem harmless, perpetuating a narrative that allows a persistent hierarchy of morals based on religious orientation (for example, as seen in *Article E13*) can lead to 'actual discrimination [with] severe consequences for its victims and for society' (*ibid*: 324). In a similar fashion, the mapping of swearing to hygienic practices could allow the same degree of discrimination to people who use swear words (as in they lack personal hygiene, they are dirty etc.). Perhaps more problematic, however, is the metaphorical representation of swearing as an invasion. The idea that swearing can spread from person to person like a disease is an idea that was first mooted with the religious societies in the Seventeenth

century. As I discussed in 2.2, the concept of Hygiene is not simply about the words but is also about control and order. Linguistic censorship is not so much about the words, but about the desire to control and censor elements of society who represent a threat to those in power (McEnery, 2006). The notion that swearing is an invasive threat to physical and moral well-being, that it could be contagious and spread like a disease, is as much about control as it is about bad language. There is a fine line between a general social cohesion that views bad language as rude and offensive and a more sinister coercive management that aims to censor and control, and sometimes punish, people who use swear words.

To conclude, this thesis has revealed that our choice of language when we talk about bad language is crucial to how attitudes towards swearing are formed, defined and sustained. Moreover, it has demonstrated that social attitudes to swearing are still very much rooted in a narrative that began hundreds of years ago. The ritualistic responses of disgust, fear and anger towards swear words are based on ancient attitudes to language. The evidence presented in this study suggests that these responses are now stimulated by a series of conceptual metaphors that are routinely used in the discourse around swearing. Despite the discursive representations identified in Chapter 5, swear words are not viruses. Neither are they bombs. Or, for that matter, are they sticks and stones. They are simply words. This begs the question whether these attitudes are still appropriate for the twenty-first century and whether it might be time to reassesses whether bad language is actually that bad.

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Article M1a

**DAILY Mirror** Tuesday November 4, 2008  
REAL NEWS.. REAL ENTERTAINMENT 40p

**Believe.. we can change the world**  
OBAMA'S RALLY CRY: PAGES 7, 8 AND 9  
**US DECISION DAY 2008**

**Tess Daly**  
**MY AWARDS NIGHT DRESS DISASTER** SEE PAGE 33

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OR COLLECT VOUCHERS AND APPLY BY POST: SEE PAGE 26

**WAR ON TV SWEARING**  
ITV boss Grade blasts too much use of F-word

By MARK JEFFERIES and JASON BEATTIE  
**OUTRAGED** ITV supremo Michael Grade last night vowed to wage war against "indiscriminate" foul language on the box.  
Mr Grade, 65, said: "The prevalence of bad language such as the F-word is a little bit unrestrained."  
"Not enough consideration is given to a very large section of the audience who don't want to hear such words. It seems indiscriminate now." He will now spell out his demands to station chiefs.  
Last night top TV figures backed his crusade to clean up the airwaves following the Manueigate scandal.  
X Factor's Louis Walsh said: "I totally agree. There's too much bad language on TV."  
Watchdog John Beyer added: "The public is offended by it and don't want

**TURN TO PAGE 11**  
**CRUSADE** Michael Grade

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K



HOAXED Fawcety star Sachs

### ITV supremo to wage war on swearing

FROM PAGE 1

it in their living rooms." MP John Whittingdale, head of the Commons culture committee, said: "Swearing is becoming so commonplace."

"The watershed doesn't mean a free-for-all after 9pm." ITV executive chairman Mr Grade - BBC chairman until 2006 - called Jonathan Ross and Russell Brand's phone stunt "pretty horrible and indefensible in any terms".

The TV chief did not call for an all-out swearing ban but said curbs were too lax. He told the Broadcasting Press Guild in London: "I'm not sure what the rules are these days."

Recent programmes have sparked fury with a torrent of foul language just after 9pm. Jamie Oliver's Channel 4 show Ministry of Food used 23 f-words in 50 minutes. BBC1's Traffic Cops had it 20 times and ITV's Natural Born Sellers 19 times.

Brand's Radio 2 show sparked outrage last month as he and Ross left lewd phone messages for Fawcety Towers legend Andrew Sachs, 78.



COMEBACK Jonathan Ross

### Wossie: Get me Manuel for 1st show

EXCLUSIVE by TOM BRYANT SHAMED Jonathan Ross will invite Andrew Sachs to be the first guest on his Friday night chat show when it returns.

A source said: "He believes that by having him on the show, he will draw a line under this whole sorry affair." Ross will be back on air in January after his three-month suspension by the BBC.

The source said: "Jonathan is desperately upset that he's offended a comedy legend like Andrew."

Insiders say the move indicates he has no plans to defect to ITV.

Sachs said yesterday: "I really don't know if I would go on the show. I have not been asked and I would have to discuss it with Jonathan Ross before I went on."

"He did write me a lovely letter of apology and going on the show is not something I would rule out."

"I've got an open mind about things like that."

Sachs is to write to Radio 2 controller Lesley Douglas saying he thinks it is harsh that she lost her job over the prank phone call.

# Fury at Clarkson's sick lorry driver joke



CRASH DUMMY  
Clarkson has caused fury over his Top Gear slur

It beggars belief that those words can be broadcast. It is an outrageous slur  
ROAD TRANSPORT UNION

# Change gear, check mirror, kill prostitute, change gear, change gear..

MARK JEFFERIES  
mark.jefferies@mirror.co.uk

JEREMY Clarkson plunged the BBC into a fresh storm last night - after joking that truckers spend their time "driving and murdering prostitutes".

The Top Gear host, 48, made the sick remark as he and co-presenters Richard Hammond and James May were given tasks as HGV drivers.

It angered relatives of victims killed by truckers Yorkshire Ripper Peter Sutcliffe and Suffolk Strangler Steve Wright - as well as lorry drivers. Now the star could be forced into an apology as the BBC tries to clean up its act following the Russell Brand and Jonathan Ross scandal.

**DISGUSTED**  
Talking to the camera, smug Clarkson said on Sunday night's BBC2 show: "What matters to lorry drivers? Murdering prostitutes? Fuel economy? It's a hard job and I'm not just saying that to gain favour with truck drivers. There's so much to do. You've got to change gear, change gear, change gear, check mirror, murder a prostitute. Change gear, change gear, murder."

The BBC admitted last night it received 188 complaints over Clarkson's comment. Sutcliffe was imprisoned in 1981 for killing 13 women and Wright was jailed this year for killing five in Ipswich.

TV watchdog Ofcom is investigating.

The United Road Transport Union's James Bower said: "We're disgusted."

Road Haulage Association chief Roger King has written to BBC director general Mark Thompson over the "outrageous insult".

The BBC said: "This reference was to comically exaggerate and make ridiculous an unfair urban myth about lorry driving and not intended to cause offence."

Clarkson's wife Francie, who is the star's manager, refused to comment.



DRIVING SEAT  
Clarkson steers the truck towards wall



WALL OVER  
Artic ploughs through wall at legal top speed

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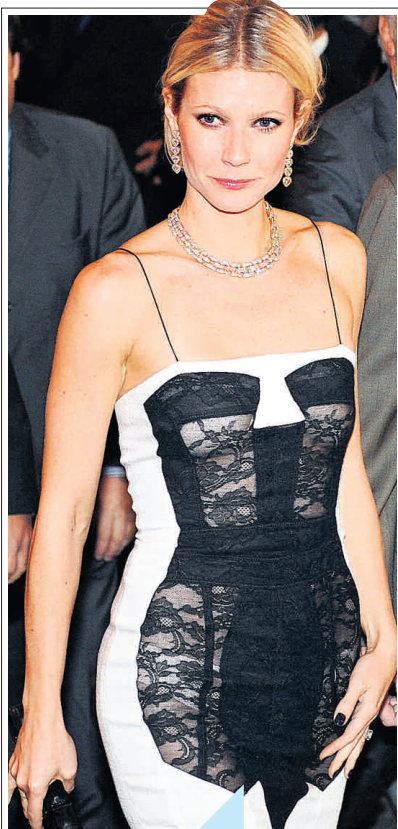


KILLERS Lorry monsters Ripper Sutcliffe, left, and Strangler Wright

### MOTORMOUTH

- ▶ CLARKSON caused outrage in May when he told the Hay Festival he got a speeding ticket for driving at 180mph in the Limehouse Link tunnel in East London.
- ▶ THE Mirror revealed in March that Clarkson was snapped chatting on his mobile while driving at 70mph on a motorway.
- ▶ IN December 2006 he sparked complaints for a Top Gear episode in which he described a car as "a bit ginger beer" - rhyming slang for queer.
- ▶ A YEAR earlier he caused controversy on the BBC2 show after mocking a German-made car by performing a Nazi-style salute.
- ▶ THE BBC had to apologise and pay £250 to a Somerset parish council in 2004 after Clarkson damaged a tree by driving into it to test a pick-up truck.





**Gwyneth's all basque to front..**

BLACK and white made Gwyneth Paltrow quite a sight last night – as it seemed she was wearing her underwear over her dress. But the Oscar-winning mum of two, 36, positively basqued in the lace-panelled limelight at the Paris premiere of her latest movie *Two Lovers* – even if she looked a bit like a French maid in negative.

# SWORN IN

## Top politicians sign up to our campaign to stamp out the F-word on television

BY JASON BEATTIE and MARK JEFFERIES  
jason.beattie@mirror.co.uk

**The Mirror's call to stop the swearing on telly has been backed by top politicians of all parties.**

ITV boss Michael Grade kicked off the campaign when he vowed to wage war on the "unrestrained, indiscriminate" use of the F-word on the box.

The Mirror supports his comments and is calling for more scrutiny by bosses over the use of swearing – a drive strongly backed by people in the industry, MPs and viewers.

Culture Secretary Andy Burnham said: "I have long emphasised the importance of high standards on television and I am pleased the Mirror has lent weight to this important issue."

Tory culture spokesman Jeremy Hunt compared bad language on television to football hooliganism, which "people said you could never stamp out, but we did".

He said: "It's time to stamp out the excessive use of swearing on television. Broadcasters need to realise the huge impact they have on shaping our society." Lib Dem culture



**I'm glad the Mirror has lent its weight to this important issue of high TV standards**

**CULTURE SECRETARY ANDY BURNHAM**

spokesman Don Foster added: "Broadcasters are too lax. They need to tone down language at all times. Not just after the watershed."

A spokesman for the BBC – of which Grade used to be chairman – said: "While we have a duty to reflect real lives and people, we are very sensitive about what we broadcast when



**▲ BATTLE** The Mirror front page yesterday

children are most likely to be listening." But the BBC and Jeremy Clarkson, 48, have refused to apologise for the jokes he made on BBC2's *Top Gear* that lorry drivers only care about fuel prices and killing prostitutes.

There have been more than 500 complaints. A BBC spokesman said yesterday: "The vast majority of viewers have clear expectations of his on-screen persona."

The remarks come after Russell Brand and Jonathan Ross left answer machine messages for Andrew "Manuel" Sachs that Brand slept with his granddaughter Georgina Baillie. Brand resigned and Ross was suspended.

But Georgina, 23, has now declared the pair should be reinstated, saying the row had been blown "way out of proportion".

She said: "I was really angry when I said I wanted them fired but the suspension was enough. I'm gutted about the whole thing. A world without Jonathan Ross and Russell Brand would be a very sad, dull place."

**Voice of the Mirror: Page 10**

## Bad language should have a specific point

By LORD ALFRED DUBS, former chairman of the Broadcasting Standards Commission

TELEVISION sets standards. It is in our front rooms and our children's bedrooms. It helps to inform, entertain and educate.

But it also has responsibilities. As the chairman of the BSC, I helped monitor language, violence and scenes of a sexual nature.

Swearing, in particular, has to be seen in context. It has its place for dramatic effect.

In the South, calling someone a daft bugger would be bad

language. In the North, it is endearing and not offensive. It is all about context.

I am no Mary Whitehouse, but standards have been slipping. The F-word is now used gratuitously and out of context.

And young people watch, listen, learn and set their standards by it. This is no call for a blanket ban, but for a

return to when swearing was only acceptable when serving a specific point.

Producers should now be more aware than ever of the need to rein back some of the excesses that have crept in.

People want to know that when they sit down in front of their sets with their families before 9pm that there will be

nothing to offend or embarrass. We know in real life people swear.

We want TV to reflect that reality.

But we do not want bad language used casually to no effect. To many, the F-word is now nothing more than just another adjective.

We have to strike a balance and it is up to the BBC and other channels to reflect the mood of the country.

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10 M Daily Mirror  
WEDNESDAY 05.11.2008

**VOICE OF THE**  
**DAILY**  
**Mirror**  
voice@mirror.co.uk

# US steps into light

**THE world is on the threshold of a new dawn today.**

Every exit poll pointed to a stunning victory for Barack Obama but the Democrat senator, like people around the globe, is rightly taking nothing for granted.

There was an unmistakable air of excitement, long queues at polling booths putting Britain to shame after our own low turnouts in the General Elections of 2001 and 2005.

John McCain is a much decorated war hero but the mother of all comebacks by the Republican would be a disaster for the US, as well as a crushing disappointment in other countries.

The weight of expectation on Mr Obama's slender shoulders would crush a less resilient politician but he looked ready to be crowned the 44th - and first black - President of the US.

*Whatever the result, the long nightmare of the George W Bush era is drawing to a close which is a cause for real celebration.*

# Bad mouthed

**TO complain that there's too much swearing on TV isn't prissy or prudish but a recognition that standards could be higher.**

Parents increasingly feel under siege as children are able to watch shows with bad language in bedrooms or on the internet.

This is why the culture spokesmen of the three main political parties added their voices to the Daily Mirror's call to clean up TV.

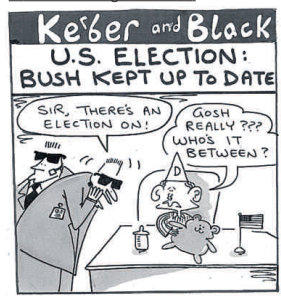
Swearing in the proper context at the right time will always be part of broadcasting.

*But producers must ask themselves if it is really necessary instead of just nodding through expletives.*

# Out on a limb

**DOUBLE amputee Mick Skee is right to be furious over the £40 cost of taking his spare artificial limbs on a holiday flight.**

*The airline should waive the charges - it doesn't have a leg to stand on.*



CMYK



# Not such a nice one after all, Sir Cyril.

## Points of disorder

◆ THE future of post offices is in the hands of James Purnell.

Downing Street has informed the Work-harder Secretary that he decides if the £1bn card account stays with the network or switches to PayPoint.

I think it's a political no-brainer and if Purnell wants to axe 3,000 post offices he's a very foolhardy Cabinet Minister.

Because No 10 will be directing the protesters his way.



## Going up

Foreign Secretary David Miliband is making the best of a bad job in the Congo...



## Going down

Millionaire Tory Alan Duncan defended the great tip rip-off of restaurant staff.

## Points of disorder

◆ MPs are behaving like a lynch mob over radio duff lads Russell Brand and Jonathan Ross.

A Commons motion condemning the idiot presenters has been amended four times as tougher and tougher punishments are demanded.

With Brand walking, the saintly Vince Cable wants Ross (left) shown the door. No other motion has been amended so much - not even the welcome for an X Factor song. It's great to see our MPs tackling the big issues of the day.

**LARGER than life Sir Cyril Smith is learning the harder they fall.**

The reputation of the 20-stone granddaddy of the Lib Dems is irreparably damaged over the exposure of his cosy relationship with a merchant of death.

Smith loved to pose as the country's most popular MP, the original chat show politician, a regular on Saturday night TV when Charlie Kennedy was still in short trousers.

The '70s and '80s catchphrase "Nice one, Cyril" could have been written for Smith as he earned a following way beyond his seat of Rochdale.

But there's nothing nice about Smith's past dealings with Turner & Newall - once the world's largest asbestos giants - that today might have seen him booted out of Parliament. Asbestos-related diseases such as mesothelioma are incurable killers, claiming 4,000 lives a year.

Yet the industry hid the lethal truth for decade after decade. And recently released

documents suggest Smith was too close to Turner & Newall for the health of the nation.

In 1991, amid a public clamour for a ban on the carcinogen, Smith was wining and dining company bosses

please, within the next eight weeks, let me have the speech you would like to make (were you able to) in that debate," Smith wrote to a Turner & Newall director.

The brass neck of Smith was astonishing when I went to see

him in Rochdale. He might be an octogenarian and have difficulty walking, but he's bright as a button - and shamelessly unrepentant.

"Of course the speech was extremely useful to me because it made it sound as if I could speak intelligently on a subject I knew little about," he declared. Insisting he used only some of the script supplied by a local employer, he maintained 4,000 deaths was "relatively low" and conjured up a bizarre explanation.

"It's not like, how can I put it, like flu and contagious," asserted Smith. "It wasn't infectious in the sense you can have a man and wife and one would have it and the other wouldn't."

But partners do die from

inhaling dust on the clothes or hair of factory workers or tradesmen. As do members of the public.

Rochdale's Labour candidate Simon Danczuk accuses Smith of betraying people, calling him an apologist for the asbestos industry.

Smith claims he's the victim of a left-wing plot.

But no one could say the parents of Leigh Carlisle are motivated by politics.

She was a beautiful Oldham woman cruelly robbed of her life by mesothelioma at the unusually young age of 28.

The latest theory is that she was infected by asbestos at school. Around 13,000 schools still open despite the presence of the deadly mineral in their buildings.

Leigh's mum Sheila's lack of bitterness is incredible. But she shook her head when we spoke of Smith's behaviour: "Let's hope he doesn't get it," said Sheila.

"He hasn't lost a daughter." Some will argue Smith's a silly old man, that it happened a long time ago and he should be left alone.

But no MP should ever ask a company, particularly a firm that has caused so much pain and heartache, for a speech.

Dishonourable Smith deserves to be stripped of his knighthood.

## Dishonourable Smith should be stripped of his knighthood



# Obama Cameleon

HERE'S something Tory bandwagon jumper David Cameron will wish he'd never said...

Q: "You have been compared frequently to Obama... do you see any resemblance yourself?"

A: "I think it's very different. If anything, American politics and British politics have grown apart."

"I think he's an inspiring orator and he has a wonderful way with phrases and I love listening to him. I wish I had that sometimes."

"But in American politics they do make much more flowery, grandiose speeches. If we made some of the speeches they make there would be howls of laughter."

"That's great all that brotherhood of man stuff, but now tell us what you're going to do. He's trying to

break a hegemony of another party, so I suppose there's a similarity there, but I don't see serious similarities."

Only Tory chancers compare Cameron to an Obama who believes - like Gordon Brown - in the power of government to do good.

And a Bullingdon Clubber who announced "let sunshine win the day" shouldn't laugh at flowery speeches.

His admission of no "serious similarities" in the self-congratulatory Cameron On Cameron book (p262) is a rare moment of honesty.

Remember it as he sucks up to Obama in coming weeks.

◆ LABOUR will hail a victory without a seat if it loses tomorrow's Glenrothes by-election in Fife.

Bookies put the party and SNP neck-and-neck in a constituency held with a 10,000 majority at the General Election by Labour's John MacDougall who, incidentally, died of an asbestos disease.

But Scots are getting cold feet over SNP leader Alex Salmond's bankrupt plan to join Iceland in an arc of insolvency.

Gordon Brown has a lot of ground to make up, but his handling of the banking crisis has clawed Labour back into the race. Odd to think wannabe Labour leaders would be holding hustings now if summer plotters had ousted Brown.

And a discredited Labour Party would be finished.

No wonder the Downing Street comeback kid's smiling.

## Speaker's corner

"THERE are no circumstances, no possible situations, in which we would even consider doing any type of deal with the BNP whatsoever." UK Independence Party leader Nigel Farage finally says something sensible. Mind you, I still think he's a swivel-eyed nutter.

READ KEVIN'S BLOG EVERY DAY AT <http://maguire.mirror.co.uk>



# Paul Routledge

## Shared fury at that telly filth

WHEN I got out of my pram about swearing on the telly last week, I didn't expect such swift support from such high places. ITV's supreme Michael Grade condemned the "unrestrained" use of the F-word and vowed to wage war against foul language in broadcasting. Politicians and telly stars backed him, and the Mirror began a campaign on the issue.

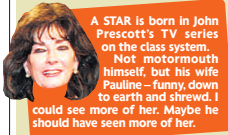
Grade says: "Not enough consideration is given to a very large section of the audience who don't want to hear such words."



Hear! Hear! It isn't just so-called "edgy" comedians like Wossy and Russell Brand who are guilty. Jamie Oliver (above) said "f-k" 23 times in a 50-minute show, and ITV's Natural Born Sellers allowed it 19 times.

Even Taggart had two F-expletives this week. I know coppers in Glasgow swear. I've heard them. But they wouldn't do it on the box.

The 9pm watershed is being abused. Young producers think it's "cool" to upset viewers with foul language, and TV chiefs obsessed with pulling yoof audiences are too scared to exercise proper authority. That must stop. And it's worth doing to roll back the corrosive influence of these self-indulgent comedians.



A STAR is born in John Prescott's TV series on the class system. Not motormouth himself, but his wife Pauline - funny, down to earth and shrewd. I could see more of her. Maybe he should have seen more of her.

## Al's a virtue for patients

WHILE all eyes were on America, smartypants Health Secretary Alan Johnson quietly ushered in a radical reform of the health service.

He ruled patients can get NHS treatment while paying top-up fees for drugs. Before, it was all NHS or all private. You couldn't have both.

This puts an anomaly right but risks creating a two-tier health service: one for the better off and another for the rest of us.

No solution will please everyone. I believe he's done his best - giving patients with terminal illnesses greater access to life-extending drugs on the NHS.

I'd go further. Those who can pay, should pay, something, at any rate, and those who can't should not.

The cost of the drugs is enormous, and strains the NHS budget.

If you're well off and want to buy a few extra months of life, should it be at the expense of those don't have the cash?



# Obama's dogs of war set to snap at Brown

## OPERATION Shock and Awe - the codename for the American onslaught on Baghdad - has been replayed with a vengeance.

This time George Bush is the victim, not the perpetrator. Barack Obama's presidential victory was awesome. And the shock in the White House was palpable.

Americans repudiated the folly, brutality and incompetence of the Dubya years.

This is a moment of history to relish. The stakes were as high as the Berlin Wall, and the election outcome may come to rank alongside that iconic fall.

**BUMP**

But when the church bells stop ringing, let's have a reality check. General Euphoria is not a reliable Commander in Chief. It is too easy to get lost in admiration, joy and a sense of triumph over a barbarous regime's end.

We will all have to come down to earth with a bump, and disillusion may come more swiftly than people might wish.

The portents of disenchantment are already visible.

While Gordon Brown jostles with French president Nicolas Sarkozy to be first to shake Obama's hand, powerful men in the shadows are naming their price for a special relationship with the black man in the White House.

The price is high, it is military and it is non-negotiable.

Only hours before voters went to the polls, Obama's aides briefed British reporters. The new president will play hardball. There will be no honeymoon in



transatlantic relations. Europe will be expected to end the anti-Americanism of the Bush years and "pull its weight". Britain gets to ride point for Nato in the Afghan war.

President Obama will demand that Brown commits an extra 3,000 British troops to fight the Taliban next year, when our forces are pulled out of Iraq.

This is on top of the 8,000-plus already in theatre, in a war that has lasted longer than the first World War and which does not offer a "decisive military victory", according to Brigadier Mark Carleton-Smith, our most senior commander in Afghanistan.

Britain's massively increased military commitment is seen as a key element in a US "surge" of troops, similar to the operation credited with bringing peace of sorts to Iraq.

But Colonel Tim Collins, the respected Iraq war veteran, says there is "no capacity or appetite to take part in that surge" among our top brass.

No? So what shall we tell the President?

He will not easily take 'No' for an answer.

**POODLE**

And that's when we will see whether the Obama-Brown relationship is something new, progressive and mutually beneficial - or simply a re-run of Bush-Blair. Back in the poodle parlour!

In their jihad against al-Qaeda, American forces are gradually extending the war into Pakistan. There are more than a million Asian Britons with family ties there.

If the price of pleasing Obama is riots in Bradford and Blackburn, it is too high.

## Snouts belong in Tory trough

DAVID Cameron is furious with greedy Shadow Cabinet members who won't give up their well-paid second jobs.

His front-bench team aren't content with the £62,000-a-year plus lavish allowances they get as MPs. Most are already millionaires, but they still can't get enough.

More than half have business interests outside Westminster and some top Tory snouts have third and fourth jobs.

Between them, the Shadow Cabinet had to declare 115 directorships and other top positions.

Hawk-nosed Treasury spokesman Philip Hammond, who goes on the telly when his boss Boy George Osborne is in

trouble (i.e. most of the time), made £1.7million from his property firm last year.

Shadow Foreign Secretary William Hague is not quite in the Tony Blair league, but he's got £1million from speeches, writing and business.

Desperate Dave is worried his fat cat coterie will give voters the impression the Tories are money-grabbing swine. Whatever gave him that idea?

I hope his henchmen ignore oldie the Etonian, who married money and has plenty of his own. Carry On Troughing! It's what they do.

They shouldn't be forced to behave like decent people.

It's not as though anybody would believe them anyway.



## GOING GAGA ABOUT DATA

MUCH nonsense is talked about the dangers arising from the Government losing personal data.

I have yet to see a case of this information being used for criminal purposes. You are far more at risk from email scams.

Gordon Brown admits: "We cannot promise that every single item of information will always be safe because mistakes are made by human beings."

David Davis, the former Shadow Home Secretary, calls this "an astonishing admission". No it isn't. It's plain common sense.

And who is he to talk? He lost his marbles, resigning his front bench post to fight a pointless by-election that wrecked his career. Advice from him is something we can profitably leave on the train.

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**HEALTH**

**Sisters' fatal shock fears**

TWO young sisters are banned from having alarm clocks in their bedroom - because the sudden shock could kill them.

Chloe Church, 11, and nine-year-old Evie suffer from long QT syndrome - a rare heart condition which means that a rush of adrenaline could be fatal.

But the girls, who are banned from PE, can go to fireworks parties because they will expect loud bangs.

Mum Samantha, 41, of Gowerton, Swansea, said: "It's tough, but they've coped remarkably well."

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**CATS HORROR**

NINE cats were put down after being poisoned with anti-freeze near Wollaston, West Mids, where 47 moggies have gone missing.



**Miriam's our star**  
THE Mirror's Dr Miriam Stoppard is honoured with a Stonewall Award last night for her work on gay issues. She said at London's V&A museum: "I'm thrilled."

**F-WORD'S GORDON GIVES UP SWEARING**

**EXCLUSIVE**  
BY MARK JEFFERIES  
mark.jefferies@mirror.co.uk

**GORDON Ramsay is to tone down his bad language because of the uproar over swearing on TV.**

The telly chef, 41, whose Channel 4 show the F Word was named after his infamous foul-mouthed outbursts, says he wants to be known for cooking rather than cursing. At recent book sign-

ings he was bombarded with fans wanting him to scrawl the message: "F\*\*\* off, Gordon Ramsay."

But a source said: "He got fed up with doing it and now won't sign his books with swear words."

"He's aware of the current criticism and complaints about too much swearing and wants to tone things down in keeping with the

attitude of the public. There is not much chance of him presenting entire shows without swearing at all, but he is certainly going to clean up his act."

The Mirror is campaigning to clean up TV after ITV boss Michael Grade blasted "unrestrained" swearing. Culture Secretary Andy Burnham said: "I'm pleased The Mirror has lent its weight to this issue."

**Letters: Page 52**

**KEEP IT CLEAN** Chef Ramsay



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52 M Daily Mirror  
FRIDAY 07.11.2008

mailbox@mirror.co.uk

# your letters



EDITED BY  
**FIONA  
PARKER**

## DOUBLE PLAY BINGO

Fri Nov 7 2008  
Game 17 Day 5

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# End foul-mouthed TV

AT last, someone with authority has spoken up about this nasty phenomenon on our TV screens which is getting increasingly worse in this country.

It seems the F-word is used in most films and dramas and its use is on the increase. Whatever happened to decency and taste in our nation?

There's never a need to use foul language on TV.  
Let the public rise up again as they did in the Ross and Brand disgrace, and with the support of people like Mr Grade perhaps we can return to decent television.

**Bob Allen, Great Barr, W Midlands**  
● IS there a chink of moral daylight on the horizon? Will, once again, sit and watch some who-so-me television without foul-mouthed "entertainers" and cocky so-called "experts" invading my living room with their gutter language?  
Perhaps in these times of recession

## The BIG issue

FOLLOWING the Manuegate scandal, the Mirror has joined ITV chief Michael Grade (right) to call on TV bosses to stamp out the "unrestrained and indiscriminate" use of the F-word. Politicians plus hundreds of you, have expressed your support...



we may even see the BBC and ITV cutting salaries by a million or two here and there.

**DJ Smith, Hamstead, W Midlands**  
● IT'S great that Michael Grade, Culture Secretary Andy Burnham and the Mirror are speaking out against the foul language on TV.

I don't understand why I can listen to my local BBC radio station knowing bad language won't be used, while it seems anything goes on television. Why the double standards?

**Joyce Fell, Liverpool**  
● OUT of bad comes forth good, so the saying goes. All the recent upsur

over Ross and Brand's unacceptable behaviour will hopefully bring a desire to clean up the language that the public's had to endure on TV and set an example to the younger generation. Let's hope all those who control what goes out on television will honour what they say and we'll enjoy viewing again.

**P Sedgeman, Redruth, Cornwall**  
● IF all swearing and abusive language on TV was banned, Channel 4 would only be left with Countdown.

**Gordon Ramsay** would be dumb-

struck as every other word he uses is the F-word and there's no reason for it.

It would also put a stop to all these awful reality shows which are ruining TV right now.

**B Collins, Sheerness, Kent**  
● SWEARING shouldn't be removed from TV altogether. It has comic value. Just so long as it's on late enough for adults, not children, to watch it.

**E Dutton, South London**  
● HAS Michael Grade never used the F-word? I have, and 90 per cent of the population has too. Jonathan Ross made a daft mistake with Russell Brand but we all make mistakes and he's apologised, so leave him alone.

His chat show's great, as is I've Got News For You, which also has the odd swear word. So what? It's fun.

**Nick Burrows, Princes Risborough, Bucks**

## To the Point

● THE Government must denounce greedy oil and utility companies for making such obscene profits while so many are suffering hardship.

**Norman Hanson, Bingham, Notts**

● THERE are a lot of forged disabled stickers being used. Traffic wardens should have a machine to check.

**D Freeman, Killamarsh, Derbys**

## Greg's giggle

Q: WHAT do you call a man with two left feet?  
A: Whatever you like - if he tries to catch you he'll just run round in circles.

## Missing

Can you help?

**FEARS** are growing for Sharon Joseph, 48, who has been missing from Croydon, South London since August 24.

Brown-eyed, 5ft 9ins Sharon is urged to call Message Home on Freephone 0800 700 740.

If you've seen her, call Missing People on Freephone 0500 700 700 or [seesomeone@missingpeople.org.uk](mailto:seesomeone@missingpeople.org.uk)

## Missing

Can you help?

**Birthdays**  
FOOTBALLER Rio Ferdinand, 30; singer Sharleen Spiteri, 41; actress Su Pollard, 59; former model Jean Shrimpton, 66; reader Ethel Jones, of Skewen, Neath, S Wales, who is 90.

## For the Record

□ THE little black dress in our pictures was from George at Asda (Page 27, November 5).

The Daily Mirror tries to correct errors and clear up confusion as soon as possible. Readers should phone 020 7293 3953, fax 020 7293 3975, email [readers@mirror.co.uk](mailto:readers@mirror.co.uk) or write to Readers' Editor, Daily Mirror, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5AP. The Press Complaints Commission (PCC) is the independent body which deals with the newspaper industry. It has a Code of Practice which sets out the standards of how to complain, is available from Hulton House, 20/23 High Holborn, London EC1N 2DL. Website [www.pcc.org.uk](http://www.pcc.org.uk) or email [complaints@pcc.org.uk](mailto:complaints@pcc.org.uk). Telephone: 020 7381 0022. Hulton: 0845 6040 2727.

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### LITTLE BIT OF HEAVEN

● THE BBC has excelled once again with its adaptation of the classic Dickens novel *Little Dorrit*. What a superb cast - particularly Matthew Macfadyen and Claire Foy.

● WOODRIDGE, E London  
● MERLIN on BBC1 is a great show and Anthony Head is excellent. It certainly makes my weekends enjoyable.

David Alan Crowe  
Wetshop, Poyrys

● BBC2'S The Restaurant has been unmissable viewing, as it was last year. I'd love to see a follow-up show on last year's winners to see if their partnership with Raymond Blanc worked out.

Carole Lawrence  
Preston, Lancs

● THE return of Lt. Col Richard Sharpe to ITV in Sharpe's Peri has been well worth the wait.

D Shattock, Bristol

● AM I the only viewer who thinks that Five newsreader Matt Barber is the sexiest on the telly?

Kathleen Proud  
Newcastle upon Tyne

● BONNET LASS Claire Foy as Amy Dorrit

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**RADIO SHOCK 1**



▲ **SUSPENDED** Jonathan Ross

**Manuelgate  
Beeb chief  
No2 resigns**

By **TOM BRYANT**  
Showbiz Reporter

A SECOND BBC executive has resigned in the wake of Manuelgate – piling more pressure on Jonathan Ross. Dave Barber, Radio 2's head of specialist music and compliance, was in charge of ensuring content met taste and decency guidelines.

His departure follows the resignation last week of Radio 2 controller Lesley Douglas.

Today Radio 2 will broadcast an apology over the messages left for Fawley Towers actor Andrew Sachs about his grand-daughter Georgina Baillie by Ross and comic Russell Brand.

The statement says: "The conversation was a grossly offensive and unacceptable intrusion into the private lives of both Mr Sachs and Ms Baillie. It was a serious breach of editorial standards and should never have been recorded or broadcast."

The scandal generated 42,000 complaints to the BBC. Brand resigned and Ross was suspended without pay for 12 weeks.

**RADIO SHOCK 2**



▲ **TV CLAMPDOWN** Wogan

**Terry backs  
ITV's Grade  
over F-word**

By **TOM BRYANT**  
Showbiz Reporter

SIR Terry Wogan has backed a clampdown on swearing on TV – and branded the worst offenders "inarticulate".

The Radio 2 presenter, 70, said he supported ITV chief Michael Grade, who this week waged war on "indiscriminate" swearing on the box. The Mirror is also campaigning against crudity on TV.

Sir Terry said: "I don't think it is ever acceptable – there will be a backlash against it. The F-word is bad enough. It's an example of people who are inarticulate."

"People think they will have more street cred with the youth if they eff and blind."

His comments come after Jamie Oliver's Channel 4 show Ministry of Food used the F-word 23 times.

Sir Terry also defended BBC colleague Jonathan Ross' £18million contract following his suspension over the Manuelgate affair.

He said: "It's not his fault he's paid that."

# THE CAVE-IN

**PASSING ON RATE CUT**

Standard Variable Rates, including the 1.5 per cent rate cut, take effect from December 1

<b>HALIFAX</b> 5.00%	<b>Nationwide</b> 4.69%	<b>Abbey</b> 5.44%	<b>RBS</b> 5.19%
<b>northern rock</b> 5.84%	<b>Lloyds TSB</b> 5.00%	<b>Bradford &amp; Bingley</b> 5.59%	<b>SCOTTISH WIDOWS</b> 4.99%

**HOLDING OUT**

Lenders still reviewing the situation and their current Standard Variable Rates

<b>HSBC</b> 6.15%	<b>Alliance Leicester</b> 6.94%	<b>BARCLAYS</b> 6.64%	<b>Britannia</b> 6.30%	<b>SKIPTON BUILDING SOCIETY</b> 6.45%
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BY **JASON BEATTIE**  
jason.beattie@mirror.co.uk

**SHAMED banks finally caved in under massive pressure yesterday and cut their mortgage rates.**

A string of major institutions said they would follow the Bank of England and slash lending rates by 1.5 per cent.

The boost for homeowners, borrowers and small businesses came after Alistair Darling summoned the bank chiefs to the Treasury and read the riot act.

A furious Chancellor threatened government action – especially against banks part-owned by the taxpayer – if they turned their backs on the public.

He ordered them to move "as quickly as possible" or face the consequences.

**BACKLASH**

Within hours, High Street names led by the Halifax – the UK's biggest mortgage lender – Nationwide, Royal Bank of Scotland and NatWest said they would be passing on the full 1.5 per cent rate cut.

They were followed by Bradford and Bingley and nationalised Northern Rock.

Lloyds TSB, Abbey and Scottish Widows had already said they would slash rates.

Gordon Brown said: "I welcome the fact that a number of British banks have now decided to pass on the interest cuts to customers, families and businesses."

Treasury insiders

## Under-fire banks cut loan rates

said the Chancellor warned bank chiefs of a public backlash if they continued to hold out. A source revealed: "He said we had given a lot of support to the banking system and most people understood that was necessary. But people also wanted to see some benefit from that."

He added that Mr Darling was close to getting out "the big stick".

The cut will reduce the monthly cost of a £150,000 mortgage by £138 to £287. Those with a £250,000 loan will

see repayments drop by around £230 each month – or £2,760 over a year.

Greedy banks had sparked fury by at first refusing to follow the Bank of England, which cut rates on Thursday by a third to a 5.3-year low of three per cent.

They were condemned by MPs, union leaders and business chiefs.

Mr Darling then called chief executives to the Treasury for an urgent breakfast meeting. Among those attending were Abbey, Barclays, HBOS, HSBC, Lloyds TSB, Nationwide, Royal Bank of Scotland and Standard Chartered.

The banks had been holding their ground while the rate at which banks lend to each other remained high.

**RESPONSIBILITY**

But they were left with no excuses after figures showed the London Interbank Offered Rate had dropped by one per cent to 4.5 per cent.

Last night it was reported the boss of Tesco pressed Bank of England governor Mervyn King for an interest rate cut.

Sir Terry Leahy, chief executive of the supermarket chain, is said to have had a breakfast meeting Mr King days before the 1.5 per cent drop. It is claimed he argued a cut was needed to restore customer confidence.

Tesco's head of legal affairs Lucy Neville-Rolfe refused to confirm he met Mr King, saying: "Our concern is to make sure banks pass the rate cut on."

John McFall, the chairman of the Treasury Select Committee, said of the banks yesterday: "They are being short-sighted. Given that they have had copious amounts of money from the taxpayer and are fully guaranteed, it must dawn on them that they have a social responsibility as well."

**Voice of the Mirror: Page 8**



**INTEREST RATS**  
Houses cut to 1.5% but taxpayers offer just 1.5% rate cut on loans

**► PRESSURE** The Chancellor and yesterday's Daily Mirror

## GRUDGING LIFELINE AT LAST

**HALLELUJAH!** Banks are bowing to pressure to slash their rates, cutting mortgage bills for millions of people.

It is a shame Chancellor Alistair Darling had to read them the riot act before they caved in.

But it will not make the move any less welcome to families and firms

who were facing a grim Christmas. The savings could stop many hard-pressed home-owners losing the roof over their heads. And it should

throw a lifeline to thousands of small firms which could have been forced to cut jobs.

Even so, the banks have done little to improve their reputations. Suspensions remain that even now some are searching for new tricks and scams to claw back the cost.

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**DAILY** Tuesday November 11, 2008  
**Mirror**  
 REAL NEWS...REAL ENTERTAINMENT 40p



**I am Hannah. I'm 13. I've been in and out of hospital for eight years. Now I've told doctors I won't have any more operations even if it means I may not survive**



**EXCLUSIVE: READ HER HEARTBREAKING STORY**

SEE PAGES 4&5

**Ban cuffs star says kids' mum**  
 By AIDAN MCGURRAN  
 SHAMED soccer star David Norris was last night fined up to £24,000 over his sick handcuff goal celebration.  
 Amanda Peak, mum of two boys killed by his jailed mate, said: "He should be suspended."  
 FULL STORY: PAGE 11

# TV'S IN THE SEWER

**Furious MP slams swearing**

By JASON BEATTIE  
 AN angry MP blasted TV chiefs yesterday for turning our airwaves into a "sewer" of bad language.  
 Speaking in the Commons, Denis MacShane said the 9pm watershed was no excuse for gratuitous swearing - and criticised Jamie Oliver's latest cookery show for its heavy use of the f-word.  
 The former Europe Minister, 60, said: "Please tell the BBC, please tell Ofcom, you don't hear that in France, you don't hear that in Germany, you don't hear it in America. Why has British broadcasting got to be in the linguistic sewer of our great language?"  
 Picking out Oliver's

ANGER MacShane

**STOP THE SWEARING ON Telly**

TURN TO PAGE 4

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4 M Daily Mirror  
TUESDAY 11.11.2008

# SEWER

FROM PAGE ONE

Channel Four series Jamie's Ministry of Food - filmed in his Rotherham constituency - Mr MacShane said: "This is not a watershed question, there are plenty of children watching after 9pm."

"I watched Jamie Oliver reporting from Rotherham... F, F, F, F."

Repeating, Culture Secretary Andy Burnham noted a recent report showed there was "an increase of bad language immediately after the watershed".

He said: "It's as if it needs to be said it is not obligatory to use bad language after the watershed."

The attack came after ITV boss Michael Grade and the Mirror launched campaigns to curb swearing on TV last week, warning broadcasters to tone it down.

On the use of the f-word, Mr Grade said: "It used to be you had a very senior sign-off to use that word."

"Clearly, not enough consideration is given to a large section of the audience who perhaps don't



▲ **SWEARING** Jamie Oliver

want to hear that word or such words. You therefore have to know why you're using it and give it a little bit of extra consideration."

Meanwhile, watchdog Ofcom has rapped Scott Mills' show on BBC Radio1.

Listeners complained after an afternoon feature in August called Badly Bleeped TV edited inoffensive words beginning with F in a way that suggested they were actually "F\*\*\*".

The BBC said the feature belonged to "the saucy seaside postcard tradition of comedy", but later accepted it had made an "error".

Ofcom found it in breach of the broadcasting code.

## Brave schoolgirl turns down life-saving

# I'VE HAD



They explained everything to me but I just didn't want to go through any more operations

SCHOOLGIRL HANNAH JONES

▲ **NO MORE** Hannah cannot face having any more surgery

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4 **M** Daily Mirror  
WEDNESDAY 12.11.2008

# BEEB CHIEFS SUMMONED

**EXCLUSIVE** by JASON BEATTIE MPs are to question BBC chiefs about the barrage of bad language on the box.  
Director general Mark Thompson and the BBC Trust's Sir Michael Lyons will also be quizzed about the Manuel-gate scandal involving Jonathan Ross and Russell Brand.  
The Mirror has launched a campaign to curb swearing on TV and all three main political parties are backing our call for a clampdown on bad language.  
TV chiefs are facing mounting pressure to clean up the airwaves and Mr Thompson and Sir Michael have been summoned before the Culture, Media and Sport committee next Tuesday.  
Committee chairman John Whittingdale said the two men will be asked to account for a lapse in broadcasting standards. He added: "The committee also intends to raise with them concerns that have arisen following the Jonathan Ross broadcast." Ross and Brand sparked fury last month after making a prank phone call to actor Andrew Sachs on Radio 2.  
In the Commons on Monday Labour MP Denis MacShane blasted TV chiefs for the amount of bad language on our airwaves. He asked: "Why has British broadcasting got to be in the linguistic sewer?"  
Watching Olcom said it had no plans to review its guidelines on bad language. A spokesman said the amount of swearing in a programme was an editorial decision.



## SECURITY Blair guard in gun gaffe

A BUNGLING minder protecting Tony Blair caused a security alert when his gun went off in an Israeli airport yesterday.  
The airport authority's Maayan Malkin said: "One of his bodyguards accidentally fired and the bullet hit the ground."  
No one was hurt and Mr Blair, Middle East envoy for the US, UN, EU and Russia, boarded his plane.

## POLLUTION Nuclear sub in river spill

RADIOACTIVE liquid has been leaked into a river from a nuclear sub, the MoD said yesterday.  
The Royal Navy said 280 litres of waste spilt into the Tamar as it was pumped from HMS Trafalgar in Plymouth on Friday night.  
The Environment Agency said there was no risk to the public, but a nuclear expert slammed the MoD for withholding details for so long.

# Mum, lover and lodger

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16 **M** Daily Mirror  
THURSDAY 13.11.2008

# CARRY ON CUSSING

## C4 gives Oliver a licence to swear

BY **MARK JEFFERIES**  
mark.jefferies@mirror.co.uk

**CHANNEL 4 will continue to swear by Jamie Oliver and won't cut back his heavy use of the f-word.**

Defying MPs who have accused broadcasters of turning the airwaves into a sewer, C4's programming boss was unrepentant yesterday.

Launching C4's winter schedule, including an Oliver show to save British pork farms, Julian Bellamy said: "We're not reining him back. It's a very careful balance."

"When you watch these shows it's very clear the swearing is a real response

to the anger at what he sees, his determination to change things."

And the freedom to swear won't just apply to the TV chef. Bellamy said he wanted to "risk offending".

In a speech which stuck two fingers up to concerned viewers, Bellamy dubbed C4 an "alternative" and controversial station.

He said: "Audiences want us to push boundaries, take risks and support new talent even if that means our programmes are not to everyone's taste. We mustn't let occasional

errors of judgement tip us into a new era of censorship."

The Daily Mirror's campaign against bad language is backed by the three big political parties. ITV and the BBC say they are paying close attention to the issue.

Watchdog Mediawatch called Bellamy's views "out of touch with public feeling".

Oliver's last series Jamie's Ministry of Food drew scores of complaints. And there is said to be more swearing in Jamie Saves Our Bacon, as he attempts to get viewers to buy British pork.

The chef, who previously declared war on battery chickens and poor school meals, said the British pig industry was "on its knees" as so much pork is imported from EU states with lower welfare standards.

He said: "We showed if you give consumers the facts they will make up their own minds."



### Britney tressed for No1

THE soft blonde locks are a far cry from Britney Spears's shaved head look.

The star, 26, is sexy in blue basque and frills to plug her album circus - out next month and a cert for the (big) top.

### POLITICS Commons sense idea

MORE women and ethnic minority MPs are needed if Parliament is to hold "sensible" debates, Harriet Harman said yesterday.

The Commons Leader spoke at the launch of a year-long all-party review aimed at getting a more representative mix of politicians.

Ms Harman said: "We can't sensibly discuss the veil when there is no Muslim woman MP or discuss domestic violence with 97 per cent men." To reflect society, there needs to be double the women and 10 times the number of non-white MPs.

### RELIGION Blair gran's dying wish

TONY Blair has confessed he defied his grandmother's dying wish by marrying Cherie.

Staunch protestant Sarah Corscadden grabbed Mr Blair's hand and said: "Whatever you do, don't marry a Catholic."

Mr Blair said at Yale University: "I didn't mention I had started dating Cherie, who is Catholic, around that time."

The ex-PM, 55, converted to the faith in December after years of speculation.

He said he had avoided discussing his beliefs while in Downing Street but admitted they had influenced his decision to go to war in Iraq.

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# TV as X Factor Laura row escalates

How many votes did she get? We just don't know  
**DAN KIRBY**



**▲ SUPPORT** Jim Devine  
**MPs urged to sign up to TV clean-up campaign**

**EXCLUSIVE** by JAMES LYONS  
**TELLY bosses will be blasted over the level of on-screen swearing next week in Parliament.**  
Labour MP Jim Devine is behind the official Westminster protest at the way bad language is taking over our screens.  
He praises the Mirror's campaign to clean up telly in his Early Day Motion, which he will put down when MPs return to the Commons on Monday.

The motion declares: "This House deplores the level of foul language on television and congratulates the Daily Mirror for campaigning to stop swearing on TV."  
Mr Devine is urging MPs of all parties to show their support for our crusade.

The Labour, Tory and Lib Dem parties are already signed up but the motion gives individual politicians the chance to support it. Mr Devine said: "I am appalled



that we appear to be the only country in Europe that allows interperate language to be used.

"I welcome the Mirror's campaign to stop swearing on television and hope it will get wide support.

"We should not just stand by as standards on our TV programmes slip."

Mr Devine drew up his motion after Channel 4 bosses insisted they would not stop Jamie Oliver turning the airwaves blue.

Broadcasters have been accused of dragging TV into the sewer by letting the celebrity chef and other stars pepper shows with expletives.

ITV and the BBC said they are keeping a close eye on the issue after an outpouring of public protest. But C4's programming boss Julian Bellamy said the channel had to "risk offending".

Watchdog Mediawatch branded Bellamy "out of touch with public feeling".

# COME CLEAN

## Fans want X voting figures



**EXCLUSIVE**  
by MARK JEFFERIES  
mark.jefferies@mirror.co.uk  
**X Factor bosses were under mounting pressure to publish voting figures last night after 50,000 Laura White fans complained about her shock eviction.**

The broadcasting watchdog Ofcom last night launched an investigation as angry viewers threatened to boycott the show if Laura wasn't reinstated.

A petition with 50,000 signatures was presented to Ofcom and one of the organisers, Dan Kirby, said: "People just want to know what happens when they vote and we have a right to know the figures. How do we know Laura was even in the bottom two? How many votes did she get? We don't know."

"They need to come clean. The voters pay the bosses' wages - they have a right to know." Ofcom will look into Section Two of the broadcasting code: "All competitions should be conducted fairly... Rules should be clear and appropriately made known."

There have also been allegations of a glitch in the phone system, which some viewers say prevented them from casting their vote.

The complaint states: "Many thousands of viewers are convinced that either their call was blocked or their vote misappropriated."

Yesterday thousands of people continued to sign online petitions calling for Laura to be reinstated. One, Elaine Macgregor, added: "FARCE. Boycott the X Factor!"

Another called Emma said: "It was a total fix. Producers knew she was competition so kicked her out. Bring back Laura!"

But a spokesman for X Factor last night said: "We would never reveal the voting figures during the competition, as it could give contestants an unfair advantage and spoil the competition for viewers."

"At the end of the series, we are more than happy to reveal the voting pattern to the public which will very clearly demonstrate who the viewers have been voting for each week."

The spokesman added: "There were no issues with the phone lines or the voting system during last week's show."

The viewers vote for the act they want to keep in and last Saturday Laura White and Ruth Lorenzo were in the bottom two because they had the least amount of votes."



▲ EVICTED Laura



▲ ALL CLEAR? Alex on her way back from the doctor's



▲ SCARF BUT NO COAT Diana leaves surgery yesterday



▲ VOICE CONCERN Rachel looks happy after check-up

## Contestants sent to Harley St doc

ALL X Factor contestants were sent to a Harley Street doctor yesterday because show bosses claim they fear their voices are being strained to the limit.  
The check-ups came after Diana Vickers pulled out of last week's show claiming

weeks of singing had brought on laryngitis. Hoping to be fit for Saturday, she visited the specialist along with Alexandra Burke and Rachel Hylton.  
A show source said: "Everyone is seeing the doctor to be checked out and

see if there is medication they can take." Bosses are also advising contestants to rest their voices and not stay up late.  
The Mirror revealed two days ago that despite her laryngitis claim, Diana was pictured screaming at a fireworks bash.

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### FOOTBALLER Norris makes apology to lads' parents

FOOTBALLER David Norris has met the grieving mum of the Peak brothers to apologise for his handcuffs gesture. Norris caused outrage with his goal celebration in honour of jailed goalkeeper friend Luke McCormick, who was over the drink drive limit when he killed Arron Peak, 10, and Ben, eight, in a crash. Yesterday their mum Amanda told how the Ipswich Town star had travelled to her Manchester home to say sorry. She said: "He told me he was sorry for the upset he'd caused. We're pleased he came and we forgive him."

### IMMIGRATION Foreigners obtain visa 'too easily'

ABOUT 300,000 foreigners are wrongly allowed to come to Britain every year - because officials find it quicker to grant visas than turn them down. Immigration watchdog Linda Costelloe-Baker told MPs yesterday that 15 per cent of the two million short-term visas granted every year should be turned down. She told the Home Affairs select committee: "There is pressure to issue them because it helps people to hit their productivity targets."

### HEPATITIS Lover jailed for passing sex disease

A MAN who infected his girlfriend with Hepatitis B the first time they made love was yesterday jailed for two years. Turkish-born Ercan Yasar, 29, knew he had the life-threatening ailment and had been told by doctors always to use a condom. But he did not tell girlfriend Sarah Hill, 27, when they had unprotected sex during a drinking session at his home in Cheltenham, Gloucs. She became very ill and spent 10 days in hospital.

Passing sentence at Gloucester crown court, recorder Neil Ford QC told him: "Your act of unprotected sex was extremely inconsiderate, selfish and dangerous. "You satisfied your sexual urges without thought of the danger that you were causing her."

## Viewers' fury at TV pair's filthy language

# RANT & DEC



It's the dog's b\*\*\*\*\*!

No, it's the kangaroo's b\*\*\*\*\*!

...and the crocodile's b\*\*\*\*\* and his penis as well!

JONATHAN Ross could still face further punishment over the lewd phone-calls scandal, BBC's chairman Sir Michael Lyons told MPs yesterday. He said "nothing" had been ruled out ahead of Friday's BBC Trust report into the affair. He also admitted Radio 2 was wrong to announce last week that Ross would return on January 24 when his 12-week suspension ends. MPs also accused Sir Michael and the BBC director-general Mark Thompson of "arrogance" over their reaction to the affair - which they deny. The BBC Trust said no further action is expected. Ross, 47, has been suspended for offensive calls to former Fawley Towers actor Andrews Sachs, 72.

## Complaints over Bushtucker 'jokes'

**MARK JEFFERIES** [mark.jefferies@mirror.co.uk](mailto:mark.jefferies@mirror.co.uk)  
**HORRIFIED viewers complained to TV watchdogs yesterday after a foul-mouthed live telly outburst by Ant and Dec.**

The presenters - family favourites famed for their squeaky-clean image - repeatedly used the word "b\*\*\*\*\*" while hosting ITV1's I'm a Celebrity...Get Me Out of Here! By turning the air blue, ITV's biggest stars have risked the wrath of station supremo Michael Grade, who has called for a crackdown on swearing. The Georgie duo were presenting the show from Australia on Monday night when their lewd exchange was triggered by model Nicola McLean being shown eating a kangaroo testicle. The outburst was just 28 minutes after the 9pm watershed and came a fortnight after the Mirror launched its campaign to crack down on TV swearing. TV watchdog Ofcom confirmed yesterday: "We have received complaints about the programme broadcast on Monday. These are being

assessed against our Broadcasting Code." Ant and Dec's boss, ITV director of channels Peter Fincham, defended the pair's exchange despite Mr Grade's recent call for swearing on TV to be "editorially justified and in context". He said: "I was watching it and I was not offended. With these things, it is about context and context is everything. I thought that was in context." Mr Fincham added that he agreed in general with Mr Grade's statement and welcomed the Mirror's campaign to clamp down on unnecessary filth. He went on: "Michael made a good point and actually said something that needed to be said. "I said that to him at the time and, judging from the public reaction, he was right to say it as well. "It is an area that needs to be looked at very carefully. "But the watershed is not some iron gate which closes down and I think it is different for different channels." ITV executive chairman Mr Grade,

who was yesterday unavailable for comment, has called for a crackdown on swearing after the watershed because the use of offensive words had become "indiscriminate". Mr Grade's call followed the Manelgate row in which Russell Brand and Jonathan Ross left lewd messages on actor Andrew Sachs' answerphone. BBC Director-General Mark Thompson yesterday said it was right to take note of the public outcry of the amount of bad language on the box. His comments came as MPs stepped up pressure on broadcasters to clean up the airwaves in the wake of our campaign. Labour's Rosemary McKenna said there was a deep public concern about "swearing, taste and bad language" on telly. All three main political parties have backed the Daily Mirror's campaign to cut swearing on television. Senior Labour MP Denis MacShane last week said TV had been turned into a "sewer" of bad language.

**9.28pm: swearing starts..**

ANT and Dec's filthy outburst came at 9.28pm on Monday after Nicola McLean was seen to eat a kangaroo's testicle. It began when Ant described the Bushtucker Trial as "the dog's b\*\*\*\*\*". Dec chipped in to joke: "No, it's the kangaroo's b\*\*\*\*\*". His co-host then repeated the offensive

phrase, adding "and the crocodile's b\*\*\*\*\* and his penis as well". The TV favourites laughed as they shocked viewers with their language. Research in 2000 commissioned by the BBC and the Independent Television Commission found "b\*\*\*\*\*" to be the eighth most offensive word.



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**KILLJOY: PAGES 8 & 9**

# Manuelgate affair..but Ross keeps his job

# MIND OUR LANGUAGE

## Beeb chiefs ordered to cut out swearing

**BY MARK JEFFERIES**  
mark.jefferies@mirror.co.uk

**THE BBC yesterday vowed to crackdown on bad language in a victory for the Mirror's campaign to cut swearing on TV.**

The corporation's governors, the BBC Trust, yesterday upheld complaints about Jonathan Ross's vulgar use of the f-word on his television chat show.

It also slammed the potty-mouthed star for his part in the Manuelgate scandal, which it called "grossly offensive". But the suspended host escaped the sack.

Russell Brand, 33, quit Radio 2 over the incident and two station chiefs lost their jobs. BBC Trust chairman Sir Michael Lyons said: "Let me be absolutely clear. There is no place on the BBC for casual and gratuitous use of the most offensive language without clear editorial justification."

But the mistakes which led to the scandal were not isolated failings, warned the trust.

It identified four shows on radio and television which contained unacceptable material.

On BBC1's Friday Night With Jonathan Ross broadcast on May 8, the chat show host made sexual remarks to Gwyneth Paltrow and asked a clearly embarrassed Michael Aspel if he'd ever "f\*\*\*\*\*" the contestants in Miss World.

Two episodes of Russell Brand's Radio 2 show were slammed over their Manuelgate content and Chris Moyles Radio 1 show was criticised for broadcasting a "suggestive" interview with Brand when as many as 300,000 kids were listening.

After the mauling by the corporation's watchdog, BBC top brass announced they



### SHOWS UNDER FIRE

**1 Friday Night with Jonathan Ross, BBC1, May 2:** Ross used the word "f\*\*\*\*\*" in a sexual context in interviews with Michael Aspel and Gwyneth Paltrow, right. He said to Paltrow: "If you want to have sex, I'll phone my wife. If she gave me permission, I would f\*\*\* you." **TRUST VERDICT:** Use of the obscenity was "gratuitous and offensive" and not editorially justified.

**2 The Russell Brand Show, Radio 2, October 18:** Messages left on Andrew Sachs's mobile phone were broadcast, including Ross saying that Brand had "f\*\*\*\*\*" his granddaughter, Georgina Baillie. The programme was cleared for broadcast by Radio 2 controller Lesley Douglas after she was assured Sachs was happy about it. **VERDICT:** Grossly offensive, humiliating to Sachs and Miss Baillie. No justification for broadcast.

**3 The Chris Moyles Show, Radio 1, October 21:** In a live interview at 8.23am, Brand told Moyles: "I phoned up Andrew Sachs to apologise for a matter live on radio and Jonathan Ross blurted out an expletive regarding his granddaughter, who I'd, in inverted commas, recently 'met'. I met her brains out." **VERDICT:** Infringed the privacy of Sachs, right, and Miss Baillie.

**4 The Russell Brand Show, Radio 2, October 25:** Brand made a light-hearted apology to Sachs for using a swear word. He also played back a song in which he claimed to have slept with Miss Baillie. In a discussion with a guest, rapper Dizzee Rascal, there were further "intrusive and offensive" references to Brand's relationship with her. **VERDICT:** The "so-called apology" was unacceptable and exacerbated the situation.



**NO JOKE** Brand quit after phone gag backfired

would ensure editorial guidelines out next year would be stricter to stop gratuitous and unnecessary swearing.

It means £6million-a-year Wossy, 48 - due to return in the New Year - will be banned from using the f-word on his show.

A BBC statement said: "The management accepts in full the findings by the BBC Trust. We will consider carefully the Trust's ruling on the use of language and audience expectations. Management will reinforce due consideration of the editorial guidelines

and will exercise considerable care over the use of language, especially of the most offensive words or phrases."

However, with the threat of a possible £250,000 fine from broadcast watchdog Ofcom hanging over the corporation, it was quick to announce that a group of executives led by BBC creative director Alan Yentob and former BBC 2 boss Roly Keating - are already working on drawing up "appropriate boundaries of standards and taste".

Since the start of November, the Mirror has responded to disgusted readers who said

swearing from stars including Jamie Oliver, Russell Brand and even squeaky-clean Ant and Dec were forcing them to switch off.

ITV boss Michael Grade joined the crusade by admitting swearing on TV was now "unrestrained". Since then ITV's director of programmes Peter Fincham has said "it is an area we will look at closely".

We also have the backing of major politicians and TV legend Terry Wogan.

The only mainstream terrestrial channel now not supporting our campaign is Channel 4 which has vowed to "carry on swearing".



**STANDARDS** Lord Rees-Mogg

## Star should have been fired says ex TV chief

By NICK WEBSTER

JONATHAN Ross should have been fired, according to the BBC's former vice-chairman, Lord Rees-Mogg.

He told the Mirror that it seemed "absurd to the point of being indecent" for the Beeb to pay £18million for the Jonathan Ross product.

He added: "He should not have kept his job, the whole thing makes no sense."

"He went rather horribly over the top. It would have been better to make a clean cut, just as I think it's right that others resigned."

"It was a major professional failure. I feel sympathy for them (the others) but - if they're going - Jonathan Ross should too."

### THRASHED

Lord Rees-Mogg, who once chaired the Broadcasting Standards Council (BSC), now absorbed by watchdog Ofcom, also backed plans to crack down on offensive language on the BBC.

Recalling a survey carried out by the BSC, Lord Rees-Mogg said: "We found a very strong feeling summed up by one girl who said, 'My mam wouldn't stand for it.'"

"This is how the BBC should view it."

Lord Rees-Mogg also described the BBC Trust's reaction to Manuelgate as "relatively moderate". The Trust replaced the BBC Board of Governors after 80 years' service last January.

He said: "The governors were criticised because... we had rows with the board of management. That meant we were doing our job."

"Where there was a conflict of views... the governors were in a position to represent public interest."

"At least the thing got thrashed out - often before the event."

# RADIO 2 MAN ON SACHS CALL

Barber emailed Douglas saying: "Jonathan uses the f-word 52 mins into the first hour in a sequence about Russell f\*\*\*\*\* Andrew Sachs granddaughter."

"They are speaking into Sachs's answer machine at the

answerphone... (Andrew Sachs AKA Manuel is aware of it and happy - I spoke to him afterwards). The problem comes when Jonathan says that Russell f\*\*\*\*\* Sachs's granddaughter... I would say take it out, but it forms the crux of the call and is VERY funny. In the second hour of the show, they go on to call the answerphone back about the f\*\*\*\*\* times to apologise and it makes for some brilliantly funny radio... Let me know what you

**BACKING** Barber's email hour, again v funny. I think we should keep in and put a 'strong language' warning at the top of the hour. I think it's

editorially justified in the context and certainly within audience expectations for Russell's show and the slot.

"Sachs is aware and happy with the results which were recorded his end for him to hear. Are you happy with

this plan of action?" Douglas replied the next day saying "Yes", the BBC Trust's report into Manuelgate reveals.

Jonathan Ross told Brand he would have to check with Sachs and Georgina if they consented to the broadcast.

Brand left a voicemail with her. The producer phoned Sachs, says the report, but no proper consent was given. Brand, Douglas and Barber have all quit.

**VOICEMAIL** Georgina



C M Y K



**VOICE OF THE**  
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# Clean up, move on

**BROADCASTING executives across the TV and radio industries should heed the words of the BBC Trust.**

The corporation's culture should reflect the values of its licence-payers or they will lose confidence in a broadcaster that remains respected not just in Britain but the world. Jonathan Ross and Russell Brand's crude comments on Andrew Sachs' answerphone should never have been broadcast, but the calls should not have been made in the first place. The Trust acknowledges that inappropriate, gratuitous swearing is turning off the public. **Too often producers and presenters forget that their work is beamed into people's homes where entertainment is expected and offence more easily taken than in their media salons.**

Jonathan Ross has come in for special criticism - his increasingly lurid language and borderline misogynist sexual suggestions had been a worry for some time before the Radio 2 fiasco. And quite rightly so.

But we are not calling for the extreme sanctions that more prudish and old-fashioned voices are bellowing for, just a great deal more thoughtfulness from broadcasters and the talented stars who entertain us.

*We look forward to Jonathan Ross and Russell Brand returning to our radios and screens.*

## Train robbers

**RAIL Fat Controllers are guilty of a bigger heist than Ronnie Biggs and the Great Train Robbers.**

Fare rises of up to 11 per cent are daylight robbery when prices of most other things are falling in the recession.

Many travellers have no alternative and will be forced to pay the grossly inflated prices.

*But an outbreak of passenger power from protesting commuters would serve the greedy companies right.*

## Sum catch

**OXFORD maths graduate Rachel Riley has landed a plum TV job on Countdown.**

*Let's hope the beauty with a brain adds up to be the new Carol Vorderman.*

**Keber and Black**  
GUY RITCHIE LOOKS BACK ON HIS TIME WITH MADONNA...



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*Strictly Come Dancing* **Star John bows out**



REHEARSING  
Lisa practices with partner Brendan

# It's like a relationship .. without 'the other'

**EXCLUSIVE**  
BY BETH NEIL  
beth.neil@mirror.co.uk

IT'S been the most dramatic, tumultuous and talked-about weeks in the history of Strictly Come Dancing. "Dancing pig" John Sergeant shocked a nation when he sensationally announced he'd hung up his Cuban heels. And no one was more surprised than fellow Strictly contestant Lisa Snowdon. Speaking exclusively to the Mirror, model and DJ Lisa says: "I couldn't believe it. I was so, so shocked. "I called his dance partner Kristina to ask what on earth was going on and she said it was true. I wailed: 'NO!' Then I left John a message saying please don't quit! "But I knew he'd made his decision. I just wanted to express my sadness, really." The fallout from John's shock resignation has aston-

ished her. Lisa, 37, says: "The world has officially gone mad. Every newspaper, radio and TV show - it's everywhere. "I can't speak for John and so I don't know what the final nail in the coffin was. "I don't think it would be to do with the judges' comments because when you sign up for a show like this you know what's in store. You're going to be judged and the judges are going to speak the truth. I've had it too - Bruno's called me goofy. But that's part of the show. John's been great entertainment and I've loved watching him. "What Kristina did with

him was amazing. She's such a fierce dancer and her choreography was so incredibly clever, it was always fun to see what little gimmicks they'd throw in. But this is a dancing competition." Dance partners are key. Lisa says of her partner Brendan Cole: "We're spending so much time together, it's like having a relationship with someone without any of the other." John returns tonight. Lisa admits it will be a tearful farewell. She says: "Hopefully he'll dance like a little star on Saturday and go out with a bang just as he wanted. It's going to be emotional as it always is when we lose someone. But especially John because I

wouldn't want anyone to leave the competition that way. But you have to respect his wishes and he doesn't want to do it any more. It's really sad." John might be out. But Lisa is desperate to stay. After finding herself in the dance-off, she's been working flat out on her quickstep with Brendan. After styling himself as a dance floor rebel, Brendan has been suspiciously well-behaved this series. Has Lisa finally tamed the beast? "He's no longer the bad boy of the ballroom. He's not up for antagonising the judges by putting in illegal lifts, creating conflict or backchatting any more. "He's really in love with his girlfriend and I think that's made a heap of difference. He's happy and combined with the fact that he and I get on really well which has mellowed him out."



STEPS  
Pair in action

**I left John a message saying please don't quit. I just wanted to express my sadness really**

LISA SNOWDON

6 **M** Daily Mirror  
THURSDAY 27.11.2008

# DRIVEN TO SUICIDE AT 13 BECAUSE SHE FELT FAT

By **LUCY THORNTON**  
lucythornton@mirror.co.uk

**A GIRL obsessed with superslim TV stars killed herself because she thought she was "fat and ugly".**  
Hollyoaks fan Imogen D'Arcy, 13 described as "beautiful, healthy and popular" - hanged herself with a computer cord after deciding she hated her body. And yesterday her mum hit out at the culture of stick-thin actresses and models that drove her daughter to despair.  
Mother-of-five Susan D'Arcy, 40, said: "Girls should not be subjected to images of celebrity women who are so thin. It's wrong for them to have these impossibly skinny women as role models."  
She said "Immy" had a photo of Hollyoaks' Emma Rigby - who played anorexia sufferer Hannah - as her computer screensaver. Viewers saw Hannah starve herself in a sick competition with

a friend to see who could lose the most weight. Susan said: "It's only now we realise what interest she had in this character, and why."  
"Everyone in Hollyoaks is slim and beautiful. It is completely unrealistic for young girls to aspire to be like that."  
"The pain of losing a daughter this way is indescribable. We would urge all other parents to be especially vigilant."  
Imogen, who was a normal weight, had secretly spent weeks before her death scouring suicide and anorexia websites. Her dad Paul, 51, told a coroner's court on Tuesday how she left a note after hanging herself at the family home in Adel, Leeds, last December. He said: "She felt fat and ugly. This is not true - she didn't have an ounce of fat on her."  
Coroner Melanie Williamson said: "Imogen was a perfectionist and like so many others she was affected by her shape, weight and size."  
The verdict was suicide.



It's wrong for girls to have such unrealistic role models  
**IMOGEN'S DISTRAUGHT MOTHER SUSAN D'ARCY**

POPULAR Imogen was pretty and healthy but she convinced herself that she was ugly and overweight

## PROTESTS Brits stuck in Thailand

**HUNDREDS** of British tourists spent a second day stranded in Thailand as protesters cut off Bangkok to air traffic.  
Thai authorities shut the city's main domestic airport after demonstrators stormed the terminal.  
Earlier, another anti-government protest closed Bangkok international.  
The Britons were among 4,000 foreign travellers affected. The protesters are demanding elections to break the deadlock since ex-PM Thaksin Shinawatra was ousted in 2006.

## CAMPAIGN Plea to PM: clean up TV

**GORDON** Brown has been urged to act on TV swearing - a campaign backed by the Mirror.  
Mediawatch UK wants him to put pressure on watchdog Ofcom and help remove excessive vulgarity on the box.  
Mediawatch director John Beyer said a new online petition already has 1,000 signatures and added: "Many people are offended by swearing presented as entertainment."  
To sign the petition, visit <http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/StopSwearingOnTV/>



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**DRESSED TO THRILL**  
Star Rebecca Adlington on last night's awards show

# Ad fab

## HOY WINS SPORTS TITLE BUT BECKY STEALS SHOW

By LAURIE HANNA

REBECCA Adlington grabbed the limelight at the BBC Sports Personality of the Year Awards last night - even though she finished third.

The teenage swimming sensation was pipped by the surprise winner, cycling star Chris Hoy, and runner-up - Formula 1 champion Lewis Hamilton. But double Olympic gold winner Rebecca, 19, wowed viewers by wearing a fabulous red dress and gold Jimmy Choos. She said: "I never expected to win or even come second or third. I'm so happy for Chris - it's brilliant to see him win it."

Earlier, Rebecca told how she had bought her eye-catching outfit while on holiday in Spain. She said: "The weather was awful so we went shopping. I got this dress, a black belt and my mum got a top. It came to 160 euros (about £150) for the lot."

For her big night, shoe-loving Rebecca simply added a pair of Jimmy Choos she was given by the mayor in her home town of Mansfield.

Winner Chris, 32, from Edinburgh, took the coveted award after picking up three golds in Beijing in a remarkable year for British cycling.

He told the crowd: "This is just unbelievable. It is the culmination of 12 years of hard work. To be standing here is just incredible. There are so many worthy athletes out there. I am stunned by this."

Rebecca also delighted the bookies last night by coming third. A Ladbrokes spokesman said: "She was the clear favourite. By not winning she has saved us a bumper payout."

Punters clearly thought she was a shoe-in...

**Hoy and Mighty: Page 48**

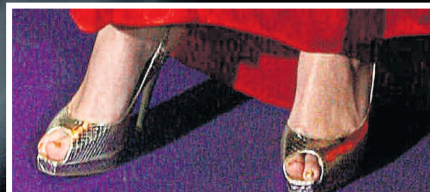


**WINNER** Gold medalist Chris Hoy



**SECOND** FI champ Lewis Hamilton

### Golden girl, golden shoes.. naturally



**CHOOSY** Rebecca wears her trademark gold Jimmy Choos for the award ceremony

# WE'LL CUT JAMIE SWEARING



By **MARK JEFFERIES**  
mark.jefferies@mirror.co.uk

**JAMIE** Oliver's swearing is to be cut from his TV shows in future - in a victory for the Mirror's campaign for a crackdown on offensive language. The celebrity chef's

## Victory for Mirror clean-up campaign

production company has promised it will "respond to public concern" after he was criticised for excessive use of the f-word.

Zoe Collins, head of Oliver's Fresh One Productions, said: "I am concerned if the swearing in the

programmes is affecting people's enjoyment of them.

"Going forward we will be much more mindful of that. I know that Jamie does not use that language to shock and get more viewers."

"The reality is that he does use

fruity language to express strong emotions."

The company has not ruled out moving Oliver's TV shows after the 9pm watershed to minimise the chance that

children would be watching. In one episode of Jamie's Ministry of Food, in which he tried to get the people of Rotherham to eat healthily, the f-word was used at least 23 times. The Mirror launched its campaign to stop swearing on TV last month.

It has the backing of all political parties and readers.

**Voice of Mirror: Page 8**



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**VOICE OF THE**  
**DAILY**  
**Mirror**  
voice@mirror.co.uk

# Support Pakistan

**PAKISTAN is in the frontline against international terrorism.**

The country borders Afghanistan and the Taliban uses its lawless north-west frontier as a base to fight Hamid Karzai's government in Kabul.

Gunmen who murdered their way through Mumbai in India were from Pakistan.

And we should remember that Asif Ali Zardari is in large part the President of Pakistan only because his wife, Benazir Bhutto, was assassinated by terrorists.

Gordon Brown's warning that three-in-four terror plots in Britain have links to Pakistan underlined the importance of a state that is also a nuclear-armed power.

Defeating the terrorists is in the interests of the UK and Pakistan so they must work closely.

*And the Prime Minister's comments are a reminder that success is in the hands of politicians and diplomats as well as the military and security services.*

## Put a lid on it

**JAMIE Oliver will be more popular than ever if he cleans up his act.**

TV chefs constantly effing and blinding have viewers reaching for the off button.

It's as if you need to be foul-mouthed to work in a kitchen.

So we applaud the decision to cut out the foul talk next time Oliver makes a programme.

Our campaign to curb swearing on television gives a voice to decent people who are fed up at the abuse beamed into their homes.

*Oliver's a talented broadcaster who will win more friends by minding his language in the future.*

## Rushing bride

**POOR Sophie Clarke was a bride who just wanted a romantic way to get to the church on time.**

*But she's proved love and marriage don't always go together like a horse and carriage.*

**Keber and Black**  
MONDAY MORNING WITH X FACTOR'S BIG WINNER:  
Simon Cowell  
20 MILLION  
30 MILLION  
40 MILLION  
50 MILLION...

CMYK

# WE UNWRAP TRUTH BEHIND SLICK PACKAGING

# Healthy foods..or a fat lot of good for kids?

**Nestle cereal plus Nesquik**  
The claim: "Added vitamin D, no artificial colours, whole grain, vitamins and fibre."  
Angela's verdict: Added vitamins are good but don't let them drink the milk through a flavoured Nesquik straw, as suggested in the advert. That combo has equivalent of seven teaspoons of sugar.

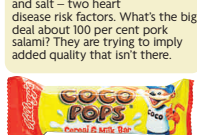


**Nutella**  
The claim: "Free from artificial colours and preservatives" and "over 25 hazelnuts in every jar."  
Angela's verdict: Under a traffic light labelling scheme, Nutella would get red for cholesterol-raising saturated fat and sugar. They do say to make Nutella part of a balanced breakfast. This is OK as long as those healthier foods, such as wholemeal bread, yoghurt and fruit are actually eaten.



**Dairylea Bites**  
The claim: "No artificial colours, flavours or preservatives added," "real cheese goodness."  
Angela's verdict: These are a calcium rich food but plain cheddar – also high in calcium – has a far lower salt content. One of these bites contains nearly a third of a child's daily recommended maximum intake of saturated fat which raises cholesterol.

**Mini Peperami Lunchbox Minis**  
The claim: "30 per cent less fat, 100 per cent pork salami."  
Angela's verdict: Most definitely an occasional snack because of high levels of saturated fat and salt – two heart disease risk factors. What's the big deal about 100 per cent pork salami? They are trying to imply added quality that isn't there.



**Kellogg's Coco Pops Cereal and Milk bars**  
The claim: "Free from artificial flavours," "free from hydrogenated fats," "source of calcium, iron and 6 vitamins."  
Angela's verdict: The labelling is a bit naughty – despite it being a kids' treat they measure the saturated fat, salt and sugar content against adult guidelines. These do give a burst of vitamins and mineral but so does a bowl of wholegrain, unsugared cereal eaten at breakfast time – a better option.

**5 healthy lunches to give your kids**



← **USE YOUR LOAF** Finding healthy lunch options is not always easy

**EXCLUSIVE**  
BY ALUN PALMER  
alun.palmer@mirror.co.uk  
THE battle to improve kids' diets by getting them off junk food is under fresh attack. As parents reject crisps and chocolate in lunchboxes, snacks with slogans such as "added vitamins" and "no artificial colours" sound like a godsend. But many manufacturers' claims for kids' food and breakfast cereals have been

**Kellogg's Rice Krispies**  
The claim: "Little grains of goodness." In the TV ad cute kids behave perfectly and engage entirely voluntarily in a counting activity.  
Angela's verdict: There's nothing wrong with Rice Krispies as cereals go but there are healthier options. They aren't wholegrain or high fibre and though not particularly sugary they have a high salt content.



**Natural Confectionery Company Jelly Snakes**  
The claim: "No artificial flavourings or colourings," "natural."  
Angela's verdict: No additives is one thing but sugar is still sugar with all the attendant problems from tooth decay and empty calories. Fine as an occasional treat after meals but there's the danger that parent might equate "natural" with innocuous and that clearly isn't the case.

**Nestle Honey Shreddies**  
The claim: "Whole grain foods contain a combination of protein, fibre, vitamins and antioxidants."  
Angela's verdict: This is true but these are also high in sugar, something which is glossed over. A product only needs to contain 51 per cent whole grain to be labelled a whole grain food – virtually all whole grain cereals only contain just over half whole grains.



**Cheestrings Original**  
The claim: "Good source of calcium and protein," "real cheese goodness," "For healthy bones and teeth."  
Angela's verdict: One Cheestring contains nearly a sixth of a child's daily recommended maximum saturated fat intake. But these aren't actually much saltier than natural cheese. Not bad and the claims made are fair.

**Fruit Bowl Fruit Flakes Raspberry with a Yogurt Coating**  
The claim: "Made with real fruit" and contains "real yogurt."  
Angela's verdict: These are made with concentrated fruit juice not whole fruit and then extra sugar is added. The "yogurt" mention is a red herring – it's a sugary coating bearing no relation to the healthy calcium-rich food. Better to give kids a handful of naturally sweet, dried fruit.



TELL US WHAT YOU THINK AT WWW.MIRROR.CO.UK/FORUMS



14 M Daily Mirror  
SATURDAY 30 JUL 2009

# GUN KID 'GOT £50 TO BRAG ON BBC'

A TEENAGER who brandished guns on a BBC Panorama programme was paid £50 to "show off", a court heard yesterday. The 17-year-old was filmed handling a firearm for the Young Gans programme about violent gangs last summer. He was not paid directly by the BBC but by a fellow member of Manchester's March Gang referred to as Male C, the court heard. The youth's lawyer Jason Smith said: "Male C told him a TV crew were making a film about gangs and offering money. He met

Male C and a cameraman and was told to make threats and show off. Later he was told 'nice one' by Male C and given £50." Police wrote to BBC director general Mark Thompson last year to ask if youths were paid to pose with guns. The boy, not identified because of his age, admitted possessing guns and ammo. After yesterday's hearing at Liverpool crown court, a BBC spokesman said: "The BBC made no payments to the gunman." The case was adjourned for 14 days for sentence.



▶ LETTER: BBC chief Thompson

## ENVIRONMENT We've bin so green

A FAMILY have cut their waste so much they fill just one bin in six months. Rachelle and Richard Strass chuck out only 300g of rubbish a week. They don't buy packaged goods, recycle and compost leftover food. Richard, 52, of Longhope, Glas, said: "We plan to go all year without using our bin."

## STAR WRECK

LUCY in the Sky with Diamonds by Star Trek star William Shatner has been voted the worst cover in a poll by Inneses Churchill.

# Jamie promises



FAMILY GUY With his girls Jojo, Poppy (left) and Daisy

## DO-IT-YOURSELF HOLIDAYS.

Otherwise known as "if-your-airline-goes-bust-you're-on-your-own holidays."

ATOL is the Government backed holiday protection scheme. Thomson & First Choice package holidays and flights are all ATOL protected. Times are tough for airlines just now and budget airlines do not ATOL protect their flights. Feel free to come in to any Thomson or First Choice shop, and ask us exactly how we can look after you and your holiday.



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CMK



AS a creator of mouth-watering dishes, Jamie Oliver is not looking forward to the stomach-churning stodge that is now on his plate – one very large slice of humble pie.

But after getting a reaming for the liberal sprinkling of swearing in his last TV series, the mockney chef seems resigned to using a little less, or, spice, in future.

Jamie landed in hot water after the *Food* word was used a staggering 23 times in just 30 minutes during an episode of his *Ministry of Food* series, in which he showed residents of Rotherham the art of healthy cooking.

It made him a target for anti-swearing campaigns – including the *Daily Mirror* – concerned about the escalating use of foul language on telly.

Jamie, who suffers from dyslexia, defends his use of the odd swearword as part of the passionate nature that has seen him tackle obesity and school dinners. But he has reluctantly agreed to clean up his act. "I never swear on cooking shows because

emotionally it is not appropriate," says Jamie, 33, in an exclusive interview.

"But when I am making these documentaries I never think about what is appropriate – I'm just wearing my heart on my sleeve.

"Ultimately, I think that is a strength. We had no complaints on that night and I score less than on Jamie's Kitchen, which was made seven years ago.

"There was a lot of swearing in Ministry but I was incredibly emotionally attached to it. At the end of the day I am not a Grade 1 student in English Literature. I am a special needs kid and when I get upset and p\*\*\*ed off, I swear and for that I apologise."

### NAUGHTY

"I think it's incredibly human. For those who aren't human, they can turn over.

"But that's obviously not good enough at the moment, so you know what I will do? I will do what I never wanted to do. I will have one little whisper to the programme editor and say, 'Take all the swearing out. Makes me look better, to make my life easier'."

Jamie gives complete editorial control of all his programmes to the production company and has no say on what can, and can't, be screened.

"What is going to happen in I can't be sure, obviously," he adds with a sigh. "I am not David Attenborough. I want people to relate

# 'foul' is off menu after F-word furore

**I'm a special needs kid ..when I get p\*\*\*ed off, I swear and for that I apologise**



**CONTRITE** Jamie will clean up his act... he swears!

Picture: NATHAN DENETTE/REX FEATURES

**I am not David Attenborough. I want people to relate to me down the pub**

to me down the pub, and every now and again the pub is not fine dining, is it? But it won't happen again. It's as simple as that.

"Everyone came down on me and I judge myself and I have to sleep at night. I saw the cut before it went out and it was me amplifying my dissatisfaction with some bad words. Yes, OK, I am sorry. It apparently lessens the effect of the good things I want to say. But it is after nine and there is a remote control.

"I'll have to make an effort not to swear, or hope that the production company covers my a\*\* and edits out all that naughty swearing."

Despite the swearing storm, Jamie is

unusually laid-back, thanks to enjoying a long Christmas break with his wife Jools and their daughters Poppy Honey, six, and five-year-old Daisy Boo.

He knows to make the most of it. In March, his life will be turned upside down by the arrival of his third child - conceived in a Rotherham hotel room during filming for Ministry of Food.

So will the Oliveres follow the Beckhams and other celebrities in naming their child after the place of conception?

Jamie laughs the laugh of a man who doesn't wear the trousers in his own home - and knows it.

"You know my wife better than that,"

he chuckles.

"She'll probably call it something like Sunshine or Dewdrop.

"Jools has got the names all sussed and she won't even tell me.

"She has been through a lot of strange cravings. At the moment she is on a lot of everything. I can't remember seeing her in the past week without something in her hand.

"The weirdest craving was with Daisy when she was chewing on rubber and having Marmite on bananas. But she is

off curries and can't do spices, so I haven't had my curry kick for a while."

With the happy event looming there is one word of warning for any of his friends who are invited round for dinner.

When Jools, 34, last gave birth five years ago Jamie decided to cook the placenta as a "treat" for his mates.

"I asked the last time if I could take it," he says. "But they have to take it and do leslis on it. I had written the recipe - I was going to do a chicken liver parfait with placenta, not liver.

"I was going to get all my mates round

to wet the baby's head and I wasn't going to tell them - then show them a DVD of me making it afterwards. But Jools wouldn't let me, she is too sensible."

Outside of the Oliver household, he is a TV personality, chef and businessman with an expanding chain of Jamie's Italian restaurants. He is also a campaigner - his next project, to be screened at the end of the month on Channel 4, sees him fight for a better deal for British pig farmers.

### CONTROL

Inside the Oliver household, however, he says he has all the authority of King Canute trying to turn back the tide.

"The wife is getting more and more control of the house and the two girls have got it all sewn up," he says with a smile.

"I work for them now. Did you know that? I work for Poppy and Daisy Oliver.

"At the weekend it is a very normal life where I work for my two girls.

"They think what I do is very insignificant and just take the mickey out of me. They are completely unimpressed by what I do. As they get older they are getting cheekier and funnier."

With that, the celebrity campaigner and masterchef heads home to his family - where he is clearly happy to be just the chief cook and bottle washer.



**STORE POINT** Sainsbury's ad with Ant and Dec

## HAS HIS SAINSBURY'S DEAL TURNED SOUR?

JAMIE Oliver's lucrative deal with supermarket giants Sainsbury's is hanging in the balance.

He does not yet know whether his £1.2million contract will be renewed in June after eight years.

Last year, Jamie told the Mirror of his anger at Sainsbury's for failing to turn up to his debate on chicken farming in Britain. That outburst earned him a sharp rebuke from the firm.

He says: "My contract is up in June and I honestly

don't know what will happen then. They know what I'm like. They know I speak my mind - I like to think that is why I have been working for them for eight years. Stuff like school dinners and 15 [training school leavers to be chefs] I could never have done without that job. The relationship is good but it doesn't mean they will re-employ me."

● **Jamie Saves Our Bacon** will be shown on January 29 as part of Channel 4's Great British Food Fight season.

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16 **M** Daily Mirror  
WEDNESDAY 18.02.2009

# HENSON BACK IN SIN BIN AFTER DRUNKEN BUST-UP



**QUIZ** Henson with officers

BY RICHARD SMITH  
richard.smith@mirror.co.uk

**GAVIN Henson was quizzed by cops during a boozy night out with three Wales players.**

Witnesses claimed Henson - who had left partner Charlotte Church at home with their newborn son Dexter - was led out of two bars in Cardiff after heated

## Cop quiz after celebration

exchanges while celebrating Saturday's win over England. Henson, 27, missed it with a calf injury but hit the town the next day with teammates Mike Phillips, Lee Byrne and Andy Powell. One witness said: "Gavin's behaviour was a disgrace. He was

abusive." Another said: "Henson was jumping on the pool table and taking people's cues. He had blood down his neck after play-fighting." Henson was spoken to by police but allowed to go. A spokesman confirmed: "Officers were called to reports of a disturbance." The

Welsh Rugby Union said it has launched a probe.

Henson's club Neath-Swansea Ospreys said: "We are aware of what has allegedly happened." In December 2007, Henson was accused of getting caught up in disorder on a train back from a match in London. Charges against him were dropped but three pals were fined for "foul-mouthed, arrogant behaviour".

## SURGERY Transplant team pick face patient

**SURGEONS** who carried out the first near-complete face transplant have lined up another patient for surgery after pleas from all over the world. The team replaced 80 per cent of the unnamed woman's face in a 22-hour op in December including eyelids, nose and cheeks. She was able to leave hospital two weeks ago. Dr Maria Siemionow who led the team in Cleveland, Ohio, said: "We have a candidate but we have to make sure they are right." Meanwhile UK surgeons being assembled for the first full face transplant at the Royal Free Hospital in London said yesterday they will make an announcement on their progress "within 12 months".

## STANDARDS TV swearing soars amid £4.7m fines

**SWEARING** on TV has helped to send watchdog fines soaring by 1,000 per cent in the past five years. And shadow culture secretary Jeremy Hunt, who uncovered the figures, said yesterday: "Either standards are slipping or, more worryingly, broadcasters now treat these penalties just as a business cost." Fines for rule breaches totalled £4.7million in 2008 - over 10 times the £462,000 companies paid out when Ofcom was set up in 2004. Foul-mouthed presenters landed music network MTV with a £255,000 bill. The BBC has a fine outstanding after failing to edit out Phil Collins' F word during the pre-watershed Live Earth concert. Other penalties included £25,000 on Television X for showing over-explicit scenes during a "freeview".

## CRISIS Zimbabwe healthcare in 'collapse'

**THE** health system in cholera-ravaged Zimbabwe has collapsed, it was warned yesterday. Medical charity Medecins Sans Frontieres said the poverty-stricken country faces epidemics such as malaria, a worsening Aids crisis and malnutrition. MSF president Dr Christopher Fournier said: "However catastrophic this cholera epidemic, it is only the most visible manifestation of a broader crisis. The whole public health system in Zimbabwe is down. It has collapsed." He blamed the crisis on the economic collapse linked to Robert Mugabe's corrupt rule. More than 3,600 people have died and 60,000 have been infected since last August.



▲ NEW MUM Charlotte Church, above, and with Henson

simplicity

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For more on the Grand Prix, go to: RELATED [mirror.co.uk/sport](http://mirror.co.uk/sport) LINKS



## It's less fine for Button

FORMULA 1 ace Jenson Button drove straight into the arms of his new girlfriend after his Australian Grand Prix triumph yesterday. Japanese lingerie model Jessica Michibata, 24, was in pole position for a kiss to seal his win for the fledgling Brawn team. And the Wizard of Oz clearly lapped up all the love. **Voice of the Mirror: Page 8 GP Special: Pages 58&59**

▲ YOU BEAUTY Happy team sponsor Sir Richard Branson

▲ WINNING SMILE Jenson the jubilant

▲ ON THE BUTTON Punching the air taking the flag

▼ VICTORY PARADE Jessica heads for pits after watching Jenson win

Daily Mirror MONDAY 30.03.2009

## MISSING Crimewatch TV plea by Claudia cop

THE detective leading the search for chef Claudia Lawrence will appear on tonight's Crimewatch to plead for clues. Missing Claudia, 35, was last seen 12 days ago and police fear she has come to harm after meeting up with someone she knows. Det Supt Ray Galloway, of North Yorkshire Police, hopes his appeal for information on the BBC1 show which airs at 9pm will bring new leads. Prayers for Claudia's return were said at churches in her home city of York yesterday. She was last seen on March 18 after working at the University of York's Goodricke College. Family and pals say her disappearance is 'totally out of character'.

## Sue Carroll What has Madonna done to deserve Mercy?



## TOMORROW PREGNANCY Coleen: I'm not telling Roo, baby

WAYNE Rooney's wife Coleen kept mum yesterday after it was revealed she is expecting the couple's first baby. Friends say that Coleen, 22, is three months pregnant. The news was broken yesterday by our sister paper the Sunday Mirror, the day after man-of-the-match Rooney scored two goals in England's 4-0 Wembley defeat of Slovakia in a friendly. Coleen has been out of the public eye in recent weeks and the couple have only told close family and friends and Rooney's bosses at Manchester United. Pregnancy rumours began in January when she was spotted in Barbados with what appeared to be a bump.

# KIDS OF FOUR COPY SWEARING FROM TV

LOUISA PILBEAM [mirrornews@mirror.co.uk](mailto:mirrornews@mirror.co.uk)

## Teachers plead for channels to tone it down

TEACHERS are warning that children as young as four and five are using foul language picked up from the telly. Kids in reception class are not only repeating swear words from the likes of TV chefs Jamie Oliver and

Gordon Ramsay but copying scenes from shows. So concerned are members of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers that they will lobby broadcasters at their annual meeting next month to cut swearing, violence



and wild behaviour. Alison Sherratt, a reception class teacher at Riddlesden St Mary's Church of England school in Keighley, West Yorks, says children are using more bad language

than ever and becoming more badly behaved and disobedient. She said: "Bad behaviour seems to be percolating down to younger children. It is not behaviour which is overtly violent

but there is an awful lot of inappropriate language." The Mirror has campaigned to end swearing on television and is backed by all three main parties. A total of 45,500 two to 11-year-olds were suspended for bad behaviour in 2006, up from 40,000 in 2005.



## Here's a strange way to improve your hearing

IF YOU have a problem with your hearing but would suffer discomfort with a hearing aid in your ear then the new Evo 1 is the digital answer. Evo 1 comes from BHM, experts at putting hearing aids onto glasses. Now they can fit a digital hearing aid onto your glasses!

And their hearing aids are invisible because they are hidden in the form of your spectacles, in the arms. Their precise technology is tried and trusted and they have refined it even more with their new digital model. And if you don't wear glasses then there is a selection of attractive ladies

and gentlemen's frames available. This incredible hearing aid is suitable for people suffering from a mild to a severe hearing loss. The glasses are attractively styled and no-one will guess that they contain a high performance digital hearing aid.

And there's nothing in the car to irritate you or be seen. So if you have any hearing loss and feel you are missing out when you are watching TV or going to the theatre, cinema, meetings or out shopping then take a look at the Evo 1 way of getting back into the joy of living.

Apply now for details of the Evo 1, call the freephone number below or post the coupon. **FREEPHONE 0800 515 349** [www.hiddenhearing.co.uk](http://www.hiddenhearing.co.uk) Please quote ref: SIMS5005

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**COWELL'S PUTDOWNS**

If your lifeguard duties were as good as your singing, a lot of people would be drowning

Band: We need some direction. Cowell: Well there's the exit!

Your mouth is far, far too big when you sing. It was like looking into a cave

You sounded like Dolly Parton on helium

# IS COLE THE NEW COWELL?

JUDGES Simon, Cheryl, Dannii, and Louis



**EXCLUSIVE**

By MARK JEFFERIES [mark.jefferies@mirror.co.uk](mailto:mark.jefferies@mirror.co.uk)

**CHERYL Cole is the hot favourite to take over from Simon Cowell as he prepares to quit X Factor.**

Cowell has told friends the next series will be his last before he leaves to set up a global TV and entertainment empire with Topshop mogul Sir Philip Green. And he has made it clear he wants Girls Aloud singer Cheryl, 25, to become the new main face of the show, whose other judges are Dannii Minogue and Louis Walsh.

His £20million golden handcuffs deal with ITV ends in December after the next X Factor run, which starts in August. ITV bosses, aware of his

pulling power, are still desperately hoping to persuade him to stay. His outrageous put-downs have helped turn the show into a ratings winner with up to 15 million viewers. In the process he has become one of the highest paid TV stars in the world with an estimated £120million fortune.

But insiders say Cowell, who is 50 in October, is reviewing his future. Although he wants to continue doing Britain's Got Talent, he felt something had to give. A close friend said: "He has found X Factor increasingly draining and it leaves him little

time for serious business. Now he's decided this will be his last series and he's moving on. In future, he will have a more overseeing role."

Cowell is said to be excited over his link-up with Sir Philip. Insiders say they are planning to launch a huge "one-stop" entertainment company to rival anything the big Hollywood studios can come up with. They will also create shows, manage stars and exploit the rights to existing TV hits.

Simon has a string of big money deals coming up for renewal with ITV, Sony Music and Fox TV in America. Sir Philip, 57, worth £4 billion, will help him negotiate new deals under their umbrella company.

Insiders say the pair have agreed that "nothing is off limits" and will even look at snapping up ITV. An industry

source said: "This is a very big play by two colourful individuals. They are already a fearsome pair individually. Put them together and that's a tough room. Simon is very ambitious and is the creative force. Sir Philip is the one who will bang the table and get the deals done."

It is rumoured that Cowell may also quit American Idol, the cornerstone of Fox TV's dwindling fortunes in the US.

He has been in talks with 19 Entertainment, which owns the rights to the show, about a new contract after raking in around £35million last year.

**He's decided this will be his last series and he's moving on**

**FRIEND OF COWELL**

## SWEAR? YOU'RE SACKED

By MARK JEFFERIES THE BBC has announced its biggest clampdown on swearing... with TV and radio hosts facing the sack if they slip up.

In a victory for the Mirror's campaign against bad language the Beeb yesterday released a 72-page report promising a massive purge on swearing shortly after the watershed between 9pm and 10pm. A

senior BBC source said: "Anyone caught out of line won't work at the corporation much longer."

New guidelines will state that "malicious intrusion, intimidation and humiliation" is completely unacceptable. And some swear words will be bleeped even after the watershed if they are not "integral to the meaning or content". The report was ordered after

abusive messages were sent to Andrew Sachs on Radio 2 by Russell Brand and Jonathan Ross. It said that of all services, BBC1 is the most sensitive because it unites generations.

In interviews with 2,700 viewers, BBC shows picked out for excessive swearing included Little Britain and Mock The Week.

**Voice of the Mirror: Page 8**



8 M Daily Mirror THURSDAY 25.06.2009

VOICE OF THE DAILY Mirror voice@mirror.co.uk

A clean-up at the BBC

BBC bosses finally seem to get it and are threatening to sack foul-mouthed TV and radio hosts.

The Daily Mirror has campaigned for a clampdown after complaints from readers disgusted by the kind of language they often hear on the airwaves.

Releasing a 72-page report is the easy bit for a BBC which, in the past, has turned a deaf ear to curses.

Now the corporation will no longer continue to contend that a spurious artistic license gives broadcasters the right to swear.

But the test that counts will be how it handles offenders who believe they are too important to sack, and can say what they like.

Swearing matters a lot to the public, most of whom who do not like four-letter words broadcast in their homes.

We hope well-paid stars will start to behave responsibly. If they do not, the BBC must sack the swearers.

Disrespectful

THE Royals really need to put on a better show for Armed Forces Day.

That the Duke of Gloucester, 19th in line to the throne, will be the most senior family figure at Saturday's centre-piece event in Kent is not good enough.

We acknowledge the Queen is to inspect soldiers in Edinburgh as part of a week-long stay in the Scottish capital.

But Prince Charles, commander-in-chief of the Paras and Welsh Guards, could surely do more than send a message.

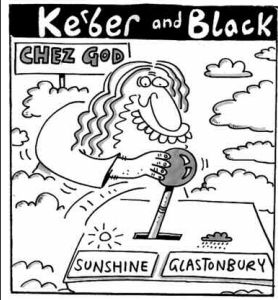
And the Princes William and Harry, both serving officers, should be at official services instead of sending messages of their own.

The sacrifices of brave men and women deserve Royal respect.

Andy's set-to

ANDY Murray doesn't like the shadow cast over Centre Court by the new roof.

We're more worried about the shadow over Britain if he doesn't win Wimbledon.



CMYK

BBC veteran JOHN SIMPSON on returning to Iran three decades after covering the Islamic revolution

THE years are rolling back for me as I witness the upheaval in Iran.

Thirty years ago, I covered the fall of the Shah and the rise of the Islamic Revolution. I was on the plane back to Tehran with Ayatollah Khomeini in 1979 as he landed to seize power. Then, in the past week, I was back witnessing what could be the beginnings of another revolution. It is extraordinary.

Here I am, 64 years old, and it was like being in my 30s again.

The same sort of people talking to me in the same way as they did back then, with the same hopes and fears. It was a very strange experience given how everything has changed.

I asked people why they're going to face such danger? And again and again they said it was because they felt completely disregarded, taken as mugs.

They said the idea the president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad could be re-elected with 63 per cent of the votes in the recent election simply wasn't a possibility. The idea he had won a big majority of the votes in Tehran was obviously not true and people felt they'd been treated by their government as though they were idiots, as if they had no judgment or sense.

Again and again people told me that was why they were there, protesting on the streets. It wasn't that they wanted regime change, they just didn't like being treated like fools. On



FIRST TIME John reports the Shah's fall

It's like 30 years ago .. shouts of 'Down with the dictator' are back

Their bodies bore the marks where they had been beaten with sticks and iron bars

the streets protesters were met with a brutal response by the police and Basiji militia which I witnessed when I was arrested on Saturday night.

We were filming at a city block, empty except for an oil depot. The crowd had set fire to heaps of wood. There was a danger it was going to blow up the oil and we got arrested.

I have been arrested lots of times in Iran - it goes with the territory - but this was quite unpleasant.

I thought: "We're in real trouble here. We are going to be held overnight and they will take all our recording gear."

They took us to a little prefab police station, just big enough for about 10 people to stand inside. They started haranguing us and accusing us of being spies - all the usual things.

We told them we were doing our job and it started getting heated.

Then they brought in two or three demonstrators who had been really badly beaten up.

They were bleeding, their clothes were all torn and their bodies bore the marks where they had been beaten with sticks and iron bars. One of them grabbed a protester by the hair and tried to smash his face on a table.

I don't like to see that so I waded in and started pulling the cops off as they were kicking him. It got a little bit physical.

The police don't usually see that kind of thing. People who get arrested in Iran don't help other people.

They realised we were too much of a handful and just shoved us out into the street. In the early stages of the demonstrations they had orders not to attack Westerners - which was not the same under the Shah as we were targeted all the time and thumped quite a lot.

Back then the Basiji, big guys with Islamic beards, were more or less on the crowd's side. Now these are the

guys everyone is scared of. These are the guys who probably killed that poor girl Neda Agha-Soltani.

On Saturday at a demonstration one of the Basiji, a big, big fellow, came round the corner with an iron bar. He raised it to attack me but saw I was a Westerner so turned away from me and whacked our poor translator really hard on the legs. The memories of the revolution of 1978/9 were all around and one form of protest sent a real shudder through me.

Thirty years ago when the people of Iran were too scared to take to the streets, they would yell "God is great" from their windows and rooftops. I had forgotten all about it until I heard the voices, the shouts of "God is great" and "Down with the dictator" sounding out across the night sky of Tehran.

It was quite ghostly - and took me back instantly to 1978. There is one major difference between now and then - this time the revolution doesn't need to be televised. The people don't need broadcasters or reporters so much because they have mobile phones and can film themselves.

We were at the demonstration on Saturday when that poor girl was shot and thought it would be too difficult to film with even a small camera. So we went round with mobile phones and left the our cameraman behind in the car. We got some extraordinary pictures on our mobiles, just like the people of Iran have been doing.

This is a revolution sparked off by ordinary people with mobile phones. It is the most extraordinary thing I have ever seen and I have covered many revolutions. They were all more, can we say, traditional - the same as the Russian or French revolutions.

But this time photos and videos can go instantly on YouTube to be seen by millions and Twitter and Facebook can allow the voices and thoughts of ordinary Iranians to be heard worldwide.

It is the most remarkable thing. It is very difficult to know how this is going to end. One problem is that there's little leadership in evidence.

Mir Hossein Mousavi, who you might call the opposition leader, isn't much of a leader and is no liberal. He has come from the system and used to be Prime Minister. In the long run he doesn't want to pull the system down so he is not leading from the front.

There doesn't seem to be anyone

This is a revolution sparked off by ordinary people with mobile phones

working on a strategy. But if they did have a strategy and a leader then change would be possible.

The unions have been badly treated by the Government and the merchants in the bazaars are still the big economic force in Iran. If they worked together for a general strike, which is how the Shah was brought down, then possibly yes, there could be a new revolution. But the real question is do they have the ability to form a strategy and do that?

The sad thing for me is that I want to be there, to see what is going on. But I can't get back into Iran because my visa expired and they aren't handing out new ones to journalists.

I can't bear the thought that something is happening there which I can't report on. It is very frustrating.

But I will be listening to the people of Iran and watching this burgeoning revolution through their own videos, pictures and words.

AS told to Alun Palmer (alun.palmer@mirror.co.uk) THE Report - John Simpson in Iran, is on Radio 4 tonight at 6pm



TEHRAN 2009

DEJA VU in the midst of protest again



**CAMPAIGN**

**Mirror gets C4 to curb its swearing**

CHANNEL 4 bosses have finally vowed to reduce swearing on their shows in another victory for the Daily Mirror.

The Mirror's Stop Swearing On Telly campaign has led to both the BBC and ITV agreeing stricter guidelines.

And despite vowing to "continue to shock and push boundaries", Channel 4 has now admitted it will change.

Outgoing chief executive Andy Duncan said the station was in the process of cleaning up its act.

He said: "There's probably something of a shift in the public mood and appetite and, of course, we're sensitive to that."

It means new series by the likes of Gordon Ramsay will now feature less swearing.

A recent edition of his Kitchen Nightmares USA saw the F-word used 63 times.

**STOP THE SWEARING ON TELLY**

**Sue Carroll**

*In a contest for least animated object on Strictly, Alesha's mouth won*



**TOMORROW**

**TELEVISION**

**Hugh's limp could cause House crisis**

ACTOR Hugh Laurie says he may be forced to abandon his lead role in award-winning TV medical drama House - because pretending to limp is such a pain.

Hugh, 50, said perfecting Dr Gregory House's trademark hobble for the cameras has forced him to contort his body for hours on end. And it is causing him real damage.

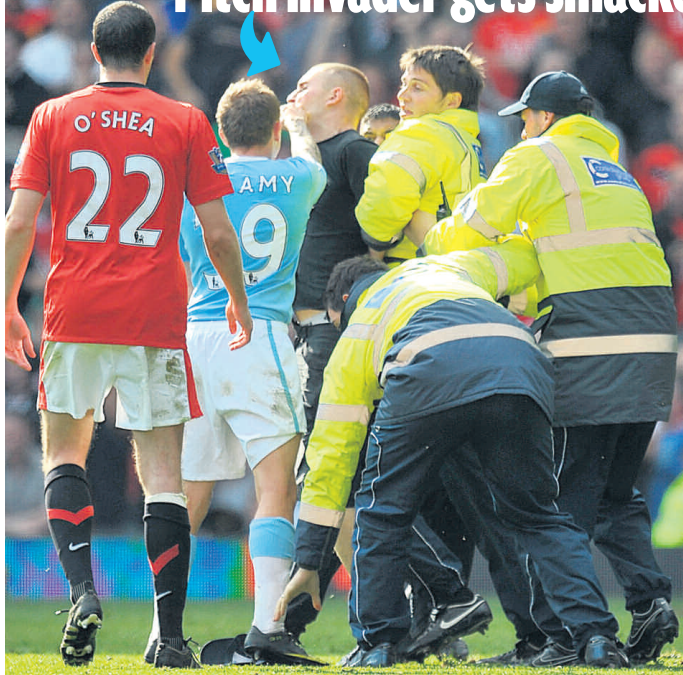
He added: "The show might last to series seven, eight or nine but I don't know if I will because I'm starting to lose my knees a little bit."

"It's a lot of hip work. There's things going badly wrong. I need to do yoga."

Laurie has won two Golden Globes for the US medical drama and was in line for his third Best Actor award at last night's Emmys. He added: "I've no idea why people like it so much and I am too superstitious to ask."

# CRASH FAN WALLOP

## Pitch invader gets smacked by striker



BY JOHN KELLY  
john.kelly@mirror.co.uk

**PREMIERSHIP star Craig Bellamy shows the form of a true striker - as he thumps a lout during yesterday's Manchester derby.**

Man City goal ace Bellamy, 30, lashed out at the pitch invader as stewards dragged the man off the field at Old Trafford.

The United supporter ran on to celebrate after Michael Owen's injury-time winner sealed a dramatic 4-3 victory.

Police say Bellamy, who scored twice, could face charges if a complaint is made.

But City boss Mark Hughes defended him and compared him to legendary boss Brian Clough, who hit pitch invaders 20 years ago.

Hughes said: "I did not see it but the guy should not have been on the pitch."

"That's not acceptable. When Brian Clough clipped someone's ear he was lauded as a national hero. Maybe it will be the same with Craig, but I doubt it."

Nottingham Forest icon Clough clouted two supporters after a 1989 cup tie when they ran on to celebrate a win. He faced no further action - and kissed the pair on TV to make up.

Police said of yesterday's incident: "If asked to investigate, we will."

BLACKBURN'S El-Hadji Diouf was quizzed by police yesterday for allegedly racially abusing a white ballboy.

The lad told a supervisor after the incident at Everton's Goodison Park. Home fans also turned on the Senegalese star. In 2003 Diouf was banned for spitting at fans and in 2004 was fined for doing the same to Portsmouth's Arjan de Zeeuw.



**ON TARGET** Bellamy

**SHAME OLD FACES: BACK PAGE**

# Meet Blue Peter's 9th pup idol



BLUE Peter's Helen Skelton proudly presents the newest member of the famous TV team - Barney.

Nine-month-old Barney, the ninth dog in the show's history, will be unveiled to viewers tomorrow.

The red setter-dachshund cross is actually Helen's and was found for her by the Dogs Trust charity.

The presenter, 26, said: "When I joined last year I said I might get a puppy. So they suggested I could bring it in to work. We spent a lot of time working with the Dogs Trust and they kept their eyes out for one that might like to be in the studio. I went for Barney as he's cute and likes to be with people."

The new pet will star on the BBC1 show with older dogs Lucy and Mabel.

Barney joins a long line of lovable Blue Peter pooches including Petra, who formed a famous double act with Peter Purves, and John Noakes' beloved Shep.

**Voice of the Mirror: Page 8**

**..and here's some they had earlier**



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Y  
K

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Daily Mirror  15  
THURSDAY 08.10.2009

# BBC F-WORD BAN

 MARK JEFFERIES  
mark.jefferies@mirror.co.uk

## Tougher rules for swearing on TV

**THE BBC has toughened the rules on swearing and violence on TV with a crackdown on the casual use of the F-word.**

In a victory for the Mirror's campaign to cut excessive swearing, the overhaul also includes a toughening-up on two of the strongest words "c\*\*\*" and "mother\*\*\*\*\*". The editorial guidelines said their

use, even after the 9pm watershed on TV and radio, must be approved by a controller who will "consider editorial justification".

It follows a public outcry over the obscene calls by Jonathan Ross and Russell Brand to Fawcay Towers actor Andrew Sachs last year.

The BBC Trust said: "Research found that people accept that strong

language can be appropriate within a programme but dislike it when used unnecessarily or excessively.

"Controllers should ensure strong language is subject to careful consideration before it is included."

The Trust, which has put the guide out for public consultation, said even after 9pm strong language had to be "clearly signposted". It also

found a lot of public concern over "aggressive and humiliating behaviour" on TV and radio.

Shows such as Little Britain were criticised for bad taste.

The Trust said: "Some comedy can be cruel, but intimidating, humiliating, intrusive, or aggressive remarks must not be celebrated for entertainment."

The Mirror's campaign to stop swearing on TV began in November after ITV chief Michael Grade said the use of offensive words was "indiscriminate".



Trustee Richard Tait said: "Public acceptability is constantly changing, so it is right that we should reflect on the standards the BBC should be setting."

## INCEST DAD GIVEN 12YRS

A MAN who fathered two children with his daughter was jailed for 12 years yesterday.

The 68-year-old, from Harlow, Essex, admitted incest, rape and indecent assault over 33 years.

The judge at Chelmsford crown court called it "sexual depravity" and a "grotesque breach of trust".

## TITANIC RERUN

A CRUISE ship is retracing the voyage of the Titanic for the 100th anniversary in April 2012 with tickets starting at £2,595.



**Russell: I think I'm in love..**

RUSSELL Brand looks smitten as he arrives at a party with new girlfriend Katy Perry.

The womanising comedian, 34, may finally have been tamed of his wild ways after admitting: "I think I'm in love."

Despite his reputation, the I Kissed A Girl singer, 24, looked like she could be crazy about him too as they went clubbing in Paris. Time for a Brand new start, Russ?

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Article E1

34 SUNDAY EXPRESS November 2, 2008

COMMENT

# Your letters

Edited by LIZ JAMES

Write to: The Editor, Sunday Express,  
Number 10 Lower Thames Street,  
London EC3 6EN. Fax: 0871 434 7300.  
E-mail: [sunday.exletters@express.co.uk](mailto:sunday.exletters@express.co.uk)  
Please include your name and address.

## Pride in the fallen

RICKI Dewsbury's article about the supposed slump in poppy sales was misleading and overly pessimistic. Here in my local branch we recruit volunteer collectors from all sections of the community, many of whom are far from their 'twilight years', and every year we increase the amount of money we collect.

There are lots of potential collectors – students, cadets, the early-retired. People are always willing to help this most worthy cause – they just have to be asked.

Sydney Graham,  
Whitley Bay and North Shields  
Branch, The Royal British Legion

## Ballet will live on

I READ Jeffery Taylor's article "PC cancer that killed British ballet" (Sunday Express, October 26) with interest. I am also a great supporter of classical ballet and was sad to read that he feels it is threatened in this country.

I see the Birmingham Royal Ballet perform very regularly and, as well as the wonderful Robert Parker, there are several young men in this company who are British, are currently soloists or first soloists and are looking as though they will soon become principals.

Mr Taylor also states that it is unlikely that there will be any more 'Billy Elliots'. I hope he is wrong; my grandson aged 10 dances at Elmhurst School for Dance in Birmingham as part of its programme. So do lots of other British boys and they all look pretty talented to me.

I honestly hope the picture is not as bleak as Mr Taylor has painted it.  
Sue Siers,  
Nuneaton, Warwick

## Teach the basics

NEIL Hamilton highlights in his column (Sunday Express, October 26) that, despite millions of pounds being pumped into education, more than 50 per cent of pupils leaving school do not attain a grade C in maths and English.

This is a shocking state of affairs but there is a way of addressing the

## Prize letter of the week

### Poppy appeal needs big rethink

"WHO'LL help lift poppy sales?" asks Ricki Dewsbury (Sunday Express, October 26). As it stands the poppy seems to be associated chiefly with the two world wars and there are not too many survivors of either to serve as a visible reminder of the debt we owe to those who gave so much for the rest of us to live in an increasingly materialistic world.

Has the time come to consider fundraising to supplement our diminishing poppy sales?

Standing out in the freezing cold, rattling a collection tin, is no fun. Neither is trudging the dark streets and knocking on unwelcoming doors trying to sell

a poppy ('No thanks mate, bought one last year – still good as new').

The BBC does Children In Need and has no problem raising millions. With TV channels numbered in the hundreds, surely one could organise Veteran Aid using a similar format.

Also, do banks, building societies, chain stores and other corporate bodies contribute to the British Legion? They might contribute more if they could be sure of getting their two minutes of free advertising, as a Terry Wogan-alike effused to the world how generous they were.

Halbert Urcombe,  
Cirencester, Glos



APPEAL: Poppy sales are sliding

problem. Attainment of this basic grade in these two important subjects should be a requirement for all pupils to achieve before they are allowed to leave school.

Employers should also not be allowed to employ school-leavers until youngsters can satisfy this level of basic education.

If they persist and leave school without, then their Child Benefit should cease and they should not be entitled to Jobseeker's Allowance.

Over time the message would get home when on applying for employment they are told that they are unemployable if they cannot provide the school-leaver's certificate which shows they have completed their education.

Godfrey Finn,  
Northampton

## Target sex fiends

I READ David Jarvis's report on criminals with horror ("Police let 10 sex fiends a day off with a caution", Sunday Express, October 26). The overall statistics were bad enough but some of the specifics were appalling: two people in Hampshire got a caution for the rape of a girl under 13, while no fewer than 47 in Sussex were given police cautions for sex offences against children.

What on earth is going on here?

The Greater Manchester Police force has even gone so far as to say that a caution is a conviction.

The figures might show that paedophiles rarely take the lives of their innocent victims – but not how seriously they damage them.

Those poor children must now also live with the fear and loathing that their tormentor is still out there, maybe still stalking them.

For such serious offences, a caution is a let-off and I would question the morals of anyone who thinks otherwise.

Steve Ward,  
Portland, Dorset

## BP's crude greed

HOW can BP justify the obscene 146 per cent increase in its profits as announced this week?

This is a classic example of a major organisation run by ruthless individuals with little or no regard for the effect their greed has either on the lives of ordinary people or the national economy.

With chief executive Tony Hayward's estimated annual salary of £360,000 plus a huge bonus, you can see where his priorities lie.

He might be worth it if he was a brain surgeon.

P Kirk,  
London

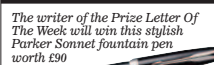
## Our dental decay

HAVING read "Britons flock abroad just to see the dentist" (Sunday Express, October 26), I understand why this is the case.

My wife and I recently went for a dental check-up. While in the waiting room, my eye was drawn to a poster outlining what one could expect to be charged for the 'band' of treatment being undertaken. As my wife and I were having 'band 1' treatment, an examination and a scrape and polish 'if required', we should expect a charge of £16.20.

First my wife went into the surgery (she has full dentures). She was in the surgery for less than one minute.

The writer of the Prize Letter Of The Week will win this stylish Parker Sonnet fountain pen worth £90



Then it was my turn. In total I have 16 teeth and these were duly counted and checked by the dentist. I was told that some of them were mobile. I was also offered the 'optional' scrape and polish at an additional cost of £15, which I declined. So I was charged £16 simply for having my teeth counted.

It is little wonder people go abroad for treatment.

David Spray,  
Chesterfield, Derby

## Swearing boycott

I AGREE completely with the view expressed by Marie Hallon (Your letters, October 26) on the gratuitous use of obscenities by Jamie Oliver. He would not talk like that to his own daughters.

I have been in touch on behalf of myself and many friends with one of his sponsors, Sainsbury's. We are boycotting its products until this loudmouth moderates his language. Also we are operating the same boycott on all who advertise their products on Channel 4.

This campaign is growing locally and it is very heartening to hear that people in other parts of the country feel the same way on the need to clean up TV and radio.

R Mitchell,  
Iteringham, Norfolk

## Briefly...

IN recent weeks we have all observed the turmoil in the USA, on the New York stock exchange and indeed in our own banking system. When my late father told me about the hardships of the Depression, he commented that he hoped I'd never see them in my lifetime. Alas, I think that I will.

R Quitenden,  
Greenhithe, Kent

I THINK the adverts being used to promote Britain's Poppy Day appeal are wonderful and whoever thought them up should be congratulated. They are tasteful, poignant and very effective in conveying the message that families of both war veterans and those involved in current conflict still need our support.

Matthew Shah,  
Enfield, Middx

I CAN'T believe that already I am being kept awake by fireworks going off through to the early hours. Who are these inconsiderate yobs? There should be a blanket ban on firework purchases until the weekend nearest November 5.

Greg Connell,  
Gravesend, Kent

WHY did Gordon Brown feel the need to comment on the recent media hype over an ill-judged prank by Jonathan Ross and Russell Brand? Gordon, you've got a country to ruin... sorry, run. Your time (at our expense) would be better spent clearing up the mess you have created and continue to create.

Paul Davis,  
Oakham, Leics

## Last week's vote results:

We asked for your opinion on reports that 'ghost workers' in Whitehall cost taxpayers £50million annually. **Should all these people be sacked immediately?**  
YES: 99% NO: 1%

We also wanted your views about new powers allowing councils to impose road tolls without Government approval. **Are road tolls just a green con?**  
YES: 97% NO: 3%

### Room 101

THE 1571 telephone answering service which invites callers to leave a message because the line is busy. This makes a charge for the call even if no message is left.

Ivy Wicks,  
Wymondham, Norfolk

MAIL delivered in polythene envelopes, usually junk mail. Why can't it be delivered in ordinary paper which can be recycled?

Gillian Cornish,  
Broadstone, Dorset

PEOPLE who don't understand the concept of overall stopping distances when they constantly

move into gaps that the majority of us leave for safe driving.

Liz Clarke,  
Swinford, Wilts

THE education cretins advocating sex education for five-year-olds. Why are they so obsessed with this subject? How long before the age of innocence vanishes?

M Busby,  
Birchington, Kent

ADVERTS for cruises to the Canary's. The correct spelling is Canaries.

Gil Wilson,  
Sale, Cheshire

**What would YOU like to see banished into Room 101?**  
Tell us your pet hates – and why you dislike them. Write to Sunday Express, Room 101, followed by the address at the top of the page, or e-mail [sunday.exletters@express.co.uk](mailto:sunday.exletters@express.co.uk)

### The week in verse by Martin Newell

Last week a poll of 5,000 couples concluded that romance dies after two-and-a-half years...

#### The Cupid Poll

So after an exchange of rings  
Two years, six months of little things  
That counted once  
The pollsters said  
Romance was dead –  
And Cupid fled  
A man took solace in his shed  
A woman in her magazine  
A fire less hot than it had been.  
A morning cup of tea un-brought  
A television blaring sport

A too-seat not left down, as ought  
A bra draped on the davenport  
A bathroom strewn with socks and pants  
The murderers of frail romance  
Though no one dead had done the crime  
They warned Eros after time  
And all conspired as broken thread  
Will weaken bonds  
Till love was dead.  
Though, ask yourself what pollsters know.  
And who had time to answer?  
Who?  
Those with nothing else to do  
Though maybe not the blissful souls  
Too loved-up to answer polls.

# Letters

The Daily Express, Number 10 Lower Thames Street, London EC3R 6EN. Fax: 0871 434 2704  
E-mail: [expressletters@express.co.uk](mailto:expressletters@express.co.uk) (include your address and telephone number)

## Great that Brown backs lower fuel-price crusade

GREAT to see that Gordon Brown backs the Daily Express crusade to force greedy oil companies to cut the price of petrol at the pumps ("Downing St backs our crusade", November 1). If they comply, perhaps he will reduce fuel tax to help motorists further in these tough economic times.

We moan about the oil giants not cutting prices as soon as crude comes down, but the Government is the real winner, with higher prices resulting in a windfall for the Treasury.

Steve James,  
Horley, Surrey

## Pity we do not have other success stories like BP

THOSE who accuse oil companies of making obscene profits and not slashing pump prices ("Oil giants must stop hammering drivers", October 31) should remember that one of their prime targets, BP has paid into the Treasury, over the past three years, nearly £4 billion in corporation tax, £14.9bn in fuel excise duty and VAT, and about £264million in national insurance contributions.

It's a pity we don't have more companies as successful as BP. On top of this, BP provides millions of pounds for many company pension funds by way of share dividends, unlike the Government, which has succeeded in wrecking the country's pension structure since taking power.

J Alford,  
Farnborough, Hants

## We want BBC to adopt a more puritanical approach

IN the wake of the Jonathan Ross/Russell Brand fiasco, we must consider our children's well-being and tighten up the obscenity laws and broadcasting code.

The BBC's top managers fail to understand that most TV viewers and radio listeners are tired of lax standards and would prefer a more puritanical approach.

I am constantly sifting through the TV listings to find something fit to watch. I cannot bear nudity, swearing and violence, but am constantly assailed by all three.

Once standards slip, there is a continuous downward spiral. Like children testing their parents' discipline, entertainers will never cease testing the boundaries, and if those boundaries are not strictly policed, standards will decline.

Marty Falk,  
Ormskirk, Lancs

## UK's fighting World War Three on economic front

THE UK is now fighting World War Three, albeit an economic one, and Gordon Brown's route to victory is to spend, spend, spend, regardless of the likely consequences ("Brown spending spurge" will put 4p on income tax", November 1).

The reason he cites is the need to maintain the economy and essential services. But I remember World War Two when, if I wanted something not readily available, I went without until such time as the country could afford it. It worked then, so why not now?

Today's voters should recognise that cuts in public services are essential if they mean a return to financial stability and lower taxes. Brown can't be blamed for oil

## Letter of the day

# Town's tribute to fallen troops made me weep

HOW proud I was to stand with hundreds of others in my hometown of Colchester, to pay humble tribute to 15 British soldiers killed fighting in Afghanistan ("Town's tribute to fallen soldiers", October 31).

Your heart would have been gladdened to see so many ordinary people, every single one wearing a red poppy, respectfully lining the streets as 600 members of the 2nd Battalion Parachute Regiment paraded in desert attire for a memorial service.

The soldiers recently returned from a six-month tour in Helmand province, where it was involved in fighting. One can only respect the heartfelt sentiments of the battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel Joe O'Sullivan, who said the battalion's soldiering was the hardest it had experienced in 26 years - since the Falklands, in fact.

Relatives of the dead were weeping, and so was I and many around me, mere observers on a proud occasion.

Name and address supplied



ON PARADE: Paras marching through Colchester

price fluctuations, but he can be blamed for not taking appropriate action when the price of crude soared. He should have discounted the cost of fuel for those involved in the road haulage of essential items, such as food, thus avoiding some, if not all, of the price hikes we now suffer.

Tony Blair inherited a healthy economy when Labour took office in 1997. Now look at it. But don't expect a quick fix if the Conservatives ever return. It worries me that a fickle public will vent its spleen on any ruling party that fails to deliver the goods - in this case, a healthy economy - fast enough.

Norman Rendle,  
Cardiff

## Rude of expat mayor not to have learned the lingo

HOW does Mark Lewis expect to run a town hall on the Costa Blanca when (allegedly) he speaks only broken Spanish ("Briton takes over Spanish town after corruption swoop", October 31)?

I thought "good for him, having a go at local government" - until I discovered that this recent holder of the title 'Councillor for Animals' has lived in Spain for 25 years.

What has he been doing all this time? True, not everyone finds languages easy to learn, but after such a long residency, he should be fairly fluent by now.

I took Spanish evening classes

for two years, at the end of which I was fluent enough to hold a short conversation and get the gist of a newspaper article.

It seems incredibly rude of this individual not to have bothered to learn the language of his adopted country. No wonder Europeans despise our inability and reluctance to learn any other language but our own.

Hilary Whitehouse,  
Marston, Oxon

## Yes, teenagers aren't as bright as they once were

I AGREE with Vanessa Feltz that teenagers aren't as intelligent as they once were ("Why teenagers aren't as bright as we were", October 28).

Two of my six grandchildren can't write or spell correctly (one aged 11 has the writing ability of a seven-year-old, which isn't her fault), yet all are computer-literate.

What chance does any modern child have when they lack basic literacy and numeracy skills on attending high school? When I entered secondary education, English and maths had already been covered at primary level, and I went on to learn other subjects.

Now the Government wants to see sex education taught in primary schools.

I'm so glad I am not a youngster in today's world, where there's no sense of innocence, freedom or romance and, above all, nothing is left to the imagination.

Name and address supplied

## DO WORKING PARENTS IGNORE THEIR CHILDREN?

**Yes** I AGREE that parents fail to spend enough time with their children, nurturing and teaching them about life ("Guilt of working parents", November 1). This is most true of those in full-time work. If they parented properly, we would not have a broken society, where many youngsters are left to their own devices and get into trouble.

And there is no point spending pots of money on expensive toys to compensate for parents' shortcomings, as the young recipients only end up clamouring for more material objects.

Alison Pearson,  
Sheffield

**No** IT'S ridiculous to allege that half of Britain's parents don't spend enough meaningful time with their children, with working dads, in particular, guilty of failing to spend enough time with their daughters.

Every parent I know makes a big effort to ensure their children take part in planned family activities. And that's the case even when both parents work.

Some guilt-ridden mums and dads do spend money on toys and expensive days out to ease their consciences, but with the credit crunch, that is surely about to end.

Peter Ingham,  
Preston, Lancs

## Ten things you never knew about... shopping

WILLIAM HARTSTON

Not only has the huge Westfield shopping centre just opened in Shepherds Bush, London, but this is Respect for Shopworkers Week, run by the union Usdaw.

1. The number of shops in the UK fell from about 400,000 in 1955 to 279,000 in 2004...
2. ...but the total amount of floor space increased over that same period. We have fewer shops, but they are much bigger.
3. In 1699, you could be sentenced to death for shoplifting to the value of five shillings (25p) or more.
4. The only European countries without a branch of McDonald's are Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the Vatican City.

5. According to research by Tesco, male shoppers buy melons close in size to their ideal woman's breasts.

6. A Portuguese language commission in 1996 listed 'shopping centre' as a particularly offensive phrase in its fight against the influx of English words.

7. In 1984, a Londoner was banned from calling his shop 'Selfridges', chosen because he sold fridges. He had earlier been banned from calling it Harrods.

8. According to 'trolley-snooping' experts, bananas in your trolley mean 'life is hectic but I love it'.

9. Brussel sprouts, however, mean 'I am down to earth and enjoy a stable lifestyle.'

10. The first item sold at the new House of Fraser store at Westfield was a Jamie Oliver mug for £9.

## BEACHCOMBER



### 91 YEARS OLD AND STILL BEYOND IMPROVEMENT...

HERE are so many self-improvement and get-rich-quick books being published that it can be difficult to select which is most appropriate for the purpose of enhancing one's personal lifestyle. There are even books for those with no lifestyle at all, but who wish to have one anyway, and guides for those, like myself, who are unsure what a lifestyle is, but are eager to find out whether they have one or not. To help find your way through this forest of self-improvement, I have selected some of the most attractive and impressive-looking titles among the crop.

How To Write A Best-Selling Novel by a chap who has never written a novel at all, let alone a best-seller (Harroff and Below, £16.99 hardback). A complete guide to the art of novel-writing from someone who has read several himself. Includes a back-jacket endorsement from a man who failed to win Big Brother a few years ago.

How To Write A Best-Selling Self-Help Book by the author of How To Write A Best-Selling Novel (Harroff and Below, £17.99 hardback). The perfect follow-up for anyone who has failed to write a best-seller after buying the author's previous book. These two titles are available together at your local remainder shop, in a special presentation pack, for £2.99.

Help Yourself! by Claudia Shelfstacker (Purloin and Prosper, £12.99). An easy-to-follow guide to the art of kleptomania, including a final chapter, penned from the author's own prison cell, on mistakes to avoid when attempting to self stolen goods on eBay.

How To Be Someone Else by Arnold Thing (Whine Press, £13.95 plus corkage). The basic problem faced by most people is that they are not someone else. This book takes the reader through every step of the procedures needed to become someone else, from the initial decision about who you want to be, through the complex maze of plastic surgery, identity theft and method-acting, to reach the final goal. The author clearly knows what he is talking about, having had a varied career as a dwarf salesman, walrus sexer, professional toenail collector, cheese taster and freelance warbler, before winning the Miss UK Pasta competition in 1987.

How To Make Money On The Stock Exchange by Julian and Quentin Wideboy (Citibooks, £45). The Wideboys are frank - remarkably so - in sharing their experiences and divulging the strategy that made them household names in the long years of investment banking. Only since bankrupting their employers and being sacked, have they found time to put the hurly burly of City trading behind them and assemble all their thoughts and ideas into an easy-to-follow set of instructions.

Coping With Insolvency by Julian and Quentin Wideboy (Citibooks, £35). The indispensable sequel to the above, with hundreds of extra chapters, each penned by a different former colleague of the Wideboys.

How To Screw Up Your Life Then Make A Fortune Writing About It by Shelfstacker, Thing, Wideboys and others (Cross Porpoise Press, £19.99). The latest in the Talking At Cross-Porpoises series in which leading experts explain their philosophy of life and what went wrong with it.

Reminded! (Nottehbic Publications, £15). The book of the popular TV series, in which people who have failed at everything else try writing books and fail at that, too.



**DAILY EXPRESS**

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**Bailed-out banks have a duty to pass on rate cuts**

**I**RRRESPONSIBILITY within the banking sector is one of the root causes of Britain's recession, probably doing even more damage to economic prospects than the global commodity price shock. All our major banks have sustained big losses through lending their customers' money to people who were never likely to pay it back.

Several have lost so much as to require massive long-term injections of taxpayers' cash. Almost all have turned to the Bank of England's special liquidity scheme to provide a short-term financial breathing space. So the banks owe the British taxpayer a massive debt of gratitude. Failing to pass on cuts in interest rates to mortgage-payers is a very strange way of repaying that debt.

Yet that is the step that several lenders appear determined to take. By no means all passed on the rate cut announced last month and more "stickiness" is being predicted when it comes to passing on future cuts.

It is entirely predictable that banks should wish to rebuild their squandered capital balances by boosting profit margins. But institutions which have harmed the economy through unsustainable lending at unduly low rates of interest must not now be allowed to cause yet more damage by switching to a policy of rampant profiteering.

Many thousands of jobs are at stake. Manufacturers such as Jaguar, which this year launched its magnificent new XF model, are having to lay off workers because of a collapse in consumer spending power rather than through any fault of their own.

Those banks directly in hock to the taxpayer should be ordered to pass on rate cuts, while those who are merely relying on short-term Bank of England liquidity should be left in no doubt that one good turn deserves another.

The banks have a corporate responsibility to make good the damage they have done and every major lender must play its part.

**Tessa has no role to play**

**F**ORMULA ONE is not an Olympic sport. So there is no excuse for Olympics Minister Tessa Jowell pitching up at the Brazilian Grand Prix on a taxpayer-funded trip. It is infuriating to see her burning public money faster than Lewis Hamilton's car burns petrol.

It is high time that silly Ms Jowell was made to throw in the towel.

**Gurkhas will overcome**

**T**HE Gurkhas are on course to win a famous victory on citizenship rights. A fearless and disciplined fighting force was ranged against one of the most spineless administrations of modern times. Whatever made Government ministers think they had a snowball's chance in hell of coming out on top?

**After the Russell Brand/Jonathan Ross fiasco we ask...**

**IS IT TIME WE CLEANED UP TELEVISION?**

**YES**



**says Patrick O'Flynn**

Chief political commentator

**I** AM no prude, believe me. I accept that sometimes an expletive can add force to a comedian's joke.

I acknowledge that sexual innuendo has been an essential part of British humour since well before the days of Carry On films. Nor would I deny that gritty, realistic drama is made more convincing by gritty, realistic dialogue.

So why do I find myself fully in agreement with ITV boss Michael Grade when he declares war on indiscriminate foul language on television?

Because it has all gone way too far, that's why. Not just the swearing but the incessant eroding of previously agreed boundaries of good taste in general.

The whole meaning of the nine o'clock watershed has changed in recent years. It used to be a guarantee of decency before 9pm. Now it seems to be a guarantee of obscenity the moment 9pm is reached - not so much a watershed as a sluice gate letting in a tidal wave of foul language.

Take Jamie Oliver's recent Ministry Of Food show that went out at nine o'clock.

What could have been intelligent and engaging peak-time viewing was despoiled by the presenter's utterly pointless cffing and blinding. He was obviously trying to keep up with fellow potty-mouthed chef Gordon Ramsay, right, the very title of whose hit show, The F-word, seeks to celebrate his casual and repeated use of a word that was once completely taboo.

And neither can one any longer be confident that pre-9pm viewing will be suitable for a family audience. The BBC's EastEnders (7.30-8pm with a Sunday afternoon omnibus) lurches from rape to murder and back again, stopping in between only for a spot of inter-generational adultery and cynical financial betrayal. No wonder its former leading lady Michelle Collins will not let her 10-year-old daughter watch the show.

Then, of course, there is the mercifully suspended Jonathan Ross, whose Friday

evening offering had become so tawdry before he was forced off air. In our house, Woss's routine of fawning over his male comedy chums while degrading whichever leading actress was persuaded to appear before him had long since lost its appeal. Give me Al Murray's good-natured Happy Hour every time.

What the viewing public deserves is not censorship but a reform of the watershed system roughly in accordance with the standards that apply to the certification of films.

Television is a far more intrusive medium than cinema as it is pumped directly into the home. It is absurd that it should get away with a single "anything goes" cut-off point. Pre-9pm, only material suitable for family audiences should be screened, between 9pm and 11pm should be an intermediate period approximating to a cinema 15 certificate, while anything truly foul-mouthed, sexually explicit or graphically violent should be confined to a late-night slot. Just like it used to be.

**“The public deserves a reform of the watershed system”**

**NO**



**says Charlie Catchpole**

TV critic

**W**ORLD economies are in a tail-spin. Starvation and genocide stalk the African continent. And our Prime Minister sounds off in the House of Commons about a stupid, tasteless prank by Jonathan Ross and Russell Brand on a late-night radio show hardly anybody listens to.

Rein in the BBC? Rein-in-gob MPs from all parties weigh in with their tuppence-worth.

Rein in the BBC? is the sound-bite of the week. Have we gone mad?

Ross is a brilliant broadcaster who became too big for his boots and thoroughly deserved a slap down for behaving like an idiot. Brand is a nine-day wonder who will not merit even the tiniest footnote in entertainment history.

End of story. Only it isn't. Our masters - and those who would be our masters - itch to control what we watch in the privacy of our homes. Even though, heaven knows, it is already subjected to more regulation than in almost any country outside Russia and China.

You'd think Mary Whitehouse, who castigated the BBC for excessive use of the word "bloody" on Till Death Us Do Part, had risen from the grave. By all means give us wholesome family entertainment.

But let's also cut adult entertainers enough slack to behave the way all adults occasionally do - by misbehaving.

Do we really want every silly stunt, every risqué joke to be "signed-off" in

advance by pen-pushers on the executive floor of Broadcasting House or approved by some faceless committee of prodnoses?

Watching TV as a job for more than a quarter of a century, I have often been offended.

I am offended by the tacky, cynical way the Jeremy Kyle Show exploits and mocks the dazed and confused.

I am offended by the annual parade of dimwits, show-offs and freaks that are designed to make the hard-of-thinking part with their money to vote for contestants on The X Factor.

But that's life. I'm offended by much that goes on around me in the world - oafs who drop litter in the street, the boom-boom of "in-car" sound systems, the existence of traffic wardens. I just have to live with it.

Our TV is not, as broadcasting's great and good tirelessly boast, the best in the world.

But trying sending a few evenings channel-hopping in a hotel room in the US, France or Italy, with its moronic game shows which make Dale Winton's Hole In The Wall look like University Challenge, and you would almost certainly agree that it's the least worst.

For all its faults (F-words included), let's keep it that way.

Most importantly, let's keep it as free as possible from the dead hand of State supervision.

**“We really need to cut our entertainers some slack”**







### Get rid of financial fat cats cashing in on credit crunch

MILLIONS of British families are to be thrown a financial lifeline this Christmas. The Government wants to kick-start our faltering economy by making it easier for us to spend and borrow.

Whitehall knows that busy High Streets will help keep people in work but Gordon Brown's plan is still a gamble. The proposed tax cuts will cost £15 billion and will be a welcome boost for the hard-up but for middle earners the benefit will feel short-lived. If consumer spending dries up the recession will become worse but is this the best way to keep our offices, shops and factories busy?

This crisis has put our jobs, homes and wellbeing at risk. So far the banks have behaved appallingly. The Government must stop them trying to chisel customers out of the better deals that low interest rates offer.

Alistair Darling must clear out the financial fat cats who think the big bail-out has made them safe from the storm. It was their stupid greed that got us into this mess in the first place.

### A fine time to clean up TV

THE obscene debacle involving Jonathan Ross and Russell Brand was the last straw. Forty thousand complained, the BBC apologised and some heads rolled – but has the lesson been learned?

Swearing and the graphic depiction of sex and violence has ruined the enjoyment of mainstream TV for millions. Broadcasters must be made responsible for what is said and shown during prime viewing hours.

The Sunday Express is proud to launch the Clean Up TV Crusade. This would give Ofcom the teeth it needs to police the airwaves. Under the terms of our crusade, four-letter-word swearing will result in a £100,000 fine for broadcasters and stars.

If it takes hefty fines to remind arrogant producers and performers that their viewers believe in decent behaviour, even if they don't, then so be it.

### Salute wartime air heroes

IT'S Remembrance Sunday so our story of the forgotten RAF men who died in Holland in 1941 is especially poignant. They were killed when their Wellington bomber was shot down and their bodies were placed in unmarked graves.

Their fate was forgotten but the people who lived in the village where the bomber crashed never forgot. They have found the names of the crew and want them on the graves and on a memorial at the site. The Dutch still value the sacrifice of the men who fought to liberate their country. They put us to shame.

Our Government still refuses to give the Bomber Command men a campaign medal recognising their wartime service. Support our Bomber Boys crusade and help force the Ministry of Defence to right this wrong. No decent country should tolerate such an injustice.

### Rod's a brolly good father

ROD STEWART has learnt a thing or two during his long career as a rock star. He can see trouble coming. So when he took his two-year-old son for a stroll he didn't forget his umbrella. He used the handle to keep the lad on the straight and narrow.

It may not be parentally correct behaviour but he still makes being a dad look cool.

Write to the SUNDAY EXPRESS at Northern and Shell Building, Number 10 Lower Thames Street, London EC3 6EN or call 0871 434 1010

# In honour of the brave who gave Britain freedom

Picture: MARK KEHOE



MEMORIAL: Lord Ashcroft with his collection of Victoria Cross medals, now on display at the Imperial War Museum

AS THE Queen leads today's Remembrance service at the Cenotaph, there is no more appropriate time to salute the bravery of British servicemen. Today is about paying tribute to our war dead but as the lives of our military personnel continue to be lost abroad, a once-a-year national recognition of the contribution of our Armed Forces may not be sufficient.

As our servicemen continue to distinguish themselves on a daily basis in Iraq and Afghanistan, it is fitting that we recall memorable moments in our military history. I still cherish the memories of the celebrated cavalry charges of the Scots Greys at Waterloo (1815); the ill-fated Light Brigade at Balaklava in the Crimea (1854); and the 21st Lancers at Omdurman in the Sudan (1898).

Then there are the many defensive sieges, including Gibraltar (1779-83); Lucknow during the Indian Mutiny (1857); Mafeking, Ladysmith and Kimberley in the Boer War (1899-1901); and, most famous of them all, the heroic 1879 defence of the mission station at Rorke's Drift in Natal, South Africa, when a mere 139 men held out against some 4,500 Zulu warriors.

Less glamorous but no less noteworthy was the sorely-stretched "Thin Red Line" of the 93rd Highlanders in the Crimea, not to mention the unforgettable stoicism shown in the trenches of Flanders during the Great War and by the retreating but unconquered Army at Dunkirk. These are just a handful of the instances which have coloured our long military past yet still inspire our fighting men whenever they are called upon to serve their country.

The Royal British Legion's website says of the annual National Service of Remembrance: "It was originally conceived as a commemoration of the war dead of the First World War but after the Second World War the scope of the ceremony was extended to focus on the nation's dead of both world wars and in 1980 it was widened once again to extend the remembrance to all who have suffered

By Michael Ashcroft

and died in conflict in the service of their country and all those who mourn them."

We owe the British servicemen who died in the First and Second World Wars an enormous debt yet sooner, rather than later, the emphasis of the Remembrance Day service may need to change to bring more about the losses suffered almost weekly by our servicemen and women in Iraq and Afghanistan. Since 2001, 122 lives have been lost in Afghanistan and, from the end of the Second Gulf War onwards, 176 in Iraq.

This is only part of the suffering, which is why in September I became one of the major sponsors of the Help For Heroes rugby match at Twickenham, which raised money for those seriously injured in the current conflicts. Of course we must honour the fallen of yesteryear but it is our serving soldiers, sailors and airmen who most need our support today.

Unlike my father's generation, I have never had to fight for my country. I was born the year after the Second World War ended but this only served to give me an interest in conflict and gallantry. As a boy I looked up to people who had risked the greatest gift of all, life itself, for their comrades and country. In this way my lifelong interest in bravery was born.

Over the past three years I have written two books that highlight moments of great courage shown by servicemen. It is only through recognising excellence, in any field, that others can be inspired to reach new heights. Britain's bravest servicemen have left a legacy which others can aspire to match and, in rare cases, even surpass.

I have now become known in some circles as a storyteller and champion of

bravery. It is these dual roles that inspired me to write *Victoria Cross Heroes*. The book was published in 2006 to mark the 150th anniversary of Britain's foremost award for courage in the face of the enemy. The book told the stories behind the collection of VCs that I have been building since 1986.

Today that collection comprises more than 150 VCs, the largest in the world, and is owned by a trust that was set up to protect the medals.

My desire to be a storyteller of brave deeds and my fondness for the VC meant that earlier this year I announced I would donate £5 million in order to show the trust's collection of VCs in a new public gallery at the Imperial War Museum in London. I want others to be able to enjoy seeing the medals and to learn about the stories behind them.

THIS TUESDAY sees the publication of my latest book, *Special Forces Heroes*. It tells the stories behind another medal collection that I began building in 1988. This time, by and large, the collection is of the decorations awarded to the SAS, the SBS and other commando-style servicemen who became involved in highly dangerous Special Forces work.

The book has two basic aims: to highlight the brilliance of our Special Forces personnel and to raise money for a good cause. In fact, every penny of my author's royalties from *Special Forces Heroes* will go to Help For Heroes.

Today, on Remembrance Sunday, I vow that I will continue doing everything in my power to champion the memories of those men who deserve their place in history as the bravest of the brave.

● The writer Lord Ashcroft is an international businessman and a deputy chairman of the Conservative Party. *Special Forces Heroes* is published by Headline on Tuesday, price £20 (see [www.specialforcesheroes.com](http://www.specialforcesheroes.com)). A four-part television series of the same name starts on Five the same evening.

**'We must cherish those who deserve a place in history'**



# Banish filth from

By **David Stephenson**  
TELEVISION EDITOR

IN THE face of a deepening crisis in trust over standards in broadcasting, the Sunday Express has launched a crusade to clean up television.

Against a background of 40,000 complaints about the offensive prank calls made by Jonathan Ross and Russell Brand, the newspaper is behind a new Decency in Television charter. The centrepiece of the new decency code is a ban on all swearing, before and after the 9pm watershed, with a £100,000 fine for offending broadcasters.

Echoing Mary Whitehouse's Clean Up TV campaign, the charter stops short of censorship but urges the Government to overhaul the regulatory system. Watchdog Ofcom, which has no accountability to the public, has failed to prevent a decline in standards.

The BBC will next week show a shocking drama series, Apparitions, starring Martin Shaw, which features the skinning of a corpse in a gay sauna and graphic scenes of satanic ritual. ITV too is set to launch a new crime series, Above Suspicion, in which a corpse riddled with maggots is repeatedly shown. Robson Green's Wire In The Blood has also been accused of showing too many gory scenes.

Meanwhile, the licence fee payer is set to pick up the bill for the Ross/Brand fiasco, with Ofcom considering fines of up to £1 million for infringements of the Communications Act, which outlaws prank calls.

The Decency in TV charter has already received high-profile backing. Mediawatch, the broadcasting interest group,

gave the code its full support.

Spokesman John Beyer said: "Michael Grade said that the use of the F-word and swearing generally was 'unrestrained' and 'indiscriminate'."

"He is right on this but he is not against swearing on TV per se. He certainly understands that viewers are disoriented and I guess he thinks if he improves language on ITV it will attract viewers away from other broadcasters. In this way, by improving programmes, he will reverse the fortunes of ITV. We have said for years, and not just about ITV, that this is the way to succeed.

"The real and lasting solution to this problem is to strengthen the Broadcasting Code, which currently does not prohibit anything. Ofcom officials tell us that in regulating TV they cannot be more restrictive than the law allows but the use of obscene language in a public place is an offence. The problem is that the 'front room' is not a public place."

He urged the Government to introduce a new Communications Act and said he was confident this was being considered by Culture Secretary Andy Burnham.

The Charter was also backed by the producer of ITV's most popular crime drama, Midsomer Murders, which returns next month with a Christmas special. Brian True-May said: "In response to last week's complaints to Radio 2, we have banned all swearing, all graphic violence and all over-sexual scenes from Midsomer Murders.

"People just don't like it. The murder is important, obviously, but showing so much blood as we did in the pilot, Badger's Drift, is

## SUNDAY EXPRESS



wrong now. There's a big backlash in the industry about how far people go."

Midsomer star John Nettles agreed. "I don't think there was too much fuss about what happened over Ross and Brand. Too little fuss was made, frankly. It was extraordinary, unreformed laddishness with all kinds of awful vulgarities. It's the assumptions they make about what will entertain us that is insulting for me."

Co-star Tim Pigott-Smith said: "I can't understand why TV tries to appeal to youth. The Ross/Brand broadcast was disgusting. People are fed up with broadcasters pushing the boundaries too far."

Their comments follow those of such broadcasting legends as Sir Terry Wogan, who described the prank calls as absolutely unforgivable. "I just hope it's not going to affect the public's attitude to Radio 2," he added. Backing the call to cut bad language in broadcasting, he said: "I think it's unprofessional. I think some people think they will have more street cred with 'the youth' if they off and blind."

The BBC said it was sensitive to the issues raised by the Sunday Express. A spokesman said: "We agree that it is important that all broadcasters closely monitor the level and use of swearing."

"The BBC has clear guidelines which say the most offensive language should not be broadcast before the watershed and should be carefully labelled and needs to be justified by the context at other times."

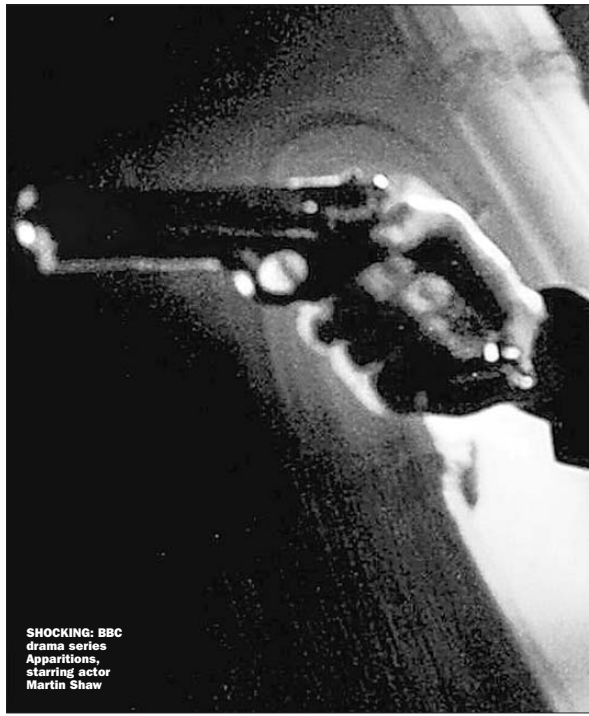
The country's most popular commercial broadcaster was less supportive, however. An ITV spokesman said: "Michael Grade has outlined his view on the use of bad language on television, a position which is shared by Peter Fincham, ITV's Director of Television, Channels and Online. An outright ban would be an overreaction but the use of swearing needs to be given careful consideration."

Channel 4 said: "Channel 4 abides by the Ofcom Broadcasting Code and so the strongest language is only broadcast after the watershed and only where editorially justified, where it meets the expectations of our viewers and where preceded by an appropriate warning."

Five, which last week ran a documentary, repeating the prank calls, said: "As a public sector broadcaster Five takes its obligations regarding language seriously."

● **Tell us what you think of TV standards. Please write to Clean Up TV Crusade, Sunday Express, 10 Lower Thames Street, London EC3R 6EN or email [sundaynews@express.co.uk](mailto:sundaynews@express.co.uk).**

OPINION: PAGE 26



SHOCKING: BBC drama series Apparitions, starring actor Martin Shaw

**'People are fed up with broadcasters pushing the boundaries too far'**

## Brand 'a time bomb

RUSSELL BRAND ran amok at BBC Radio 2, urinating in his studio and sending a lewd text message to the station's controller Lesley Douglas, before the Andrew Sachs scandal imploded.

The 33-year-old presenter, who resigned from his radio show following an obscene telephone call he and Jonathan Ross made to actor Sachs, was, according to one source, "out of control" and "consistently making a mockery of BBC guidelines".

"There were also stories about him urinating in his studio on more than one occasion and even though a complaint was made, the feeling was, 'Well, that's just Russell'. It got a lot of backs up," said the source.

"On another occasion Brand sent a lewd and sexually explicit text message to Lesley [Douglas]. It was

By **Jane Clinton**  
pretty full-on stuff but there was a view that he could do no wrong. He was the poster boy of Radio 2, despite having a comparatively small audience on his Saturday night show."

The comedian and actor would also jokingly sit on Douglas's knee.

Brand and Ross caused a storm when on October 18 their obscene and sexually explicit telephone messages to Sachs were broadcast.

"The pair called the 78-year-old former Fawlty Towers actor four times and left obscene messages referring to, among other things, Brand's sexual relationship with Sachs's granddaughter, Georgina Baillie, 23.

Baillie had a brief fling with Brand in 2006. Eleven days after the broadcast, Brand

resigned. The following day, October 30, Radio 2 controller Douglas resigned and Ross was suspended for 12 weeks without pay. To date the show has had 42,000 complaints.

While colleagues lamented Douglas's departure, Brand's resignation was a relief to many in the corporation uneasy with his appointment.

Though he was pushed as the edgy face of Radio 2, there were those who thought Brand's £200,000 pay packet for 380,000 listeners was remarkably generous.

"There were a number of producers who did not want to work with him as they knew he would make a mockery of the BBC's standards of decency," added the source.

To veteran DJ Paul Gambaccini, the episode came as no surprise. He revealed that Brand was

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## who urinated in his studio'

Douglas's "pet" but also, ultimately, her Achilles heel. "She [Douglas] let him get away with so many outrageous things," Gambaccini told Nicky Campbell on the BBC Radio 5 Live breakfast show.

"Lesley had a commitment to Russell which was almost obsessive. That is to say she believed that hiring him was a good move for Radio 2 and she stood by him through thick and thin, even while he was alienating almost everyone else in the building.

"The fact is that he was her pet and she let him get away with so many outrageous things.

"In this profession we never disparage a colleague, it's an unwritten rule, but when his appointment was announced I sent an e-mail of protest to her; the only one I have sent in my entire career.

I knew this would end in tears because it could only end in tears. When you pick up a time bomb, one day it will explode."

The BBC Trust has approved a series of management actions, including a study into where the appropriate boundaries of taste and standards should lie and a review of compliance procedures.

On Friday there was yet another casualty in the debacle, Radio 2 executive David Barber, the station's specialist music and compliance boss. It is thought he would have been involved in checking the Brand show's content before it was transmitted.

An apology was broadcast on Radio 2 yesterday when the Ross and Brand shows would have been on air.



CLOWNING AROUND: Russell Brand on Jonathan Ross's chat show

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# Your letters

Edited by LIZ JAMES

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## Ross jibe unjust

YOUR article "A midlife crisis led to downfall" (Sunday Express, November 2) implies that Jonathan Ross should not behave in a certain way because of his age and that he is wrong to associate with people younger than himself.

If I said someone should not be allowed to do certain things because they are black and should not mix with white people I would be rightly scorned. But it would appear that it is acceptable to discriminate on grounds of age after all.

At least Mr Ross took what was coming to him rather than run away, as did his partner in crime.

Mike Jackson, Bodorgan, Anglesey

## Radio boss's folly

WITH regard to calls for Radio 2 controller Lesley Douglas to be reinstated at the BBC, why was this highly paid senior manager so popular? Along with former colleague Jim Mair, far from finding talent of the future, she was responsible for bringing in stars with controversial backgrounds such as Russell Brand, Jonathan Ross and Chris Evans to replace serious broadcasters such as Sunday Express columnist Sir Jimmy Young, who had millions more listeners than any of the above.

The suggested transformation of the station resulted in a huge range of music from across the decades being relegated to a one-hour slot on Tuesday and Sunday nights, in favour of chart hits being played endlessly. What's more, warnings had to be broadcast about the content of programmes on Saturday lunchtimes and that was after three hours of Ross continually swearing.

To add insult to injury, Ms Douglas then went and created 6 Music, which is aimed at exactly the same audience as Radio 2. Please Ms Douglas, don't come back.

Jeremy Britton, Backwell, Somerset

## Poppy sacrifices

I ENJOY reading Julia Hartley-Brewer's column each Sunday and while I'm very glad she wears her poppy with pride and respect, as a

## Prize letter of the week

### Time to censor rude presenters

IN response to the piece by Julia Hartley-Brewer "Oh, quit being hysterical and give Ross a break!" (Sunday Express, November 2), of course tastes in comedy change.

But unfunny material can never be made funny by the use of bad language, and many listeners, like myself, object to such language being beamed into our homes by an organisation we are funding. I pay my licence fee for the privilege of switching on, not to feel obliged to switch off.

It is irrelevant to suggest that the majority of complainants had not heard the show or didn't like Jonathan Ross or Russell Brand. While this may be true, it doesn't

render their complaints unworthy. This argument would mean no one had a right to complain unless they had suffered directly from, or witnessed, a particular action. The complainants should be congratulated for speaking out once the obscene phone calls were brought to their attention.

If these complaints lead to mass censoring of comedians and presenters it will prove these people are unable to operate within the boundaries of decency and modesty required by the majority of viewers and listeners - and it would be very welcome.

Gerard Lees Young, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear



POOR JUDGMENT: Jonathan Ross

sign of gratitude to all who died to give this country freedom, the money raised from the sale of poppies also goes towards helping the present generation of servicemen and servicewomen working to preserve freedom in present conflicts.

They put themselves at risk every day and the appeal helps families left behind when the very worst happens to these heroes.

Those people who can't be bothered to buy a poppy should just stop for a minute to think about what's happening today, rather than assuming that it all relates to something that happened in the dim and distant past.

My gratitude to all the people who buy a poppy.

M Waddington, By e-mail

## Back our heroes

I AGREE with Ricki Dewsbury ("Who'll help lift poppy sales?" Sunday Express, October 26) and Halbert Ucombe (Your letters, November 2) about the lack of funding for ex-servicemen.

Local associations supporting them need financial support. I telephoned the Eastbourne branch of the Royal Naval Association after reading that its annual march would not take place next year as members in their

seventies and eighties would not be able to march the distance.

I suggested they should sit in Army trucks so they could still wave, feel proud and get the recognition that they deserve but then I was told the real reason was lack of funding.

This is so sad - they sacrificed their lives and their social lives for their country. They did not have internet, webcam and mobile phones to keep in touch with their loved ones and family.

Some £5,000 of National Lottery money was donated but surely it could have been more?

Perhaps a footballer or two could even offer a week's wages - it's amazing how we can find £150,000 a week for someone like Manchester United's Cristiano Ronaldo.

Cassie Wood, Eastbourne, E Sussex

## Obama's big task

AFTER interminable months of propaganda, have the people of the USA have finally fallen under the spell of yet another purveyor of bland, vacuous waffle?

Let's hope that in reality Barack Obama proves to have more substance than his rhetoric.

We all know that the candidate who sounds the best is often more of a conman than a reliable and safe pair of hands.

We have been there and know the signs - we fell for it three times in a row and look where it got us.

I'm sure we all wish Mr Obama the very best of luck and every success in his forthcoming role and just hope that he is not in fact just a mixed-race Tony Blair.

Graham Langford, Watton, Norfolk

## Banks' loan ruse

A BARCLAYS Bank financial person was interviewed for television and was asked if customers would see the immediate effects of this interest rate cut. His reply was that it would take some time for this to filter through to

the customers. Isn't it amazing? When the bank base rates increase there is no filtering and the effects are immediately felt by customers.

It's the same with petrol pricing - if the price of a barrel of crude oil increases, the effects are felt straight away at the pumps but when the price of oil falls it's weeks before we see any change at the pumps, and we are told this is due to the production of the stuff.

Is this another one of life's great mysteries or the in-bred manifestation of the greed of the fat cats in question?

Alan Parkinson, Huddersfield, W Yorks

## Baby signs' value

NEIL Hamilton's column in the Sunday Express of November 2 states that he hates "Baby on board" notices in car windows.

They are displayed so that if the car is involved in an accident and parents are unconscious the rescue services will know there is a child in the car.

Unfortunately, some people don't take the notice out when there isn't a child on board and the rescue services can waste valuable time looking for a non-existent child.

Jen Birch, Barnack, Cambs

## Briefly...

JULIA Hartley-Brewer is the first person I have heard speak total and utter sense about the Ross/Brand affair ("Oh, quit being hysterical and give Ross a break!", Sunday Express, November 2). I agree with her totally and I'm not a fan of either of them.

Linda Bradley, Strabane, Co Tyrone

IT'S truly shocking that the Bank of England has slashed interest rates, presaging a fall in rates paid to savers by the high street banks. At a time when these banks are questionably solvent, savers investing their hard-earned funds in these enterprises should receive an increased interest rate reflecting the risk involved. Or does capitalism not work like that in Brown's Britain?

John Eoin Douglas, Edinburgh

WHY do programme-makers, in their contempt for decency, produce increasingly offensive material and then coyly resort to euphemisms in describing it? "Strong language" means obscene language, while "edgy" means unfit for family viewing. Why not just make better-quality programmes?

Douglas Davies, Porthcawl, Glamorgan

I WAS not surprised to hear of an increase in sales of stabproof vests ("Scared taxi drivers buy stab-vests", Sunday Express, November 2). Knife crime is a very real problem and if there are protective items available then we must use them.

Karen Heath, Sudbury, Suffolk

## Last week's vote results:

We asked for your opinion on the £40,000 salary received by John Prescott for fronting a BBC television series on class warfare: **Is the BBC grossly overpaying greedy Prescott? YES: 97% NO: 3%**

We also wanted your views about the future of BBC presenter Jonathan Ross: **Is foul-mouthed Ross ruined for good? YES: 92% NO: 8%**

## Room 101

CHARITY workers who shake their collecting tins in your face when you are trying to get into the supermarket. Also, double-glazing salespeople who tackle you as you try to enter DIY stores.

Jane Smith, Beckenham, Kent

CHEFS and cooks in television cookery programmes who leave their long hair dangling all over the food they are preparing. I am sure this wouldn't be permitted in the kitchens of top-class restaurants and hotels.

P Gold, East Hendred, Oxon

THE internet. It's becoming increasingly impossible to communicate with anybody except via computer and there is a widespread mistaken assumption that everybody has one. Well, there are 17 million of us who haven't and we are becoming totally disfranchised because no one bothers to give out proper addresses any more.

E Sykes, Appleby, Cumbria

BRITISH pop singers who sing in false American accents. Why?

H Rock, Holywell, Clwyd

### What would you like to see banished into Room 101?

Tell us your pet hates - and why you dislike them. Write to Sunday Express, Room 101, followed by the address at the top of the page, or e-mail [sunday.exletters@express.co.uk](mailto:sunday.exletters@express.co.uk)

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## The week in verse by Martin Newell

AS America elects Barack Obama as its 44th President...

### The New President

Day of days, America  
Waking to the future now  
Liberty, the statue stands  
Morning rain upon her brow  
And east to west,  
between the coasts  
Having gone another mile  
A nation will confront its ghosts  
And Martin Luther King will smile.

For something may have  
changed at last  
Discernible, a wind will blow  
One that kicked up long ago  
That rucks the waters far below  
As stretching out across the land  
The hand that took  
the dripping hand  
Of refugees along the way  
Made them welcome



Bade them stay.  
Called itself the USA  
Greeted the dawn renewed today.

Dazzled, dazed and circumspect  
Far from where he first began  
Waits the President-elect  
Comes the hour, comes the man  
Steady steps and steady hand  
Now there will be much to do  
Day of days, America  
President, good luck to you.



# End torrent of foul



By **Jason Groves** and **David Stephenson**

A SENIOR MP has criticised the Government for failing to tackle the "torrent of gratuitous bad language" on TV.

After the launch of the Sunday Express Clean Up TV crusade, Tory John Whittingdale said the public backlash over offensive calls by Jonathan Ross and Russell Brand highlighted the need to impose new standards.

Mr Whittingdale, chairman of the Commons culture and media committee, said broadcasters seemed to view the 9pm watershed as a free-for-all, with "a torrent of gratuitous bad language on programmes ranging from comedy to cookery after 9pm".

He has asked Culture Secretary Andy Burnham to press broadcasters to "reconsider what is publicly acceptable in mainstream entertain-

**OBSCENE CALLER:** Russell Brand

SUNDAY EXPRESS



ment shows". Mr Whittingdale singled out foul-mouthed TV chefs as their shows are often screened immediately after the watershed.

He told the Sunday Express: "Jamie Oliver would be just as good a broadcaster, maybe better, if he did not use the F-word every three minutes."

"As the Sunday Express has highlighted, there is a very widespread feeling among the public that things have gone too far."

"I find it particularly disturbing that there is now a sudden leap in the bad language broadcast immediately after 9pm. There are still children watching and many adults

who find the gratuitous use of this kind of language offensive."

Mr Burnham has hinted he will take up the issue with the broadcasters directly.

His comments come amid growing concern about standards on TV. Shadow Culture Secretary Jeremy Hunt called for an independent body to handle complaints about the BBC after the Ross/Brand affair attracted a record 40,000 complaints and led to Ross's suspension and Brand's departure.

Former Europe Minister Denis MacShane described the frequent bad language on TV as really offensive. "We do not hear it in France, Germany or America, so why, with our great language, does British broadcasting have to be in the linguistic sewer?" he asked.

The demands for action came as ITV refused last night to ban swearing on I'm A Celebrity, Get Me Out Of Here.

Oftcom has ruled on hundreds of complaints about bad language in previous series, including the use of the F word in the reality show which starts tomorrow night.

A spokeswoman said: "We will comply with internal and Ofcom

guidelines. We do have a very short delay and an operator watching out for swear words in the live sections."

John Beyer, of Mediawatch, said that broadcasters must take much more notice of their audiences, who "are offended by swearing and do not want to hear those words".

He also called for Channel 4 to be sold off after the broadcaster rejected a swearing ban.

MPs will next week grill the BBC over its offensive content and the Ross/Brand affair. Nigel Evans, of the Culture and Media Select Committee, said: "I want to see what responsibility, Sir Michael Lyons (chairman) and Mark Thompson (BBC director-general) are going to take for what happened with Brand and Ross. We want a root-and-branch reform of the editorial guidelines."

He also called BBC salaries, such as Ross's £8million pay packet, "offensive", adding: "The wonderful thing about the Ross affair is that no one has come forward to offer him £6million a year to appear on another channel."

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# TV says MP



TOP OFFENDERS: Hugh Dennis, Dara O'Brain and Frankie Boyle of BBC2's *Mock The Week*

## ...but bosses are broadcasting more filth than ever before

BRITISH TV comedy shows continued to broadcast a tide of lewd and offensive material last week, showing that television bosses are ignoring the public's demands to clean up programmes.

An investigation by the Sunday Express reveals more than 80 instances where standards slumped to the gutter as producers desperately tried to boost viewing figures.

Our findings come just weeks after the Russell Brand and Jonathan Ross Radio 2 scandal and show that television executives are cynically disregarding the public outcry over falling standards.

In five comedy programmes broadcast on the major channels there were uncensored scenes that TV bosses should have been ashamed to broadcast. The worst offender was Channel 4 with 45 uses of bad language or

By **Emily Fox**

tasteful, smutty remarks. The BBC was a close second with 36 instances that were highly likely to offend normal, decent people.

We discovered that during two-and-a-half hours of TV comedy last week there were 16 uses of the F word, 18 other strong swear words, 26 sexual innuendoes, nine graphic sexual references and 13 other comments of an offensive nature, including jokes on paedophilia, immigration and sexual harassment.

Russell Brand's *Ponderland* on Channel 4 was the ultimate sinner with 25 appalling incidents in just 30 minutes.

Some 16 of the words he chose are considered by Ofcom, the TV watchdog, to be the most offensive language in the English dictionary.

Although broadcast after the 9pm watershed, the programme was available on Channel 4 on Demand 24 hours a day.

John C. Beyer, director of MediaWatch, said: "Channel 4 and other such broadcasters want to appeal to the younger generation. However, by doing so they are appealing to a niche market. Television transcends generations and so should these shows."

"Older people are alienated these days. Even Prince Charles told broadcasters recently not to forget the over 50s, who are probably the largest TV audience. Broadcasters have to learn that television is for the public and they have to start listening."

Dramas and soap operas are also resorting to shocking language and smutty innuendoes to hold audiences.

The BBC One drama *Apparitions*, starring Martin Shaw as an exorcist, was guilty of six counts of strong language and a graphic and violent murder scene.

**Roll call of shame**

**Russell Brand Ponderland** (Ch4, Nov 14, 10:35pm)  
6 F words  
10 Other swear words  
5 Sexual Innuendoes  
4 Graphic sexual references  
Total count: 25

**8 Out of 10 Cats** (Ch4, Nov 14, 10pm)  
4 F words  
3 Other swear words  
Total count: 11

**Never Mind the Buzzcocks** (BBC2, Nov 14, 9pm)  
1 F word  
3 Swear words  
3 Sexual Innuendoes  
1 Graphic sexual reference  
Total count: 10

**10 Sexual Innuendoes**  
3 Other offensive comments  
Total count: 20

**Mock the Week...Again** (BBC2, Nov 13, 9pm)  
5 F words  
1 Other swear word  
9 Other offensive comments  
Total count: 15

**The Graham Norton Show** (BBC2, Nov 14, 9:30pm)  
1 Swear word  
6 Sexual Innuendoes  
3 Graphic sexual references  
1 Other offensive comment  
Total count: 11

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# Your letters

Edited by LIZ JAMES

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## Puerility of BBC

I TOTALLY agree with everything Martin Townsend said in last week's Sunday Express (A word from the Editor). However, I think that the problem is much worse than is generally realised. Sadly, a large sector of UK television viewers love to watch people being bullied, ridiculed and subjected to personal insults. I believe the BBC knowingly caters for this appetite with shows featuring the likes of Jonathan Ross, Russell Brand and Chris Moyles. Also we have shows like The Weakest Link where Anne Robinson routinely insults, bullies and humiliates hapless contenders. I wonder if anyone has ever retaliated and told her what an obnoxious woman she is, although I expect the BBC would edit this out? These people should be setting an example of how to behave properly, not of how to behave like a foul-mouthed lout.

Bill Taylor, Poole, Dorset

## Respect airmen

IN response to the letter from Billy Taplow (Your letters, Sunday Express, December 7), who appears to agree that the Dambusters raid was indeed 'infamous', three particular thoughts come to mind. Firstly, he should read about what the Nazis attempted to inflict upon the civilised world (presumably Mr Taplow is not Jewish, a gypsy, homosexual, or has any other perceived genetic 'flaw'). He should also try to understand why so many exceedingly brave young men, who would have much rather spent their evenings chasing the pleasures of life, gave their own so that we can live ours as we choose. And he should respect 617 Squadron and 53,000 airmen who lost their lives in pursuit of allowing us to write such letters as Mr Taplow sees fit to do.

Peter Mills, Shoreham-by-Sea, W Sussex

## Protect our rights

MOST of the civilised world has embraced Britain's legal system for their own use and this nation is

## Prize letter of the week

### Laws apply to high-living MPs too

I MUST protest about Neil Hamilton's article "Going to hell in handcuffs" (Sunday Express, December 7). His apparent suggestion that MPs in the House of Commons should be immune to the law of the land is arrogant in the extreme.

The Metropolitan Police 'raid' on Tory MP Damian Green's parliamentary office was carried out with the full permission of Michael Martin, the Speaker, and Jill Pay, the Serjeant-at-Arms who decided to co-operate instead of making police obtain a warrant.

As it is, MPs have a standard of living and lifestyle far higher than anything that the majority of their

constituents will ever be able to aspire to. They set their own remuneration and pension rights, decorate and furnish their multiple homes and enjoy a lavish way of living subsidised by the public purse. They even manage to 'create' employment roles for their family members.

It's about time that these feather-bedded parasites were made to live in the real world, on average wages, and with the same pension rights as those who pay them - the hard-pressed taxpayers of Britain.

Richard Brown, Maple Cross, Herts



UNDER ATTACK: Neil Hamilton

rightly known for its sense of fair play. Indeed, it is almost alone in steadfastly following every barmy piece of EU legislation, to the letter, while other nations pick and choose which they will adhere to and which they will ignore.

So it is only fair and reasonable that Britain should have its own, unique bill of rights to replace the heinous and much-abused Human Rights Act. Our culture, entire civilisation and heritage is, thankfully, unique and a British bill of rights would be able to reflect that priceless point.

If we, standing almost alone, can save the civilised world from the forces of evil on two occasions, I feel sure that we can write a document enshrining natural justice for our citizens without the need for help from others.

Philip Codd, Manchester

### Selina deal unfair

WHAT is this country coming to when an organisation can't employ who it wants? I read with dismay that Selina Scott has won an age discrimination case against the television channel Five after she was turned down in favour of the younger Isla Traquair. Where is it all going to end? Does this case open the floodgates to

anyone who feels that he/she has been turned down because of age?

I feel that managements have the right to employ the job applicant they want on their payroll. For Selina Scott to be awarded £250,000 is wholly unfair. Many people have to accept job rejection - whatever their age. Ms Scott should have graciously accepted her rejection by Five.

Colin Richey, Tiverton, Devon

### Lusitania 'suicide'

THE news that divers have recently found ammunition on the wreck of the Lusitania does not exonerate the skipper of the U-boat which sank her ("Secret ammo find on wreck of the Lusitania", Sunday Express, December 7).

However, the captain of the Lusitania, and others, were responsible. They cut their own throats. The U-boat crews were under strict orders not to sink neutral ships and they obeyed those orders. However, some ships took to deliberately flying false colours to prevent attack and one of these was the Lusitania.

The result was that German U-boat skippers were no longer able to distinguish between neutral and enemy ships, so were given no choice.

Noel French, Plymouth

have a second intake of children in March, rather than just once a year in September?

I dread to think what this country will be like for children to grow up in.

J Green, Kettering, Northants

### Care for savers

I LEFT school in 1947 aged 15 to join the Royal Navy. My fortnightly pay came to £27 but I worked hard and saved, investing my money in shares and bank deposits.

British bankers were once the best in the world, and in business 'an Englishman's word was his bond'. My only debts have been a mortgage and a credit card which I settle monthly. In recent years the British government, banks, businesses and a large number of the populace have all become mired in debt. In the last few months my assets have reduced to about a quarter of their previous value.

The Government's solution is to encourage further borrowing and to throw taxpayers' money at debtors. If I had boozed away my earnings and lived off benefits, the politicians would be caring for me. Are there any politicians who are concerned about honest and frugal voters?

Bryan Smalley, Much Hadham, Herts

### Late for school

I WAS interested to read "Pupils born in summer 'must start school at four'", Sunday Express, December 7.

We have three grandchildren, our first grandson born in March and a granddaughter in May. Both started primary school the September after their birthdays, initially part-time to allow them to settle in.

However, our third grandson was born in October, so although he is now four years old, when does he start? Next September, 2009.

How far behind will that leave him and, of course, all the other children born in October and after? Why not

The writer of the Prize Letter Of The Week will win this stylish Parker Sonnet fountain pen worth £90

### The week in verse by Martin Newell

LAST week it was revealed that wild west legend Butch Cassidy (below) was a Geordie...

#### Geordie Cassidy Rides Again

An arid sun was blazing  
The prairie dust was clearing  
Two desperados lay in wait  
A bullion train was nearing  
The Sundance Kid in silhouette  
Against an azure sky  
Said: "Ready with the dynamite?"  
And Butch replied:  
"Why aye!"

The train came to a screeching halt  
Upon the twisted track  
The carriage door slid open  
And Butch got in the back  
A woman gasped,  
The guard

## Briefly...

WITH the culmination of I'm A Celebrity... Strictly Come Dancing and The X Factor, it is safe for me to turn on the television once again. It is not just the quality of presenters that is in a sorry state but the standard of the television programmes themselves.

Andrew Johnson, Blackpool, Lancs

PETER Haddington (Room 101, Sunday Express, December 7) wants us all to talk 'common' and say class. Has he never watched EastEnders? He will find that all the ghouly or 'ghastly' characters in the soap say 'clarse', and they are certainly not trying to sound posh. Sorry Peter, but it's regional as well as how educated you are.

Belinda Robson, Scarborough, N Yorks

I THINK the BBC should put a penalty clause in the contracts of all employees that appear on its programmes of £1,000 for every swear word used. Swearing on television would probably be eliminated altogether and we could have family TV again. It would also work wonders for our youngsters' vocabulary.

George Sullivan, Leamington Spa, Warks

AS a former seaman, I shouldn't be advocating fewer cargoes but surely the impact on the environment of ships burning fossil fuels to transport recyclable materials to the Far East is much worse for the environment than if that waste was just incinerated here?

L Davis, Carlisle

### Last week's vote results:

We asked for your opinion on Commons Speaker Michael Martin: Should the disgraced Speaker resign now? YES: 98% NO: 2%

We also wanted your views on disgraced television presenter Jonathan Ross being dropped from his annual TV film review: Will TV be better without vulgar Ross? YES: 96% NO: 4%

### Room 101

GOING towards a small shop to find an assistant standing in the entrance smoking - needless to say I take my custom elsewhere.

Tony Carroll, Barnoldswick, Lancs

THOSE ghastly 'Snow White' puff sleeves on any woman over the age of 16, especially when she has podgy arms.

Daphne Birky, Alton, Hants

OMNIBUS editions of EastEnders and Coronation Street during the weekend. If people are that interested they could record these

programmes themselves during the week and watch them whenever they want to. That would release time for more interesting programmes like sport, nature, documentaries and other real-life productions.

Graham Cook, Wotton-under-Edge, Glos

BUS drivers who pull away from the kerb just as you reach the bus stop when you are running for the bus. They must be able to see you in their rear-view mirrors and I am sure they do this on purpose.

June Smith, Beckenham, Kent

#### What would YOU like to see banished into Room 101?

Tell us your pet hates - and why you dislike them. Write to Sunday Express, Room 101, followed by the address at the top of the page, or e-mail [sunday.exletters@express.co.uk](mailto:sunday.exletters@express.co.uk)





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**Grimy corridors of power should be swept clean**

**A**S A former head of the Confederation of British Industry who went on to serve as trade minister, Lord Jones is well placed to compare working practices across the private and state sectors. His verdict on his time in the Government surely proves, once and for all, that a massive efficiency drive in the public sector is long overdue.

Lord Jones believes that the civil service could be run just as well with half the staff and that this would "deliver a lot more value for money for the taxpayer".

This is a man whose judgment was so valued by Gordon Brown that he gave him a peerage in order to bring his expertise into the Government. So the Prime Minister can hardly now dismiss his views.

What Lord Jones found in the corridors of power was a cosseted elite, wholly reliant on taxpayer funding and fixated on sustaining their own privileges rather than being productive or open to creative thinking.

Despite rating Lord Jones so highly, Mr Brown will do nothing to give taxpayers a better deal because the administration he leads is up to its neck in the same culture of self-interest that dominates Whitehall. Voters looking for better value for money should look elsewhere.

**Stop curse of obscenity**

**T**HE seemingly unstoppable rise of obscene language is one of the chief factors lowering the quality of life in Britain today.

A generation ago, it was regarded as shameful when even mild expletives were said in public. But now it is common to hear the foulest terms uttered quite casually by people who neither know nor care that they are causing offence.

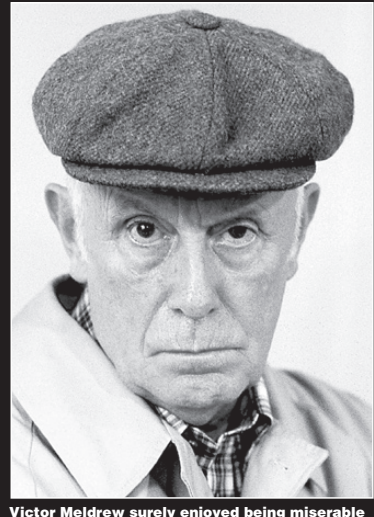
This degradation of civilised standards has been brought about by a combination of slack parenting and the capture of television by Sixties liberals who regard any notion of self-restraint as obsolete.

A survey published yesterday claims that more than 90 per cent of people are not offended by swearing, with tolerance of obscene language particularly marked among the young. If that really is the case then it is a sad comment on the state of the nation – but no reason to cease fighting for decency and civility.

**An unpalatable truth**

**P**LANS for restaurants to list the number of calories that each item on the menu contains may help diners fine-tune their orders but will do nothing to alter a basic culinary fact: the more mouthwatering a dish sounds, the more likely it is to make you fat.

**Handing out pills for unhappiness isn't the answer**



Victor Meldrew surely enjoyed being miserable

**Theodore Dalrymple**  
Social commentator

**N**O ONE is unhappy these days but everyone is depressed. Jerome Wakefield, a professor at New York University, has sounded a warning against the tendency of medical science to apply drugs to block natural human emotions.

In the last few years of my practice as a doctor, I must have heard hundreds or even thousands of people say that they were depressed but only two or three admit that they were unhappy (and one of those was in prison).

When I started out in practice 35 years ago there were depressed people but they were relatively few in number. Their illness was truly incapacitating. They were often very subdued and slowed down, lacking in interest, neglecting themselves, not eating or drinking properly and feeling profoundly guilty for no good reason. Rich people with this kind of depression sometimes believed that they were destitute. They wanted to die, or at least not to live. Some even believed that they were already dead.

In the days before there was effective treatment such people would be admitted to an asylum and would spend their days sitting on a chair at a table set against a wall to prevent them from going anywhere. They would be watched, day in day out, by an attendant until – two, three or four years later – the fit of melancholia passed. It was a dreadful business. Effective treatment means that such extreme cases are now very few and far between. That, of course, is all to the good.

**U**NFORTUNATELY, the replacement of the word "unhappiness" by "depression" is not all to the good. It turns a normal human experience – that of unhappiness – into a medical condition, to be treated and cured by doctors. Most human unhappiness is understandable. If a recently widowed person appears too happy too soon after the death of his or her spouse we suspect that the marriage could not have been a very happy one. It is one thing to make an effort not to cry in public, but another not even to be sad.

Unhappiness usually arises from the situation in which people find themselves, either through circumstances beyond

their control or as a result of their own choices. It is like pain: undesirable but necessary for us to learn from experience and to avoid whatever causes it. We think that a person who could feel no pain would be fortunate but in fact those few people who are born without a capacity to feel pain suffer many serious injuries and lead short lives.

When a person tells a doctor that he is depressed he is in effect asking for a cure, in the same way as he expects the doctor to cure a cough. The doctor has very little time at his disposal so he colludes with the patient. Instead of trying to find out what it is that is making the patient unhappy and suggesting that he change it, he hands the patient a pill.

Since pills are only handed out for illnesses, the patient now has confirmation from the doctor that he is indeed ill. He does not have to change the circumstances that are making him unhappy, which is a great relief because no one likes to change. That is because change

is difficult and painful and can be impossible. Sometimes the pills actually work: the patient feels better. But as often as not he feels better because of the placebo effect. A sugar pill would have done just as well. At other times the pills do not work and the patient returns to the doctor, who tells him to double the dose. When the double dose fails to work the doctor switches him to another pill and, when this does not work either, to yet another.

**E**ACH time, of course, the patient has to take the pills for a certain number of weeks before they can be said not to have worked and since there are a large number of pills for a doctor to choose from, this slightly ludicrous foxglove in the surgery between doctor and patient can go on for years. In the meantime, the cause of the patient's unhappiness goes unexamined and unchanged.

The effectiveness of antidepressants against most forms of unhappiness is very slight, if it exists at all. This is not altogether surprising because at first they were tested in the Fifties on seriously depressed people, in whom they appeared to work miracles. To call everyday unhappiness depression and then to treat it with antidepressants is like calling every swelling cancer and then treating it with anti-cancer drugs.

The drug companies feared at first that there would not be enough seriously depressed people to make the manufacture of antidepressants profitable. But the abandonment of the word unhappy for those few people who suffer because they came among the most profitable drugs ever developed. The American psychiatrist Thomas Szasz once published a very funny article in *The Lancet*. Dr Szasz suggested that henceforth happiness should be considered an illness. After all, it is quite rare and often leads people to do foolish things. As a result, it is potentially dangerous. Therefore, those few people who suffer from it need treatment. Luckily, there are plenty of medicines available to doctors that can make their patients feel worse and thereby control their happiness.

This makes no more (or less) sense than treating unhappiness as a disease.

**'Sadness is a normal part of human life'**

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DRAMATIC  
PICTURES  
- PAGE 3

# SWEARING NOW THE BLIGHT OF BRITAIN

## How TV is degrading our public life

**SWEARING** has become the curse of modern British life, with the vast majority of us no longer offended by bad language, according to shocking new research.

Influenced by television, more than nine out of 10 adults now admit to swearing every day. And those who do not are often too fearful to challenge those who do.

The average Briton now swears a staggering 14 times a day, with 90 per cent of the adult population no longer fazed by the use of expletives. Our behaviour is heavily influenced by the increased use of bad

By **Mark Reynolds** and **Martyn Brown**

language on television, say critics. They want the Government to tighten controls.

Broadcaster Esther Rantzen said last night: "Everybody would agree that there is too much swearing on television and something has to change."

Esther, who is patron of the Campaign for Courtesy, added: "It is becoming ludicrous and banal. We don't want society to go that way too."

John Beyer, of Mediawatch UK, said: "This sort of language is damaging our culture and the way we

**TURN TO PAGE 5**



## Burglars beat this loyal dog to death as it defends family

**SEE PAGE 13**



# How swearing is now the curse of modern Britain

By Martyn Brown

FROM the gutter straight to your living room... bad language on TV has reached epidemic proportions. A galaxy of stars from chef Jamie Oliver to clean-cut Ant and Dec have joined the vulgar throng, leading to thousands of complaints from angry viewers finding themselves unexpectedly listening to the filth. Most upsetting have been chef Gordon Ramsay's continuous use of the F-word, chat-show host Jonathan Ross's lewd expletives and Top Gear presenter Jeremy Clarkson's sick jokes. The BBC in particular has faced a barrage of criticism in recent weeks following radio's "Sachsgate" scandal, in which comedian Russell Brand and Ross left offensive messages on actor Andrew Sachs's voicemail. And the

Picture: TOM MIHALEK



Star Madonna with Ramsay, left, who uses the F-word which Ross, right, is no stranger to

**Q Do you think swearing is rife in Britain?**

**YES: 0901 031 1501**  
**NO: 0901 031 1502**  
**Yes text DXVOTE A to 82100**  
**No text DXVOTE B to 82100**

Calls cost 25p from a BT landline. Lines close at midnight tonight. Texts cost 25p plus network operator rates

corporation was also rapped when Madonna swore continuously on Radio 1's Big Weekend last year. After protests from listeners and viewers forced to pay the licence fee, the BBC has vowed there will be less swearing on its TV and radio stations this year following a review of bad language across its services. Ross, 48, has apparently been ordered to tone down the swearing and sexually suggestive comments when his Friday show returns a week today after a 12-week broadcasting ban. He is also due to present the Bafta film awards, to be shown on February 8, and he has already warned that he would insert "improbable words" into his script. This comes after a BBC Trust report condemned Ross for his role in the Sachs debacle, which sparked 42,000 complaints and saw Brand leave the corporation. The report hit out at £6million-a-year Ross for the "gratuitous and unnecessarily offensive" language he

used towards actress Gwyneth Paltrow when he said he would like to "f\*\*\*" her during an interview. Sir Terry Wogan has also backed calls for a clampdown on swearing on TV, and branded the most offenders "inarticulate". The 70-year-old Radio 2 presenter said he supported ITV chief Michael Grade, who has waged war on "indiscriminate" swearing on television. "I don't think it is ever acceptable, there will be a backlash against it," he

said last year. "The F-word is bad enough. It's an example of people who are inarticulate." John Beyer, of Mediawatch, said: "There is far too much swearing on television, all of the research carried out by Ofcom and viewers feedback points to that. We all know about the Jonathan Ross, Russell Brand situation, but that was just the tip of the iceberg. "There is swearing everywhere you look on TV - Jamie Oliver, Catherine

Tate, Billy Connolly and, of course, Gordon Ramsay, not to mention all of the films that are shown on TV that contain bad language. "Most people have a television set in their homes and young children are watching it everyday, wanting to copy the words they hear. "It is damaging British culture. The Government and broadcasting companies need to get together to stop the unnecessary use of swearing on television."

## 'Bad language ruining our culture'

**FROM PAGE ONE**

speak to each other. Children as young as four, five and six are copying it and it is undermining our language. There is no place for unnecessary swearing on television. Chef Gordon Ramsay and controversial presenter Jonathan Ross are among the worst culprits. And just last week chef Jamie Oliver had to apologise for swearing during an episode of his Ministry of Food series. He used the F-word no fewer than 23 times in 50 minutes. Conservative MP and Daily Express columnist Ann Widdecombe said: "I think it is clear that the amount of swearing in society has been enormously influenced by the amount of swearing on television, in films and even in books. The fact remains that

there are many people who do not like casual and consistent swearing and are offended by it when they hear it in public. But these days sometimes all you can do is stare in disbelief when you hear this kind of language." Peter Foot, chairman of the Campaign for Courtesy, said there was still an appetite for good manners. **Shocking** "Swearing has become too habitual, but I think if you walk down most suburban streets and knock on the door, people are actually generally still polite." Britain is generally seen as a conservative nation but a survey of more than 2,000 people found that just eight per

cent are now offended by swearing, as long as it is in an adult context. The detailed study by the Australian company www.Nulon-uk.com found a clear link between a person's age and their views on swearing. Ninety-four per cent of those aged 16-30 said bad language was no longer even an issue, while just 79 per cent of people aged 50-60 agreed. According to the research, men are more foul-mouthed than women, with 90 per cent swearing on a daily basis compared with 83 per cent of women. Perhaps most shockingly, some 78 per cent of people admitted to swearing regularly for no reason whatsoever, while the overwhelming majority - 98 per cent - admitted they swore when they lost their temper. William Findlay, who compiled the re-

port, said: "This survey clearly shows that British people accept that swearing is a fact of life in today's society. The fact that nearly every one of the 2,319 people polled has sworn while angry shows that British attitudes towards conservatism in public are changing." Greg Simons, joint managing director of Nulon, said: "To find out that the average Briton swears 14 times a day is a real eye-opener. The results clearly show that swearing is a fact of life in today's society, both at home and in the workplace. "I have witnessed swearing at all times of the day at all levels of society, from children to police officers. Britain seems to be a nation that just can't be shocked."

OPINION-PAGE 10



Sales inquiries have soared

## Rush is on to buy bargain houses

By Sarah O'Grady  
Property Correspondent

HOME-BUYERS keen to snap up bargains are flocking back to the property market in record numbers, Britain's biggest estate agents said yesterday. Statistics show a huge increase in the number of inquiries at high street branches. There has also been a surge in online requests, with some firms reporting the highest figures for five years. Property experts are putting pressure on lenders to free up money to let buyers cash in. Some £37,000 was wiped off the value of the average home last year - an 18.9 per cent decline, according to Halifax - and the downturn has sparked interest from first-time buyers and movers as the "risk element" is disappearing. Websites propertyfinder.com and Rightmove have registered record-high inquiries.

### Advantage

Estate agents Haart and Countrywide reported huge jumps in the number of would-be buyers as they surfed the net looking for cheap properties. Haart said buyer interest in the first week of this year was up 54 per cent on the same time last year, while Countrywide said inquiries were also up by half. Russell deVos, Haart's managing director, said: "Home owners, including first-time buyers, played a waiting game in the second half of last year but they are now keen to take advantage of the more affordable house prices and lower mortgage rates." Nicholas Leeming, director of propertyfinder.com, said: "So far January has seen a 60 per cent increase in the number of people looking for property. "Estate agents across the country are telling us they have been surprised by the huge leap in buyer inquiries since the New Year." Rightmove registered 44,000 emails sent to its estate agents on the first Monday of the year - an increase of 121 per cent on inquiries on the first Monday of 2008.



Yesterday's Daily Express

# Crusade for decency ...the town where swearing is banned

By Martyn Brown

BRITAIN should adopt a nationwide zero-tolerance policy to stamp out the swearing that is blighting modern society, campaigners demanded yesterday.

They have called for local councils and police forces to crack down on foul-mouthed language and introduce £80 fines for those caught swearing in public.

The move follows a hugely successful scheme launched by Preston city council in Lancashire. It has adopted a tough approach to eradicate swearing from the town's streets.

Council bosses have already seen a positive reaction since they introduced an anti-swearing poster campaign and £80 fixed penalty notices.

The need for immediate action was highlighted by the Daily Express yesterday when we laid bare the shocking picture of how swearing has become the curse of modern British life.

Influenced by television, more than nine out of 10 adults now admit to swearing every day.

The average Briton now swears a staggering 14 times a day, with 90 per cent of the adult population no longer fazed by the use of expletives.

## Staggering

Yesterday Peter Foot, chairman of the Campaign for Courtesy, called for a nationwide campaign to stamp out swearing.

"It would be a terrific idea if all councils and local authorities across Britain were to help us to fight bad language," he said.

"You need to convince people that it is actually boring to hear repetitive swearing.

"People need to think that when they are using these foul words they are boring those around them."

Since December the message of zero tolerance against bad language is being spelled out in signs across Preston.

The signs point out "Rules Round Town" such as "No Effin' & Jeffin" - meaning no swearing - and "No Aggro".

The Respect Our City campaign is designed to reduce anti-social behaviour such as spitting, litter dropping and dog fouling. Police



Police and council officials in Preston, Lancashire, have launched a poster campaign to clean up the town - including a ban on swearing in public places



Walter Laurence Holt

## 'Unacceptable in streets or anywhere'

THE move to curb swearing in Preston has met with public approval.

Maureen Burke, 77, a retired doctor's receptionist, said: "It's awful to hear people swearing in the street or anywhere for that matter. It is unacceptable. The

younger generations are being brought up on swearing and it has become the norm.

"There is too much of it and children just have to turn on the TV to hear people swearing. Banning it on the streets can only be a good

thing." But Laurence Holt, 17, a waiter, said: "Fining people impinges on freedom of speech. It is a good idea to ban it but unenforceable."

He added: "In normal conversation, where no one else is in earshot, swearing is OK."



Angry Maureen Burke

can give out fixed penalty notices of up to £80 for public order offences while council officers can impose £75 on-the-spot fines for litter offences.

Inspector Stewart Whittle, of the Preston Community Safety Partnership, said: "This campaign is at a very early stage but we have had some positive comments from members of the public on the whole.

"Respect Your City is all about raising awareness of anti-

social behaviour such as swearing, dropping litter and fighting which are problems most people don't want to see in Preston or any other towns and cities.

"We think it would be a good idea for safety partnerships in other areas to roll out similar schemes."

Critics also say our behaviour is heavily influenced by the increased use of bad language on mainstream television.

They want the Government to

tighten controls. Broadcaster Esther Rantzen, who is patron of the Campaign for Courtesy, said the frequent use of the F-word on television was becoming "ludicrous and banal".

"Something has to change," she warned. "We don't want society to go that way too."

According to the latest research, men are more foul-mouthed than women, with 90 per cent swearing on a daily basis compared with 83

per cent of women. Most shockingly, some 78 per cent of people interviewed admitted to swearing regularly for no reason whatsoever, while the overwhelming majority - an amazing 98 per cent - admitted they swore when they lost their temper.

Ninety-four per cent of those aged 18-30 said bad language was no longer even an issue, while just 79 per cent of people aged 50-60 said they agreed.



Bank deputy Sir John Gieve

## Another £100bn bail-out for 'insolvent' banks

GORDON Brown will announce a further emergency bank bail-out totalling more than £100billion next week, it emerged last night.

The desperate measure, which will raise the taxpayer's liability to more than £250billion, came as a report warned that Britain's banks are technically insolvent.

The report, from analysts at Royal Bank of Scotland, said the credit crunch showed little signs of easing. In an indication of the extent of the

By Macer Hall  
Political Editor

problem, the report was titled Living on a Prayer: Banks had so little capital to lend, they were effectively insolvent, it said. It was a situation "not unusual" in an economic downturn, but showed little sign of abating in the coming months.

The Treasury and Downing Street refused to discuss the bail-out plan

yesterday. But details leaked out after the Prime Minister met Bank of England governor Mervyn King and Financial Services Authority chairman Lord Turner at Number 10.

Treasury sources indicated that an extra £108billion of public money will be used to guarantee loans and mortgages. Officials will be hammering out details over the weekend.

The move follows increasing fears that Mr Brown's part nationalisation of the banks has failed to ease the

credit crisis. Jitters swept the City again yesterday. Barclays, which turned down Government aid last year, saw its shares lose almost a quarter of their value in an hour. RBS shares fell by more than 16 per cent.

Sir John Gieve, deputy governor of the Bank of England, warned business leaders that little can be done to prevent the economy suffering the worst recession for decades.

CITY: PAGE 84



# Letters

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## Everyone pays the price for dishonesty of others

THE story of the huge crowds who descended on two faulty cashpoints and walked away with free money provides an interesting insight into attitudes ("Hundreds grab £50k free cash at faulty cashpoints", January 17).

Whether they were committing a criminal act is a matter for lawyers, but their actions are certainly morally questionable. Would it be morally justifiable if someone walked off with £30 they saw me drop in the street?

Even if the banks have made enough money from the public, as some of these people claimed, does this justify taking money they know is not their entitlement? Furthermore, the Nationwide is a building society not a bank, so the money belongs to savers not shareholders.

Many of us would probably act in a similar way, if presented with the opportunity. After all, we live in a something-for-nothing culture that is readily embraced. How many people have made illegal music downloads, for instance?

Nevertheless, it is a sad indictment that some of us are happy to justify such dishonesty. We all pay a price for this attitude.

Mike Reed,  
Manchester

## Loan money to those who need it and cut out banks

WHERE'S the Government getting all the money to bail out the banks ("Another £100bn bail-out for 'insolvent' banks", January 17)?

And once the banks have their hands on it, where's it going? Certainly not to small businesses desperate for credit, or to potential home-buyers keen to secure a mortgage and who'd willingly kick-start the property market.

We know who's supplying the money and will have to pay it back to the Government - the fast-dwindling supply of taxpayers. Wouldn't it make more sense for the Government to loan this money straight to the people who need it? They could then start repaying it immediately to the Exchequer. Or is that too simple?

J Valentine,  
Rotherham, S Yorks

## Yet more financial worries waiting to pounce on us

ISN'T it time we called a halt to the banking debacle, which wouldn't be so bad if Tony Blair and Gordon Brown hadn't wasted the nation's cash reserves and revenue?

Why should we - again - bail out the banks when they've made a killing by paying over-inflated salaries, bonuses and pensions to top executives and are behind the economic grief we suffer today?

If any other company ran up debts like the banks, they'd be declared bankrupt. And two other financial liabilities are waiting in the wings - the Olympics, which is running out of money fast, and the third runway at Heathrow, which will involve destroying a complete village that lies in the way.

Why does the London area have to face the threat of yet more pollution? Both Gatwick and Stanstead airports are surrounded by fields and nearer to the sea's fresh air that can more easily dilute and disperse air pollutants.

John Cane,  
Twickenham, Middx

## Letter of the day

# Swearing blight: parents should lead by example

I'M amazed that research has only just revealed that swearing in public is so commonplace ("Swearing now the blight of Britain", January 16).

The phenomenon dates back to the Nineties, and will take something special to eradicate. But all power to crusading cities like Preston ("Crusade for decency, the town where swearing is banned", January 17).

Once again, the silent majority has been silent for too long. Children now copy their elders, and it's common to hear youngsters swearing in public.

But it's up to parents to show a good example. Only then can we perhaps reverse the swearing trend and get back to showing respect for the feelings of others.

I'm sure any progress would also help engender some respect in other areas - such as abusive and aggressive behaviour, vandalism and littering, to name a few.

David Hoults,  
Warrington, Cheshire



ZERO TOLERANCE: Preston, Lancashire, shows way

## No way would Scots allow airport plan without vote

ONE aspect of the Heathrow expansion plan should not be allowed to pass without comment ("Drama in the Commons as MP grabs mace in anger at Heathrow plan", January 16).

We have a Scottish-led government imposing this £9billion expansion programme without a vote by English MPs. Imagine the loud reaction if a similar development affected Scotland without the approval of the Scottish people through their political representatives?

But, of course, it would not happen, because the Scots have

their own devolved parliament with the sole authority to promote such ideas. Perhaps the English should campaign for a similar parliament for themselves.

Roger Palmer,  
Rugby, Warks

## PM is siding against Israel with aid package for Gaza

GIVEN the bad state of Britain's finances and thousands of private sector jobs being lost, why is our unelected Prime Minister sending aid to African states and others?

By granting £20million aid to Gaza, he is taking sides against Israel, despite the latter declaring a unilateral ceasefire that resulted

in Hamas firing another barrage of missiles over the border.

In Afghanistan and Iraq, Labour has led us into needless conflicts, both in expense and the human cost as Union flag-draped coffins are flown home. Our troops are not dying in defence of the nation, but through our politicians meddling in matters that do not concern us.

We should pull out our Armed Forces and base them here to defend our borders against aggressors and invaders. We should also stop paying benefits to immigrants who only come here to enjoy our generosity.

Let's spend our money on British interests at home and forget aspirations overseas, where our involvement is unwanted.

If Gordon Brown wants to defend our borders against aggressors and invaders, we should also stop paying benefits to immigrants who only come here to enjoy our generosity. I have outlined, he should call an election and put his proposals in the Labour manifesto.

Frank Irwin,  
Thingwall, Wirral

## Let's vote in civil service 'mandarins' who run UK

THE people who occupy the top two posts in every department of the civil service should be elected by us, the people. After all, we pay their wages, so we should have a say about who's in charge. And let's do away with the job-for-life culture. MPs must fight an election every five years or so - why not the 'mandarins' who really run Britain?

Tony Ives,  
Sheffield

## IS SLOW DATING PREFERABLE TO SPEED DATING?

**Yes** I AM so glad that slow dating has taken over from the horrors of speed dating ("Slow dating is the new speed dating", January 17).

I have been to several speed dating events, all utter disasters. How can you find out whether someone is suitable when you have so little time to make your mind up about them before moving on to the next?

With slow dating, there is a long, comfortable build-up, and at any point you or the other person can bail out, tactfully (hopefully) and without feelings getting hurt.

Pamela Gordon,  
London

**No** I HAVE to admit that slow dating is the new speed dating, but it isn't my preference. When you're my age (over 50), you don't have lots of time to find out whether a potential suitor is Mr Right. I can't spare 20 hours and nine minutes on a first date, and as for five hours just setting up the date... I spent less time writing my will.

So come on, guys and gals, stop daydreaming about the perfect partner and just get on with it. After all, most people assess someone within 15 seconds of meeting them.

Clare Kelly,  
Windsor, Berks

## Ten things you never knew about... disaster

WILLIAM HARTSTON

The film *Disaster Movie* is released on DVD and Blu-Ray today (£17.99 RRP) as research indicates January 19 to be the most likely day for a disaster.

1. In the Oxford English Corpus, the adjectives most often used to describe disasters are natural, environmental, humanitarian, major and financial.
2. The word 'disaster' comes from the Greek for a star, 'astron'. It meant ill-fortune foretold by the stars.
3. In the US, the most common fatal natural disaster is a lightning strike, which kills 400 people a year.
4. According to the British Geological Survey, 274 earthquakes were recorded in the UK between 1800 and 2002, of which 34 took place in January.

5. The only Shakespeare play that includes the word 'disaster' more than once is, appropriately enough, *All's Well That Ends Well*.
6. The worst natural disaster of the last 1,000 years was probably the influenza pandemic just after the First World War. It claimed up to 70 million victims.
7. In the 14th century, about 25 million people in Europe were killed by the Black Death.
8. Excluding disease, floods in China in 1931 may be the worst disaster: they killed about three million.
9. China also suffered the worst-ever earthquake, killing 830,000 in 1556.
10. The most costly disaster was an earthquake in Japan in 2004 that caused £70billion worth of damage.

## BEACHCOMBER



### 92 YEARS OLD AND STILL PROUD TO BE PEDANTIC...

I MUST be my age, I suppose, but I am becoming ever more irritated by the increasing numbers of young people who do not say what they mean.

Please note that it is not the young people themselves who irritate me, but their increasing numbers. Had it been the young people who were irritating me, I would have said so, but that was not what I meant, so I did not say it. Would that the aforementioned young people took as much care with their own language.

I mention this now because a new leader has emerged at the top of my personal list of most irritating expressions. Until recently, this had been, "May I ask you a question?" Anyone with my degree of knowledge must, of course, expect to be approached by my myriads of young people asking questions, but I always felt that those who began by asking whether they could ask a question were entering dubious territory, philosophically speaking.

If they genuinely feel obliged to ask me whether they may ask a question, then as "May I ask you a question?" is itself a question, they ought to ask it before asking that question, which, of course, leads to an infinite regression, implying that no question can ever be asked. What they mean, of course, is something on the lines of, "After I have asked you this question, may I ask you another one?", though quite why they feel the need for permission to be granted for the second question and not the first is puzzling to me.

That puzzle, however, frequent though it is, has been knocked firmly into second place by the increasing number of young ladies who answer my telephone calls and, when I tell them the name of the person with whom I wish to speak, say, "May I ask who is calling?"

The first few times I heard this, I took it as rather a compliment. The young lady, I thought, must have been impressed by my voice, or my mode of speaking, or my use of language, and although she appreciated that she was a mere cog in the machine designed to connect me with the person I was calling, felt a desire to know who had impressed her.

"Of course you may ask, my dear girl," I would reply, and I waited for them to do so.

Only when this was greeted, on several occasions, by an awkward pause, did I realise that I had misjudged the situation. More often than not, the conversation continued with her saying again, "May I ask who is calling?" and again, assuming that we had a bad connection or she was a bit deaf, I told her that she had my full permission to ask.

Whether it is the effect of their training, or a naturally reticent personality, they seemed to have huge difficulties in saying simply, "Who is calling?", and on occasion I have had to script that very line for them before they will utter it.

My great fear, of course, is that the "May I ask you a question?" brigade will combine forces with the "May I ask who is calling?" lot, giving rise to a new breed of telephonists who feel obliged to ask for permission to ask a question before they enquire whether they may ask who is calling. They will say something on the lines of, "May I ask you, after I have asked you this question, a subsidiary question relating to your identity, this request also including self-referential retroactive permission to ask the question which it forms?"

I shake with horror when I think of the damage it could do to my telephone bill.

### The case for quiet dignity

**C**AROLYN HUGHES has a rare sense of proportion in this vengeful age. She is the mother of the British soldier killed by suspected "friendly fire" in Afghanistan.

She says, rightly, that those who were responsible will have to live with the knowledge for the rest of their lives. That sentiment is too little heard today.

There is hardly any recognition of somebody being punished enough by conscience and remorse. Instead there are immediate demands for the longest possible sentences and the most punitive possible action, even when what has happened is the product of accident rather than design.

Corporal Danny Winter, her late son, must have been proud of his mother. In an era when the fashion is to parade misery and demand retribution or compensation, Mrs Hughes's quiet dignity, along with her calm reason, is an example to us all.

### Mistaken for an invalid

**L**AST week I had a fit of uncharacteristic ageist irritation. I had come out of the surgical boot I had been wearing as a result of my broken foot and was in lace-up shoes, which admittedly looked a trifle grannyish, and was still using a crutch.

"Oh, dear!" sighed one sympathetic lady. "Have you got arthritis?"

"Oops!" said another. "Have you had your hip done?"

OK, I have grey hair and am drawing my pension but does that mean I cannot be assumed to be healthy and active and suffering only from a minor injury? A younger person would have been asked: "What happened?"

I knew I was reacting unreasonably, that the statistics say it is people of a certain age who are more likely to need bits of themselves replaced or to have the problems which come with decades of wear and tear and that there is nothing wrong with being thought fragile. But I still felt pigeon-holed and grumpy.

My ill-temper did dissolve into hoots of mirth, though, when I heard a woman urge her husband in a stage whisper to "help that little old lady across the road".



# Ann Widdecombe

## Rejoice, Ken Clarke is back to take on Labour

**T**HE long overdue return of Ken Clarke to the Conservative front bench is a tribute not only to his own qualities but also to David Cameron's leadership. Mr Clarke was one of Margaret Thatcher's greatest assets as he was also one of John Major's. As Home Secretary he instituted reforms which Labour condemned, then abandoned when they took power and then shamefacedly reinstated.

As Education Secretary he made sure that even the poorest performing schools had to teach a core curriculum. As Home Secretary he defied the over-mighty Prison Officers' Association to create private prisons which Labour promised to scrap altogether but within five minutes of the 1997 election they were busy commissioning more.

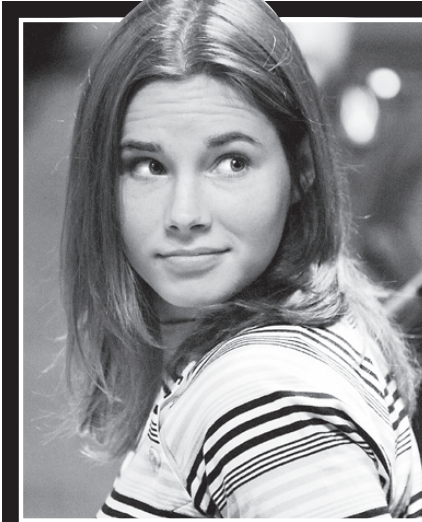
As Chancellor he gave us the then lowest inflation and interest rates for decades together with the biggest drop in unemployment. In short, he delivers.

He also had the good sense to reject any suggestion of raiding pension funds because he was not as cavalier or greedy as Gordon Brown proved to be. Such determination normally produces battalions of enemies but Ken has stayed popular: the Hush-Puppy-wearing jazz enthusiast to whom the public relate.

It helps that the intelligent Gillian Clarke has always looked like mum rather than a brittle, super-slim, superbly coiffed career woman.

They come over as utterly down to earth and trust-worthy in an age when politicians are routinely despised and distrusted. So why has he been left for so long on the back benches? Every time he speaks I hear mutters of "if only" as colleagues ask themselves just that question. The answer is as obvious as it is pathetic: Europe.

It was for that reason that the biggest beast in the Tory jungle lost not only to William Hague but also, much less understandably, to Iain Duncan-Smith. Anybody, just anybody, wailed the Eurosceptics, rather than Ken.



### A murder trial is no laughing matter, Missy

**A**MANDA KNOX, alias Foxy Knoxy, looks remarkably relaxed given that she faces up to 30 years in prison if convicted of the murder of her friend Meredith Kercher.

I admit her smiling demeanour and compliments to her fellow-accused on his haircut prejudice me against her, whether she is guilty or innocent. Her friend is dead and the bereaved relatives now have to cope with the details of her murder being dissected all over again.

Even if she is wholly innocent it is still a time for solemnity and compassion, not a personality parade. She might as well have sashayed, smiling and debonair, up to the mourners at a funeral.

Not all Eurosceptics were so blind. I voted for him because I just asked some simple questions: if being pro-Europe is so unacceptable how come he was such a valued member of Eurosceptic cabinets for so many years?

Given that he had always been so honest about his pro-Europe stand but had served faithfully two Eurosceptic Prime Ministers why could we not accept that he recognised reality and believe his promise not to

try to impose his views on the party as a whole? There is behind all this a much bigger question, one of fundamental democratic principles.

All parties are coalitions of differing views. There has never been, until recent years, an attempt to impose a rigid uniform ideology. Front benchers accept collective responsibility but, providing that constraint is accepted, they may have widely differing views.

I differ from Ken Clarke on Europe and on abortion, from David

Cameron on climate change and, angrily, on freedom of conscience for Catholic adoption agencies and from David Davis on 42 days detention. So what? There is vastly more that unites us which is why we are in the same party. David Cameron is at ease with difference and can therefore lead a party at ease with itself. He is sufficiently confident in his own position to want tall grass around him. The Conservatives have the right man at the top.

## THIS TIDAL WAVE OF PROFANITY IS A POOR SUBSTITUTE FOR MANNERS

**R**ESearch suggests that we swear about 14 times a day. Goodness knows how that can be verified but even supposing it to be true it reveals little. What determines attitudes towards bad language is its context and its strength. A muttered oath when you have driven a nail into your thumb will raise the eyebrows of only the most puritan but loud, coarse language in the street for no apparent reason will disgust even the most libertarian.

What has changed so sharply over the last couple of decades is the free use of swearing

and casual profanity in front of children. I was 13 at the time of the Lady Chatterley obscenity trial. Mrs Rhymes, who taught us English and who had just introduced us to a (perfectly decent) poem by DH Lawrence, solemnly informed us that we were not old enough to know the detail of what was going on. Now every six-year-old hears the wretched word involved several times a day.

I was 16 before I knew what it meant but these days no television cook seems able to look at a plate of vegetables without accusing it of sexual activity. When I was about 10 I

informed my mother that at break I had chased a bug around a tree, having been told by a friend that this would utterly scandalise her. Instead she replied in unperturbed tones: "Ah! You had his blood, 'e knows you did." I didn't even get the joke and nor did my friend next day. Our mothers would not have expected us to.

As for the Third Commandment, I doubt if anybody apart from serious practitioners of religion even knows what it is. The exclamatory use of the name of God is pretty much indistinguishable from common swear words

and that of the Second Person of the Trinity is not far behind but I suspect references to the Headquarters of Perdition probably outstrip both.

Blasphemy at breakfast is now a normal response to a dropped cornflake. It is all rather sad. Swearing and explicitness mean an absence of more colourful, precise, creative vocabulary and the death of picturesque euphemism. My great-uncle never went to the lavatory. He always went to see a man about a dog. It was called manners. Whatever happened to them?

## THE DAILY EXPRESS 30-SECOND MATHS TEST TEST YOURSELF EVERY DAY ON THIS PAGE

JUST follow the instructions from top to bottom, starting with the number given to reach an answer at the foot of the ladder. Set your own 30-second challenge: for the very young or arithmetically rusty, you have 30 seconds for the **BEGINNER** task. For a greater challenge, try **BEGINNER** and **INTERMEDIATE** in 30 seconds, and true mental gymnasts should try **INTERMEDIATE** and **ADVANCED** in 30 seconds together.

BEGINNER	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED
<b>14</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>104</b>
TIMES 2	TAKE THE SQUARE ROOT	DIVIDE BY 8
ADD 48	TIMES 14	TIMES 14
HALVE IT	ADD 1	TAKE AWAY 11
HALVE IT AGAIN	TAKE THE SQUARE ROOT	DIVIDE BY 19
ADD 53	TIMES 6	TIMES 15
DIVIDE BY 9	REVERSE THE DIGITS	80% OF THIS
ADD 47	DOUBLE IT	INCREASE BY 75 PER CENT
DIVIDE BY 5	DIVIDE BY 6	2/3 OF THIS
<b>ANSWER</b>	<b>ANSWER</b>	<b>ANSWER</b>
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*Today's answer can be found on page 57*

# Shocking 9 out of 10 parents swear in front of children

By Mark Reynolds

AN ALARMING 90 per cent of 11-year-olds have heard their parents swear.

Branded an "appalling" indictment, the research revealed yesterday that the average child hears their mother or father utter expletives six times a week.

And almost half of the youngsters polled admitted it upset them. Worryingly, the other 54 per cent said they were used to it.

The poll of 3,000 11-year-olds also revealed that children are using swear words at an earlier age now, with 41 per cent admitting they used expletives in their everyday language because they heard their parents use them.

Some 86 per cent said they felt that their parents' swearing set a bad example for them. And the language used by TV stars like Gordon Ramsay and Jonathan Ross does nothing to help.

Peter Foot, chairman of the Campaign for Courtesy, described the findings as depressing but not a surprise. "We need parents to be



Ross sets a bad example

the ones to put their children right before they even get to school, with 'please' and 'thank yous', rather than leaving it to teachers," he said.

"But this is awful, appalling really. There are some age groups now who can't say a single sentence without the F-word in it."

A spokesman for research site www.youngpoll.com, which carried out the study, said: "When youngsters hear their parents use

swear words so frequently, it's inevitable that they will pick up bad habits.

"Parents should be aware that children are easily influenced and will try to replicate what they say whether it's swear words or not."

"When adults hear a young child swear it's very easy to find it humorous, yet any use of bad language should be nipped in the bud at an early age."

Almost two thirds (64 per cent) of those polled have been disciplined at school because of their use of bad language.

Yet a conscientious 34 per cent of youngsters have tried to curb the error of their ways and asked their parents to stop using swear words in front of them.

The spokesman added: "It's worrying that kids are telling their parents to improve their language. Mums and dads should be taking more responsibility when it comes to their child's vocabulary."

More than nine out of ten adults now admit to swearing every day. And those who don't are often too fearful to challenge those who do.

## Snow brings UK roads to a halt

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**SUNDAY EXPRESS**  
**OPINION**

**Negligent C4 bosses must pull the plug on this filth**

**I**T TOOK a massive campaign of protest by outraged TV viewers to force the BBC to discipline the foul-mouthed entertainer Jonathan Ross but no sooner is he back on screen with his cleaned-up act, than a new show launches a fresh barrage of obscenity.

Channel 4's *Free Agents* is supposed to be a romantic comedy but there is nothing to laugh at in this shocking show. Instead of good-hearted humour and wit, viewers are treated to a torrent of swear words strong enough to make a sergeant major blush.

The first of the six-part series went out on Friday and in just half-an-hour the f-word was used 22 times and the c-word uttered three times.

What on earth do C4 bosses think they're playing at? The use of the c-word has broken the last rule of public decency. Any broadcaster using it on the radio would be put off air. Profanity like this has no place in mainstream entertainment, it is crude and depraved.

If TV companies can't be relied on to produce decent programmes then Ofcom, the broadcasting regulator, must act. Chuck this muck off our screens and condemn the producers of this immature smut.

**Better care for youngsters**

**T**HE Sunday Express was proud to join forces with the NSPCC in a battle to get improved protection for children at risk. Today we are equally proud to report that our crusade has been a success.

Our research revealed that health visitors across England are facing a crisis. Thousands of very young children are at risk because the workload on social workers is too great. In the past decade, the number of health visitors has fallen while the number of deaths among babies and the under-fives has grown.

Last week, Children's Secretary Ed Balls and Alan Johnson, the Health Secretary, said they agreed with us and pledged to boost the number of health visitors under the terms of their new Child Health Strategy.

Well done. The Baby P case was a tragedy that must not be allowed to happen again. With more health visitors working with realistic case loads our welfare authorities stand a far better chance of preventing harm being done to the most vulnerable in society.

**Food facts at our fingertips**

**C**ONSUMERS must be able to rely on the truth of the information that is used to label food. That is why the Sunday Express is happy to support the Conservatives' new Honest Food Campaign.

Over recent years, food producers have deceived shoppers by claiming their products were British when, in reality, they were not. For instance, meat presented as British may only have been processed or packaged here.

Under the Tories' proposal, honest labelling will be compulsory. As consumers, we must have those facts to enable us to choose the food we put on our tables.

**Web of deceit nabs Romeo**

**W**E'RE told that the course of true love never did run smooth but spare a thought for one lovelorn Romeo from Sheffield.

He thought that he had found a sweetheart on the internet. She suggested a romantic tryst near Aberdeen but when the ardent suitor arrived, he discovered it was all a hoax.

Emma the website temptress had, in fact, been created by two men from Liverpool and, when the Romeo's wife found out about the episode, she left him. As Socrates said: "The hottest love has the coldest end."

**I blame Labour for child father**



By **Virginia Blackburn**

**V**ALENTINE'S DAY has just been and gone. How nice it would have been if we could have celebrated it with a story about a newborn baby given to a couple in love. Instead, we have had a story about a newborn baby but far from it exemplifying anything at all about love, duty, responsibility or morality.

It is an utterly shocking indictment of the collapse in our society's values and an appalling warning about the dangers to our civilisation that lie ahead. For the father, Alfie Patten, is just 13 years old - 12 when the baby was conceived - and the mother, Chantelle Steadman, just 15. Together they are the parents of Maisie Roxanne, born last Monday. What future does Maisie have, born in to such a mess? What future is there now, come to that, for Alfie and Chantelle?

It is not so very long ago that the news that two people who are still children had borne a child themselves would have been the subject of unequivocal condemnation. Until very recently there was simply no mainstream line of thinking that would have taken this to have been anything other than a moral and societal disaster. But despite the fact that politicians on both sides of the political divide have spoken out in condemnation, this is, alas, an inevitable result of flawed thinking on the Left.

The Conservative Party might not be doing enough to encourage marriage and the stability of the family but it is, at least, dimly beginning to realise that married parents, with at least one in work, are the best people to bring up a child. On the other side of the fence, there has been a resolute refusal from Labour to intervene with anyone for doing anything and that particularly applies to bringing up a child.

Despite repeated studies showing exactly the opposite, the Left has claimed over and over again that there is no harm to children being brought up in one-parent families, families headed by step-parents, families in which both parents are gay and, in this case, a family, if it can be called as such, in which the father is so young he asked, "What's 'financially'?" when asked how he was going to look after his child.

**S**OCIETY seems to have become deliberately perverse. Just a couple of weeks ago there was, rightly, an outcry when it emerged in Edinburgh that two children of a heroin addict mother were being taken away from their loving grandparents to be placed in the care of a gay couple. From that to the case of Alfie and Chantelle is but a very short step.

Indeed, Alfie and Chantelle are themselves the products of broken homes and a benefits culture that is totally out of control. Alfie's parents are separated and his father, Dennis, has nine children in total, not all with his wife. Chantelle's parents, meanwhile, have three other children; the family live on benefits. Both appear to have come from an "anything goes" culture, in



Pictures: STEVE REIGATE

**NO SHAME: Nicola Patten, top, and Penny Steadman, mothers of child-parents**

which the responsibility for providing for a family always comes down to dependence on the state.

When Chantelle turns 16, her family will be eligible to claim a staggering £30,000 a year in benefits. How is putting that amount of money on the table for the taking possibly going to teach anyone involved in this whole sorry saga the benefits of self-reliance and hard work?

As if this were not enough, although there is no doubting that the children involved had sex together, there is talk that Alfie might not even be the father. How closely did Chantelle's parents monitor her sexual activities? A sense of shame is no bad thing; single mothers might have been vilified far too strongly in the past but at least a sense of propriety meant that a young, unmarried woman would think long and hard before putting herself in a

situation where she might find herself pregnant. This might have had a downside but at least it ensured that the vast majority of children were born within a stable unit with two parents to help bring it up.

Nor does our current celebrity-driven culture help. Children today don't want to achieve, they want to be famous. That, at least temporarily, is what Alfie and Chantelle have managed in droves but the cost doesn't bear thinking about, particularly for their baby. Here they are, two children, now responsible for making life-changing decisions about a newborn child.

**L**ABOUR apologists for anti-social behaviour will no doubt point out that 500 years ago it was normal for children to become betrothed at 12. That is true but life expectancy was in the early 30s in those days and consummation of the relationship didn't happen straight away.

We thought we had moved on from this but if Alfie and Chantelle, with their "anything goes" mentality, reliance on state handouts, exulting in temporary celebrity and utter lack of understanding of the responsibilities ahead of them are a symbol of the way our society is heading, then God help us. He and He alone is the only one who can put this right.

**'Alfie himself is the product of a broken home and a benefits culture that's totally out of control'**

JULIA HARTLEY-BREWSTER: PAGE 29

## Woman and unborn baby killed by car

THIS mother-to-be died with her unborn child when she was struck by a BMW car which mounted a pavement.

Anne Marie McCreadie, 29, was walking with her husband Andy and a friend when the tragedy happened at Fenrith, Cumbria, on Friday evening.

Mrs McCreadie, of Lowry Hill, Carlisle, was taken to hospital with serious pelvic injuries but died later.

The male car driver was arrested.

A police spokesman said: "A blue BMW coupe mounted the pavement and collided with a pregnant female pedestrian who was walking with her husband and a male friend at 6.30pm. The woman sustained serious pelvic injuries."

"The male driver of the BMW was arrested at the scene on suspicion of causing death by dangerous driving and is helping police with their inquiries."

Police are urging witnesses to call 0845 3300247.



Anne Marie McCreadie enjoying pregnancy

## Poll gives BBC excuse for even more swearing

A BBC report will show that the public is more relaxed than ever about swearing on TV - sparking fears that it will give the corporation a licence to air even more bad language.

The survey of viewers' attitudes on taste and decency was ordered by the BBC Trust after the furore over Jonathan Ross and Russell Brand leaving lewd messages on veteran actor Andrew Sachs's answerphone.

The report is said to show that viewers are "relaxed" about the use of bad language, especially after the 9pm watershed.

About 7,000 members of the public were interviewed and the results will be presented to the BBC Trust later this month.

But the findings are contrary to a survey last year in Radio Times, in which 69 per cent of 4,500 people polled said that there was too much swearing on TV.

Watchdogs fear the latest report will stop the BBC cleaning up its act.

John Beyer, of Mediawatch, said: "There is already far too much swearing on TV that is entirely unnecessary. My fear is that Mark Thompson, the BBC's director general, will tell everybody that it is business as usual."

"But swearing alienates television

By Sara Dixon

viewers. If they are going to carry on broadcasting swearing, the BBC will alienate swathes more viewers."

Brand, 33, left the BBC after the messages were broadcast last October. He had used shockingly explicit language to tell Mr Sachs, 79, about his brief relationship with his granddaughter Georgina Baillie, 23.

The airing of the pre-recorded Radio 2 show sparked more than 40,000 complaints and severely damaged the BBC's reputation. Radio 2 controller Lesley Douglas resigned.

### Creative

Mr Thompson said recently that the BBC, which receives £3.5 billion of public money a year, would continue "to push boundaries" in the "interests of creative freedom of expression".

He added: "If we set up a programme strategy based on never offending anyone, we wouldn't broadcast any news programmes."

But he did admit that the Brand and Ross tapes should not have been aired.

The BBC refused to comment before the report's publication.

## 3 hurt as 'tornado' rocks festival

THREE people were injured when a rock festival stage was ripped apart by a "mini-tornado".

The 50mph wind lifted part of the roof off the stage and the canopy then hit three staff at the Bearded Theory festival in Hulland Ward, near Ashbourne in Derbyshire.

The workers suffered shoulder, back and neck injuries and were airlifted to hospital. "Freak" winds

also made portaloos "spin through the air" at the event on Saturday, where 2,500 fans saw bands like Hawkwind and The Saw Doctors.

Witness Danny Carden said: "A mini-tornado just took the roof off. It was absolute chaos."

But the show went on, despite the weather. Met Office forecaster Tim Thorpe warned of a "small risk" of more freak winds this week.

/lmc

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# DAILY EXPRESS

## LET'S GET BRITAIN MOVING

# CRUSADE

Our roads are a national disgrace. Potholes alone cost British drivers £1million in repairs every single day. But while roadworks blight every city, town and village in the country, nothing ever improves. Congestion costs the British economy a disgraceful £20 billion every year and it's getting worse.

Local authorities, gas, water, phone, TV and electricity companies routinely dig up the roads and abandon holes for weeks on end causing massive tailbacks. Last year, 140 million working hours were lost in traffic jams. Worst of all, British drivers pay a staggering £45 billion-a-year in motoring taxes, but Gordon Brown's shameful Government only invests a pathetic £2.7 billion in road maintenance.

So, the Daily Express has launched a nationwide crusade to sort out this mess. We're demanding that the Government starts to invest properly in the UK's road network and develops a coherent national strategy to stop pointless traffic congestion. Every major motoring organisation in the country, including the AA and RAC, is behind us...and now we need YOUR support.

Visit us online and sign our petition now at [www.express.co.uk/web/getbritainmoving](http://www.express.co.uk/web/getbritainmoving) where you can also upload your road horror stories and pictures. Alternatively, fill in the coupon below and send it straight back to us.

Get all your friends, family and colleagues to sign up too. We'll collect all the responses and make sure YOUR voice is heard.

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To Gordon Brown, Prime Minister

I believe that the Government should start to invest properly in Britain's road network and develop a coherent transport policy to end unnecessary traffic congestion.

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## Tycoon's great giveaway should inspire each of us

IN a week dominated by news of MPs feathering their nests, how refreshing to read of Brian Burnie's decision to sell his country house and donate the proceeds to cancer charities ("Why I'm leaving my millions to charity", May 18).  
Mr Burnie is a wealthy man but leaving a legacy to charity isn't just the preserve of the rich. Every year, having looked after friends and family, thousands of people leave a gift to charity in their will, and it makes a huge difference to the work of charities in the UK.  
Currently, seven per cent of the UK population chooses to leave a gift to charity in their will.  
If we could raise that figure to just 11 per cent, it would mean an additional £1 billion of much-needed funding each year.  
Let's hope that Mr Burnie's actions act as an inspiration.

**Stephen George,**  
Chairman, Remember A Charity

## Time to bring our tinpot tyrants crashing to earth

I MISSED the boing of politicians on BBC1's Question Time, but am reminded of the astonished look on the face of the Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu as he addressed his people from the balcony of his palace in Bucharest and realised, finally, that they did not love him quite as much as he thought.  
At the next election, we can all send a similar message to our beloved leaders, if we so wish.

**Kenneth Stirland,**  
By e-mail

## County would be proud to honour Gurkhas' bravery

AS a retired Royal Engineer who has worked on several occasions with the Queen's Gurkha Engineers, I give my wholehearted support to your proposed statue of a Gurkha on the cliffs above Folkestone ("Join our fight for a true tribute to lost Gurkhas", May 18).

It will not be the first in Kent, because there is one of a Queen's Gurkha Engineer in the centre of our county town, Maidstone.  
This has become a must-see for visitors to the town and the men of the QGE always get the biggest cheer when 36 Engineer Regiment is on parade.

**Capt (retired) J E Borer,**  
Rochester, Kent

## Eurovision's about cute personalities - not songs

CAN someone please tell me why Norway's song was so popular in the Eurovision song contest ("Eurovision wins Sir Terry's praise", May 18)? I've forgotten the lyrics, the melody, in fact, everything about it, and only a couple of days have elapsed since the event.  
The classiest song and best performance of the night undoubtedly came from the UK, which just goes to show - once again - that this competition is not a song contest but a cute personality festival.

**T Eastman,**  
Plymouth, Devon

## Silence is golden, Graham, so please give us peace

SHUT up, Graham Norton! We spent Saturday evening saying these words (my husband uttering them out loud and my brain doing the same) as we tried to hear the people who were talking when he was. Or should I say he was talking

## Letter of the day

# MPs' expenses dwarfed by the EU gravy train

WE'VE all been reading, with mixed feelings, about the extraordinary developments surrounding MPs and their claims for expenses ("Stand up and fight this grasping band of rotten rulers", May 18).  
But this is only the tip of the iceberg. For example, this is the 13th consecutive year the accounts of the European Parliament have been rejected by the auditors, who won't sign them as a correct record of what's taken place, and of the costs incurred.  
To cap it all, it's reported that the European Commission blames member states for audit failings, and has suspended £1.2 billion in payments to English regions.  
We're about to vote in the European elections. What are we voting for? What accountability do our elected European members have regarding this matter?  
Before we vote, it would be interesting to invite them to declare detailed expenses they've claimed from the EU since their appointment.

**Ray Hollins,**  
Solihull, W Midlands



**FAILINGS:** The European Parliament in Strasbourg

when they were. It would have been so nice to hear everyone who spoke in English. But Norton never, ever stopped.  
There was no shortage of silent spaces for his commentary without talking over the top of others.  
He also could have been much more complimentary about the contestants instead of making derogatory remarks.

**Daphne Greaves,**  
By e-mail

## Viewers not convinced by BBC excuses for swearing

I WOULD like to know where the BBC recruited the 7,000 viewers it interviewed regarding attitudes to taste and decency

("Poll gives BBC excuse for even more swearing", May 18).

The poll is said to show that viewers are relaxed about the use of bad language, especially after the 9pm watershed.

Sorry, but I know many people who would totally disagree with this poll, and who feel there is too much bad language on television these days.

Doesn't the BBC realise that foul language is not an essential ingredient of good drama?

Someone in authority should pull in Mark Thompson, the BBC's director-general, and tell him to make more watchable shows with some of the £3 billion of public money he receives.

**Andy Clark,**  
Crawley, W Sussex

## Squeaky-clean fun - every home should have a rat!

I WAS concerned to read your article on rats ("Plague of 'super rats' who can't be poisoned", May 16). These angelic animals are highly intelligent and clean - yes, clean. They make wonderful pets and are great fun to play with.  
Unfortunately, the long, bald tail puts some people off, and the Black Death was a public relations disaster. Rats are only a problem if they get in the house. If we do not leave food out for them, they are not a problem.  
More people should keep rats. They will eat all your waste food leaving none for the wild ones. They do not smell and I have never been bitten by a rat.

**Jim Brightwell,**  
Edgware, Middx

## Widespread internet use boosts Royal Mail income

I QUESTION Royal Mail's claim that the internet is causing a massive decline in post volumes ("Post cost to rise despite profits", May 15). While I agree that e-mails have, to a degree, taken the place of traditional, posted letters, the internet has surely enhanced the volume of post and, no doubt, Royal Mail revenue.  
If Royal Mail ever becomes fully privatised, we can say goodbye to the 'one price goes anywhere' system and those living in remote or rural areas will be in danger of losing their postal service.

**Joan Squires,**  
Plymouth, Devon

## WILL SCRAPPAGE KICK-START NEW CAR SALES?

**Yes** I AM pleased to discover that, at long last, the car scrappage scheme has come into force.

Let's hope the incentive of £2,000 or more for trading in an older car will tempt more customers into dealers showrooms.

With new car sales down by nearly 30 per cent on last year, action is desperately needed to lift the gloom.

In Germany and France, the scrappage scheme has provided a vital boost to sales and saved thousands of jobs - exactly the kind of fillip our manufacturers need. Let's hope it works.

**G Haslam,**  
By e-mail

**No** SCRAPPAGE is just another government initiative that is doomed to failure. Already we see that it only applies to the first 300,000 vehicles, so how do you know where you are in that queue?

Then we see that dealers are adjusting discounts on new cars, with the £2,000 scrappage then being applied. So if there was £3,000 off the selling price, it's put back on and you are left paying £1,000 more before you bring in your old car.

There's not much point in having a deal that costs you more than the discounted price.

**Syd Vaughan,**  
Birmingham

## Ten things you never knew about... flowers

WILLIAM HARTSTON

The Chelsea Flower Show opens today, with entrance for Royal Horticultural Society members only today and tomorrow. The general public may see the glorious displays from Thursday to Saturday.

1. Since 1986, Prince Charles has received one daffodil a year as rent for land on the Isles of Scilly.
2. According to a survey this year, 30 per cent of Londoners would like to receive flowers on Valentine's Day, but only 10 per cent of Londoners sent them.
3. The average American buys 4.67 roses a year.
4. The apple said to have struck Isaac Newton on the head and inspired his theory of gravity was a large, green-skinned variety called Flower of Kent.

5. The Titan Arum flower of Sumatra, or Corpse Flower, is three metres tall and smells of dead flesh.
6. Last year, Valentine's Day roses were banned in Saudi Arabia, as they were seen as love symbols, encouraging relations between men and women outside marriage.
7. It's illegal to pick the Pink and White Lady Slipper (Cypripedium reginae) in Minnesota, where it is the state flower.
8. The Puya raimondii from the Andes in South America takes 150 years to grow a flower, then it dies.
9. "Flowers are restless to look at. They have neither emotions nor conflicts." - Sigmund Freud
10. Details and booking for the Chelsea Flower Show can be found at [www.rhs.org.uk/whatson/shows/chelsea2009](http://www.rhs.org.uk/whatson/shows/chelsea2009)

## BEACHCOMBER



## 92 YEARS OLD AND STILL A NAME TO CONJURE WITH...

THERE'S an interesting battle going on in the Swedish courts over a couple's determination to call their son 'O'. Apparently, Swedish law explicitly forbids single-letter names, even if such a name has been sanctioned by a gadget-maker in the James Bond films. So I suppose 'M' would be banned, too, and I imagine 'W', 'O' and 'P' would be completely out of the question. The family says it has nothing to do with any liking for the Bond films. It claims the boy has answered to the name of 'O' ever since he was born, and, anyway, it's a nice-sounding name.

Quite what the name sounds like in Swedish, however, is a matter of speculation, as the letter O was eliminated from the Swedish alphabet in the spelling reform of 1906. It only occurs nowadays in imported words such as squash, quilting and Qatar, and if you need to spell these out, the letter is pronounced as 'koo'.

To further confuse matters, the family is reported to have offered the court a compromise: if it is not allowed 'O', it suggests the alternative of 'O: u', presumably pronounced 'koo-colon-space-you' (translated into Swedish, of course).

This is nothing new for Swedish courts, which have, in the past, been called upon to rule on whether certain names are acceptable. They have, in recent years, banned the names of Elvis, Metallica, Superman and Ikea, but allowed Lego and Google. 'Brfxxccxxmnpccclllmmnprrvcclicnks-qbbl1116' was also banned in 1996, even though the parents insisted that it was pronounced 'Albin'.

A couple of years ago, the Chinese courts were faced with a similar problem when a couple announced their intention to call their child '@'. I do not know if a final ruling has yet been given in this case, but it could cause the child some difficulty when he or she grows up and decides to get an e-mail address.

This all brings to mind the case of the 17th century Englishman given the name of Hath Christ. Not Died For Thee Thou Wouldst Be Damned Barebone. He was the son of Praise-God Barebone, who was an unusually pious member of Oliver Cromwell's Nominated Assembly, which was given the task of reforming England. His extreme views and strong influence led to the assembly becoming known as the Barebones Parliament, but, in fact, it was the son with the long name who did more to reform England by introducing the world's first insurance company in 1667.

Having trained as a physician, and changed his name from Hath Christ Not Died For Thee Thou Wouldst Be Damned Barebone to the simpler Nicholas Barbon, he saw a huge gap in the market when the Great Fire of London destroyed so much of the capital in 1666. As a result he founded The Insurance Office, with fire insurance not unaturally one of its major sources of business.

I doubt, though, that it offered any policy to parents who wanted to insure their ungrateful children changing their names from Hath Christ Not Died For Thee Thou Wouldst Be Damned to Nicholas.



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**FURY:** The Sex Pistols' infamous outburst, above; more recent swearing from footballer Didier Drogba, top, Jonathan Ross and Russell Brand, below, and Debbie, a lead character in Shameless



**B**RACE yourselves dear readers because as far as humanly possible, this article will contain no swearing and these days that is apparently more shocking than a liberal sprinkling of four letter words.

According to Mark Thompson, director-general of the BBC, it would be perfectly acceptable if this article were peppered with profanity because we are all quite relaxed about that sort of thing. He bases this assertion on a recent survey on taste and decency which is to go before the BBC Trust this week and purports to show that most viewers do not mind bad language on television. In fact, a substantial minority of viewers and listeners are in favour of less censorship than we have at the moment.

The Trust requested a review of editorial standards following the Russell Brand-Jonathan Ross debacle, in which the pair left an obscene message on the answering machine of actor Andrew Sachs. The survey involved about 7,000 members of the public and reveals a lack of concern among viewers about the use of bad language in certain contexts, particularly after the 9pm watershed.

Thompson goes on to assure us that "in the interests of creative freedom" the BBC will continue to "push

**By Anna Pukas**

boundaries". So that's all right then. The next time anyone complains about something patently distasteful, Thompson and his executives will no doubt feel justified in arguing that they are quite au fait with what viewers do and don't like because they've asked them.

But have they? We do not know how the questions in the survey were phrased, nor are we likely to find out as the results are being presented to the Trust and are not for public consumption. However, it is impossible to listen to the director-general's summary and not smell a rat.

The majority of viewers and listeners don't care about swearing? Most have no objection to a string of f-words, or worse, coming out of their screens or radios? Frankly, who does Mark Thompson think he is kidding?

"There is a big difference between people resigning themselves to hearing bad language on television and liking it," says Tony Thorne, who is language consultant at King's College London, and has written numerous books on language. "They may have come to expect it but that doesn't mean they like it."

Indeed not. Gordon Ramsay is a

*Amx*

The BBC bizarrely claims that, more than 40 years after the f-word was first used on TV, people are happy with swear words. Are they serious? We've never been more horrified

**FOUL:** The constant swearing of chef Gordon Ramsay has outraged viewers

# VULGAR TRUTH ABOUT OBSCENITY TV

popular TV chef and we know that the professional kitchen is a high-pressure environment. We get the joke in *The F-Word*. It's a programme about food but the title is a reference to Ramsay's salty language. But when Ramsay's *Great British Nightmare* was broadcast in January containing 115 instances of offensive language in 40 minutes, Ofcom received 51 complaints. It was not the swearing per se which offended but the relentlessness.

This is what linguists call "appropriacy". Thorne explains: "It's about the right word in the right context. Swearing does serve a function. It can be an emotional release or it can enable you to fit in with a group, which is why teenagers have their own slang. People can be unsophisticated but they are very sensitive to language."

But have we really become so desensitised to language that we feel no outrage when a teenager uses the c-word to her father, as Debbie Gallagher did in a recent episode of *Shameless*?

In 1914 the use of the phrase "not bloody likely" on stage during the first night of George Bernard Shaw's play *Pygmalion* incited hysteria in the audience and a call from the Bishop of Woolwich for the word

to be banned. Half a century passed before critic Kenneth Tynan said the f-word on TV in 1965. The gap between the next utterance was only eight years. Nowadays, its use is practically obligatory in "gritty" drama. Reality shows such as *Big Brother* and *I'm A Celebrity... Get Me Out Of Here*, which are broadcast live, have contributed to the increased frequency of "mindless" swearing, in which the f-word is used almost as punctuation.

Thorne believes the inclusion of offensive words shows laziness on the part of scriptwriters and programme makers.

"They use swearing as a short cut to a false authenticity but it ends up looking completely unauthentic. It's like rock 'n' rollers still striking a rebellious pose

**GUARDIAN:** Mary Whitehouse foresaw TV's ugly future

Picture: GETTY



after 40 years. It's just that: a pose. Relentless profanity is such an uncreative use of language. We have a million words of vocabulary at our disposal in the English language and it seems a pity not to be more imaginative. My 10-year-old son loves *Top Gear* but gets annoyed when guest drivers doing the time trial have to be beeped out so much. He asks me why they can't control their language and he's right. It is very tedious."

A few years ago, a survey revealed that while viewers had no great objections to scenes of sex or violence, they were very disturbed by bad language. "This makes sense; we can switch off scenes of violence because there is usually some preamble to them but there is no time to take evasive action against offensive language. Once it's out, it's out. And a 9 p m

watershed is useless to a father and his young son watching a live football match together in the afternoon as the cameras linger on the snarling faces of footballers mouthing obvious obscenities at the referee. The beeping device is also ludicrous; all it does is alert a viewer or listener to the use of the word that it is covering up.

**T**HE judicious use of swearing is effective: it can shock or intimidate or simply release tension. But what does the constant swearer say when he is *really* angry? What can he do when his language has lost its power? Punch something? Punch someone?

We ignore the insidious creep of profanity at our peril. "Attitudes are definitely far more liberal but make no mistake, those old social taboos are still there," says Tony Thorne. "The biggest number of complaints to newspapers are about language. It may be a minority that doesn't like bad language but if it's a significant minority, you should listen."

Will the BBC listen? Maybe. But I wouldn't swear to it.

## A TIMELINE OF TV'S FILTHIEST MOMENTS

**1965:** Theatre critic Kenneth Tynan is the first person to say "f\*\*\*" on TV. He is on a BBC late-night discussion show debating censorship. Result: public apology by BBC, four Commons motions are tabled in Parliament condemning Tynan. One MP says Tynan should be hanged.

**1973:** Journalist Peregrine Worsthorne becomes the second person to use the f-word. On teatime news show *Nationwide* he is asked how the public will react to Tory minister Lord Lambton being caught in bed with a call girl. He says they "will not give a f\*\*\*". Result: he almost loses his job and is suspended from broadcasting for six months.

**1976:** The Sex Pistols say the f-word several times during an interview with Bill Grundy on live afternoon show *Thames Today*. Steve Jones calls Grundy a "dirty old f\*\*\*er". Result: Grundy is suspended for two weeks, the show is taken off air months later, Sex Pistols are banned from TV.

**1987:** Jools Holland says "Don't be square, be a groovy f\*\*\*er" while presenting a live trailer for Channel 4 show *The Tube*. Result: the series is pulled for three weeks and Holland forced to resign.

**2004:** John Lydon uses the c-word on ITV's *I'm A Celebrity Get Me Out Of Here*, calling the audience "f\*\*\*ing c\*\*s". Result: apology from ITV but fewer than 100 viewers out of an audience of 11 million complain.

**2009:** Celebrity chef Gordon Ramsay says the f-word 115 times in the first 40 minutes of Ramsay's *Great British Nightmare* on Channel 4. Result: Ramsay is criticised by media watchdog Ofcom.

**2009:** Russell Brand and Jonathan Ross leave an obscene message on Andrew Sachs's answer-phone during a *Radio 2* show. Result: major row. Brand resigns, Ross is suspended for three months without pay.

**2009:** Chelsea player Didier Drogba screams "It's a f\*\*\*ing disgrace" live as his team is knocked out of the *Champion's League*. Result: pending.

Picture: RED; CHANNEL 4; SKYSPORTS/SHUCKAS VIDEOGRABS



# Letters

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## Brussels is in charge - we don't need all these MPs

AS usual, your commentator Leo McKinstry's razor-sharp analysis of the MPs' expenses scandal is spot on. However, taking it a step further, it begs the question, why do we need all these MPs in the first place?  
Given that 80 per cent of our laws are dictated by Brussels and that civil servants run the wheels of government, why should the British taxpayer fork out for this lot? Let's sack them all and lighten the burden on our pockets.

**Eleanor Minihane,**  
Whitchurch, Shropshire

## One-off windfall will get people spending again

AUSTRALIANS have started receiving 900 dollars (£450) from their government to boost spending and to protect the economy from the recession.  
They have been urged to spend this money on local businesses to keep their fellow citizens in employment. Yet in this country, the only people getting one-off payments are MPs, and they do not seem to care whether people are kept in employment.  
The fiscal stimulus that the Bank of England is giving is not being seen by the man in the street, and more and more people are being made redundant.

Surely this Australian idea is worth trying here, because, for example, if you buy a washing machine, then someone has to make another washing machine and so on.  
While all the business about MPs' expenses is outrageous, the emphasis has been taken off what is happening with the economy.

**Jonathan Wright,**  
Huddersfield, W Yorks

## Regaining sovereignty is the only sane way forward

THE Conservative leader David Cameron has described UK Independence Party MEPs as 'a bunch of nutters'.  
But Conservative governments signed three of the six treaties that surrendered the power to govern our own country to the EU supranational state. Were those actions sane?  
UKIP wants to regain control of our borders and stop unlimited immigration, to stop paying £40million of our money every day to Brussels, and to keep control of our courts. In short, UKIP wants to regain the power to make our own laws.

By leaving the EU we can get our country back and make it great again. Is that nuts?  
**Jacqueline Jones,**  
UKIP prospective  
Parliamentary candidate

## Barrage of bad behaviour is destroying family values

I AM sure I am not the only parent throwing up my arms in despair at the BBC's claim regarding the use of swear words on TV ('Poll gives BBC excuse for even more swearing', May 18).

When are those in high-profile positions of influence and power going to take responsibility for their actions and the consequences of their decisions?

As the parent of four children aged between four and 15, I do my best to lead by example and to set standards of behaviour that will hopefully help my offspring mature into pleasant, polite, caring and hardworking adults.

We sit down to eat as a family; we are polite to each other; we

## Letter of the day

# Public's wrath could restore our democracy

THERE is great public anger at MPs who have, for years, ripped off British taxpayers with dubious expenses claims. However, this anger is fuelled by the deep resentment felt by ordinary, decent people at the decline over the past 12 years of all that made Britain great.

Falling education standards, escalating crime, soft justice, mass immigration, domination by the EU and the recession are feeding public wrath. The issue of MPs' expenses has at last given the British people an irreproachable reason to speak out and vent their anger and frustration without fear of retribution.  
The situation has reversed and the electorate is now asking the questions. It is a time for change.

I totally agree with the sentiments expressed by Leo McKinstry ('Stand up and fight this grasping band of rotten rulers', May 18) that the expenses fiasco could bring back true democracy and shift the balance of power to the people.

**B Ireland,**  
Sheffield



**TABLES TURNED: MPs are now on the defensive**

switch the TV off at meal times; we limit the amount of time the children spend on the computer. In other words, we do our bit.

However, I am beginning to feel we're losing the battle. My children are constantly bombarded by adults on TV, the radio and in newspapers who should know better - politicians abusing an appallingly lax expenses system; highly paid footballers who spit, swear and are physically aggressive on the pitch; and TV programmers who celebrate celebrity, value looks over talent and think swearing is perfectly acceptable.

I am sure that there will be those out there who will respond 'well, don't let the children watch TV', but that is a cop-out.

We live in the real world and we

will continue to play out part. I just hope that the powers-that-be do theirs.

**Sue Guildford,**  
Sandbach, Cheshire

## Moaning soccer star needs a reality check over wages

MANCHESTER City midfielder Stephen Ireland is demanding his wages are trebled if he's to sign a new contract. Ireland apparently earns 'just' £26,000 a week ('Ireland deal up in the air', May 19). God help him - he earns in one week as much as a decent year's wages for most of us.

Jobs are disappearing, the infrastructure of the country is collapsing and a fit young man who

makes a wonderful living from something millions play for pleasure thinks he's hard done by. Seems like it's not just MPs who live in cloud cuckoo-land.

**Les Carr,**  
Liverpool

## Story proves we need lots more sunshine - not less

IF sunshine can add years to your life ('How you can add years to your life', May 18), why on Earth is the taxpayer being forced to shell out billions of pounds to prevent global warming, effectively preventing us from enjoying the Mediterranean type of climate that will enable us to live longer?

**John Phelan,**  
Louth, Lincs

## Leslie Ash should donate MRSA cash to help NHS

VANESSA Feltz commented on Leslie Ash giving to charity some of her £5million compensation for catching MRSA, but I have a better idea. Give it back to the NHS so it can use the money to treat patients ('It'll be good to see her back on television', May 19).

I am not belittling Ms Ash's condition, generosity or her sincerity - I'm just aware that every time someone sues the NHS, money that could and should go to patients and their care goes into the pockets of some legal team and the person who sues. Mistakes happen - that is real life.

**Kathy Davis,**  
Waterlooville, Hants

## WAS SPEAKER MARTIN RIGHT TO STEP DOWN?

**Yes** NO doubt traditionalists will not be pleased to read this, but if Commons Speaker Michael Martin had not announced that he is stepping down, the only possible course of action left would have been to sack him.  
If Mr Martin was still working as a sheet-metal worker and displayed consistent levels of incompetence, he would be given his cards.

Presumably, if he had not gone of his own accord, there would be somewhere (the Queen?) with the clout to terminate his employment.  
**Philip Roe,**  
Stamford Bridge, N Yorks

**No** WHILE it's hardly surprising that Michael Martin has finally bowed to pressure to step down as Speaker, it is a sad day for our democratic process when a man in such a senior position in Parliament can be forced out in such an unseemly manner.

Mr Martin has come in for much criticism, a lot of it justified, over his attempts to keep MPs' expenses secret. Yes, he has defied his critics, but the way MPs have turned on him is despicable. They made Mr Martin their sacrificial lamb to calm public fury.  
Name and address supplied

## Ten things you never knew about... Shakespeare

WILLIAM HARTSTON

William Shakespeare's sonnets were first published 400 years ago today, on May 20, 1609.

1. The publication of the Bard's 154 sonnets, by Thomas Thorpe, is marked by an entry in the Stationer's Register for 'a booke called Shakespeares sonnettes'.
2. Quite apart from the lack of an apostrophe in 'Shakespeares', it is full of misprints and was not reprinted in Shakespeare's lifetime.
3. The 46th word of Psalm 46 in the King James Bible is 'shake' and the 46th word from the end of the same Psalm is 'spear'.
4. This was probably a hidden birthday card to

- Shakespeare, as that translation was published in the year of his 46th birthday.
5. The only mention of billiards in Shakespeare is in Antony and Cleopatra, Act II, Scene V.
  6. Launce's dog Crab, in The Two Gentlemen Of Verona, is the only dog to appear on stage in a Shakespeare play.
  7. The longest word used by Shakespeare was 'honorificabilitudinitatibus' in Love's Labour's Lost.
  8. The Merry Wives Of Windsor is the only Shakespeare work to include the word 'cabbage'.
  9. The world heavyweight boxing champion, Gene Tunney, lectured on Shakespeare at Yale University.
  10. 'William Shakespeare' is an anagram of 'I am a weakish speller'.

## BEACHCOMBER



## 92 YEARS OLD AND STILL CLAIMING NO EXPENSES...

THE newly appointed Poet Laureate, Miss Carol Ann Duffy, has, I am sure, been absorbed with the task of settling into the momentous responsibilities of this historic post, which presumably is the reason she has not yet had time to dash off a sonnet or two on MPs' expenses, a topic that has so gripped the nation. As with her predecessor, Mr Andrew Motion, I am pleased to step in with a quick verse to ease the pressure on Miss Duffy and give her a chance to find her feet and tuck away a few rhymes for future use.

The poem that follows is to be read as a plea for understanding by our representatives, and is entitled Mainly Penitent, Monetary Perquisites, Mostly Permissible, Monstrous Prices, MPs.

There's breathless hush in the Commons today, As the members debate their expenses.

And their reputations turn darker grey, As they seem to have lost their senses, In claiming the costs of some rental porn,

And a trouser press and a new-laid lawn, And a baby-sitter from dusk till dawn, (Plus another till eve from the early morn),

Both dated back to the day he was born, "We regret this has brought our profession such scorn, Though our claims constitute no offences."

There's a mood of contrition about the House, And the sound of the wringing of hands,

From chaps who spend weekends away shooting grouse, Or cheering their teams from the stands,

That's two first-class tickets to football or moor, At prices to make any working man poor,

And don't forget lunch at the Fat Duck for four, (It's all quite legitimate under the law);

Another Dom Perignon bottle for sure, And then perhaps, just for the road, seven more,

And while I am claiming, we'll add a new door, (Replacing the one that I kicked down before,

In rage that my team couldn't level the score), The auditor quite understands,

And so it goes on as the MPs admit The mountains of things that they bought,

And deem in their claim to be totally fit To include in their weekly report. The list seems quite endless of what they confess:

A new roof, a garden, a nice trouser press, A vibrating bed used as treatment for stress,

And let's pay the children to clear up their mess, It's all at top prices - why settle for less?

They say, "We regret that we caused such distress." Distressed, I fear, that they ever got caught.

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**Mark Palmer**



Daily Express writer

**N**EVER underestimate the ability of highly paid executives in the rarefied world of broadcasting to state the blindingly obvious. Andy Duncan, Channel 4's outgoing chief executive, said at the weekend that it was time to curb swearing and vulgar content on television. Hallelujah! Better late than never, you may be tempted to think, but just remember that this volte-face comes from a man who for years has allowed obscenities to be heard on his channel in spite of widespread criticism.

How dare he make such a U-turn without apologising for what has gone before? "There's probably something of a shift in the public mood and appetite around this," said Duncan, by way of justifying his climb-down.

Well, no, actually, I don't believe there's been much of a shift at all. For years millions of us have deplored the inclusion of gratuitous swearing as soon as the evening watershed has been reached but no one has ever taken the slightest bit of interest.

On the contrary, the metropolitan elite conspired to think that effing and blinding was relevant, cool, contemporary and something to applaud. Those who, like the late Mary Whitehouse, wanted to clean up television, were dismissed as out-of-touch reactionaries who hadn't quite adapted to the modern world.

The truth is rather different. In fact, it's Duncan and his lawdriy, trendy cronies who have misread the signs of our troubled times. Many of his channel's shows, such as Jamie's Ministry Of Food and Gordon Ramsay's The F Word, have been debased by allowing the f-word to be broadcast as if it's a completely acceptable form of parlance. Of course, that is what it's now become in the eyes of some gullible viewers.

Channel 4, like other broadcasters, has opened the floodgates and allowed verbal sewage to seep into modern society. Our daily lives are infected by it. It's all around us. Listen on the street to groups of boys and girls as young as 10 and their conversations are littered with profanities in the same way as seen on Big Brother or any of foul-mouthed Ramsay's shows. It's no good telling those youngsters to wash their mouths out. They would just look mystified and tell you to f-off.

Swearing is almost always unattractive. It demeans the swearer and shows a lack of respect for the one subjected to the swearing. It is seldom either necessary or effective, even when trying to emphasise a point, and because it is used so liberally the swear word has become devalued.

"Don't swear, boy. It shows a lack of vocabulary," wrote Alan Bennett in his book *Forty Years On*. It shows a lack of imagination, too. Anyone can swear. It's easy. Just ask Jonathan Ross and Russell Brand, who have made careers out of it and prospered as a result.

There's the rub. It's the effing and blinding brigade who seem to reap the rewards from their foul language. The message for other broadcasters? The more you pepper your shows with expletives, the more your bosses will think you are on the same wavelength as the young audiences you are desperately trying to attract. Yet young audiences take

their lead from what they see on the small screen. So it's a vicious, uncouth circle.

In the Fifties and Sixties it became common-place to hear the word "bloody" but it was mainly used by men and seldom uttered in mixed company. The f-word was, like the atom bomb, kept strictly under wraps and was only threatened to be deployed in absolute emergencies, while the c-word was taboo. Today, the f-word has become meaningless, while even the c-word is banded about with increasing regularity.

DO not wish to be too prissy about bad language - it has its place - but I don't mind admitting that it came as a shock during this year's Edinburgh Festival to hear the c-word used often by stand-up comedians desperately seeking a name for themselves.

What I noticed while listening to many of them was how it backfired. One night, my wife and I went to see the young comedian Jack Whitehall.

He's only 21 and is a real talent. But what we noticed was that the audience never laughed more because of his swearing. Actually, they laughed less because it sounded so ordinary, lazy and boring. The likes of Andy Duncan have just woken up to this.

I don't think they have a genuine belief about swearing. It's just that, finally, they have realised large swathes of the British public regard bad language as a turn-off.

**TV finally gets tough on obscene language**



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# Barrage of swearing that shames Britain

FOUL language has become so common that a third of us are subjected to a swear word every five minutes.

The barrage of four-letter words comes from our families, colleagues, people we pass in the street and from television, a study shows.

But although only five per cent of us get through a typical day without hearing at least one swear word, 83 per cent of Britons are still offended by them.

The foulest mouths in the work-

By **Laura Clout**

place can be found in London offices while the Welsh are least likely to be offended by swearing.

Three-quarters think swearing is commonplace while 84 per cent say children curse more than previous generations, market researchers Online Opinions found.

Over a third of the 1,000 people polled said they heard swearing from family members, almost half from their friends and four out of 10

from their colleagues. And 65 per cent said they were subjected to bad language on television after the 9pm watershed.

And people find there is no escape on the street, over the internet and when we are driving, from road rage motorists, cyclists and pedestrians, the survey said.

A third of those in the poll said they heard swearing every five to 10 minutes on an average day.

Earlier this month Channel 4 chief Andy Duncan pledged to curb

swearing and vulgar content on its programmes, which include Gordon Ramsay's shows. But research revealed that in a single episode of his Kitchen Nightmares USA, the F-word is heard 63 times.

Other culprits include Jonathan Ross and Jamie Oliver, who had to apologise for swearing on his Ministry of Food series.

Most adults questioned admitted swearing was acceptable, but just one in five of over 60s agreed. A spokesman for Online Opinions said: "Swearing is everywhere but that does not mean the public is happy about it. Most admit they use bad language, but many feel aggrieved they have to hear it from others, including those on TV."

Peter Foot, chairman of the Campaign for Courtesy, said: "As well as being disrespectful, swearing shows a limited vocabulary."

OPINION: PAGE 16



Still missing, chef Claudia Lawrence

## Eight quizzed over Claudia

By **Paul Jeeves**

FOUR detectives have flown home after quizzing eight men in Cyprus about missing chef Claudia Lawrence's complex love life.

They included ex-pat builder Steve Sammons, 35, who was the last person to send 35-year-old Claudia a text at 9.12pm on the day she disappeared in March.

Speaking for the first time about the text, Mr Sammons confirmed it was about her coming out to visit him. He said: "She just wanted a break."

Claudia, who police say had liaisons with a number of men, is thought to have also indulged in a series of romances on the five trips she made to Cyprus over two years. Detectives insist Mr Sammons, who denies being her lover, is not a suspect.

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**Troops have protected us so we must assist them**

**I**T IS a tragedy that so many veterans from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are ending up in jail, on probation or otherwise at the margins of society.

The return to civvy street has always been a difficult transition for those who have served in combat zones. It is no surprise that men traumatised by their experience of war and institutionalised by life in the forces should find it difficult to adjust. They are expected to move from an ultra-masculine environment into an increasingly feminised society not much impressed by the traditional male virtues of strength and physical courage.

The law must of course be properly enforced, especially if a crime of violence has been committed and ex-servicemen, above all, should understand the importance of accepting personal responsibility for their actions. Yet society has a duty of care towards such individuals. The challenge facing us is to find positive uses for their talents. That should not be beyond the wit of the authorities.

Many parts of the public services are desperately short of male authority figures and role models. Teaching, probation and the youth service are all now dominated by women bristling with impressive sounding diplomas and degrees. Yet there is every reason to believe that the addition of men from forces backgrounds would bring a new dimension to their work with troublesome youths.

Unless something radical is done to provide veterans with a structured route back into society there is every prospect of many more becoming embittered outcasts with cause to recall the lines of Rudyard Kipling: "It's Tommy this, and Tommy that and 'chuck him out, the brute!' but it's 'saviour of his country' when the guns begin to shoot."

**Carry on working please**

**F**ORCING people to retire at the age of 65 if they are in good health and able to carry on working is ridiculous. The idea that older workers block the prospects of younger ones is specious. A bigger working population means more output, more demand for goods and services and ultimately more jobs.

Until this country accepts that simple economic truth it is unlikely to even begin to meet the challenges posed by an ageing population.

**Language of the sewer**

**T**HE rise of foul language is one of the vilest aspects of modern life. Many young people do not even realise that it is offensive to curse in public places. But a country full of people who cannot keep a civil tongue in their heads can hardly regard itself as civilised.



**BAD: Baroness Scotland breaks her own rules, Boris Johnson breaks his promise**



**A WOMAN OLD ENOUGH TO BE A NEWSREADER?**

**W**HEN Brian Jones disappeared from the Rolling Stones in 1969 Mick Jagger advertised for a new guitarist "who can do his own make-up". In the mid-Seventies, punk rock time, New Musical Express needed a new breed of journalist. It advertised for "young gunslingers" and got the teenage Tony Parsons and Julie Burchill who became their most famous operatives. Now the BBC feels a desperate need for women newsreaders who are over 50. Clearly they have dispensed with one middle-aged woman too many.

Already under fire from some quarters because Fiona Bruce is not as old as the antiques brought to Antiques Roadshow and Alesha Dixon was born well after the foxtrot went out of fashion, they fear attacks from regiments of middle-aged women viewers and old men screaming "we hate seeing good-looking young women", not to mention human rights organisations. The average age of leading woman newsreaders is 43 - 11 years younger than the leading men.

My advice, if it didn't infringe anti-discrimination law, would be to go for Rolling Stones/NME-style directness: "Wanted: woman newsreaders, bifocals or varifocals an advantage. Must have senior citizen's bus pass."

Or else, and this is an even better idea, just recycle the old ones. Come back Angela Rippon, 64, Jan Leeming, 67, Anna



**A congestion of oversights**

**T**WO delicious new words have come to prominence in the lexicon of political double-speak: "oversight" and "aspiration". Oversight, you may remember, was the term used by Baroness Scotland to explain how she came to employ an illegal immigrant as her cleaner. It was a peculiar way to explain how she, the Attorney General, had come to break a law she had a role in making. Far from being an oversight it was at least a mistake or even a bloody disgrace.

Lots of people have said that. What nobody has pointed out is that someone involved in the case made a bigger oversight/mistake than she did. After all, Lady Scotland was one illegal employer among thousands. Her cleaner Loloahi Tapui did far worse: she made the oversight of choosing the worst employer possible. Had it not been the Attorney General the case would probably never have come to light, she would not have made the newspapers, her door would not have been smashed in by the immigration authorities and she wouldn't have been arrested in double-quick time. Illegal immigrants were warned: it is a fatal oversight to take jobs with government law officers.

Lady Scotland was fined a mere £5,000, which she likened to the fine you get if you forget to pay the London congestion charge. Which brings me to Boris Johnson and "aspiration" meaning "a hope or ambition". High among his promises when he stood for election as Mayor of London was that he would abolish the congestion charge zone covering the west of the city.

This was an important vote-winner for him among many tens of thousands of people who felt themselves excluded from the facilities and pleasures of Chelsea,

Kensington and Notting Hill. This week it became known that Boris's pledge would not be carried out in the foreseeable future (that means never). It would be too expensive.

In his ingratiating flick-of-the-wrist Old Etonian style he would probably call it "chickenfeed" but in London's inner-outer western suburbs he's about as popular as he was in Liverpool when his magazine The Spectator insulted the whole city.

Boris's "promise" had become an aspiration. He was firmly committed to it but had - just possibly - not done his sums before making his promise (he's not concerned with such trivial details). At the Lib Dem conference Nick Clegg said there was "no question mark" about his personal commitment to abolishing student fees, a key plank of Lib Dem policy. "The issue is simply affordability," he said.

This is the perfect definition of aspiration: you want a bigger house, you want a world cruise - the issue is simply affordability. That was the type of aspiration politicians used to approve of. Thatcher and Blair's politics were all about British people's aspirations. Aspiration was another word for ambition. Now aspiration is dangerously close to desperation. In the Government's case, with all promises long gone, aspiration is a thing of the past. We must be at the back end of desperation. All that's left now is respiration.

David Cameron, Boris Johnson's fellow Old Etonian, has yet to announce many of his aspirations. Keep your eyes skinned. As one of their schoolmates observed, Eton charm is potent but dangerous: an Etonian kindly offers you a lift, then you find yourself taken not where you want to go but where he wants to go.

**Assisted suicide - beware a right becoming a duty**

**I** WAS in the House of Lords in July when Debbie Purdy won her long campaign to change the regulations about assisted dying. Ms Purdy has multiple sclerosis and wants the right to go to a clinic abroad with her husband without him facing the risk of prosecution on his return. Their Lordships instructed the Director of Public Prosecutions to clarify his position so he has come up with draft proposals.

Basically, doctors and relatives can assist and are unlikely to face prosecution provided death comes as "a clear, settled and informed wish". The same rules will apply to deaths at home and abroad.

The gravely ill would be able to "die with dignity" as supporters put it but is it dignity or is it danger?

If assisted dying is legitimised the terribly or terminally ill may well start to feel they have a duty to die so as not to be a burden. Long-suffering relatives may want to put them out of their misery (and relieve their own). Supporters think it is civilised but it is wrong. The risks far exceed any benefits such change would bring.



**RIPPON: Time she was recalled**

Ford, who will be 66 next week. Moira Stuart was a cause celebre when she was sidelined, presumably because of her age, but at only 60 I think she's too young for a comeback. And Selina Scott, 58, who recently settled an age discrimination case against Channel 5 is far too junior.

My first thought was to go for the ultimate: Barbara Mandell, the first woman to read the news on television. It was 1955 and the beginning of ITV. Sadly Barbara, born in 1920, died in 1998. I wish the BBC every success - wouldn't Dame Edna Everage fit the bill?

**A LEAKED dossier from India's cricket coach to his team recommends sexual activity as an aid to playing well. "Does sex increase performance? Yes, go ahead and indulge." Why did nobody ever tell me this stuff? As I come to the end of yet another unsuccessful season thinking lack of foot movement is to blame, I look forward to next season with commitment refreshed: must aim higher.**

**The more we toil the less we do...**

THE new Speaker of the House of Commons is reported as saying that we should do away with the summer recess and keep MPs at Westminster in September. Beware! We already have one of the longest sittings of Western legislatures, which is probably why we have more disproportionate and inappropriate law than our European counterparts.

The German parliament sits for 38 days to our 133, France for 110 and Switzerland 52.

When I am asked what single action would result in better law I know that people expect me to say something about Europe. Instead I usually reply, "send the MPs home!"

However, even if we do sit for longer than other parliaments it does not mean that we scrutinise legislation more thoroughly. Sadly the opposite is the case. When our hours were shortened by the incoming Blair government the amount of law-making was not reduced but enlarged, with the result that we had to deal with more bills in less time. The very undemocratic consequence is that you and I are being governed by increasingly large quantities of law which has never been debated or voted on by your elected representatives.

That is the real scandal rather than the length of summer recess.

**Why teaching is a real man's job**

MORE than a quarter of state primary schools have no male teachers. The fear of being labelled a paedophile is apparently at the root of the reluctance of many men to follow a path which once attracted many.

The consequences for children are catastrophic, particularly when so many are being brought up without fathers and therefore need another stable male role model in their lives, which once a male teacher might have fulfilled.

Paedophilia is a serious matter but Britain is becoming paralysed by fear of it and has gone from not understanding how seriously to take it to viewing every adult who comes within 10 yards of a child as a potential pervert. That is why we have the ludicrous law demanding criminal record checks for anyone who so much as sets foot in a school to talk to pupils or help out with some event. It is also why busybody rules prevent parents from taking perfectly innocent photographs of school sports days or nativity plays.

That is bad enough but even more sinister is the knowledge now available to children that the way to get your own back on a teacher is to accuse him of abuse. Immediately he will disappear.

**Let his money speak for itself**

SO THE mole who broke his position of trust and revealed the details of MPs' expenses says he was motivated by sympathy with our troops in Afghanistan. Doubtless he will assuage this noble concern by donating the sum of £110,000, which a newspaper says it paid for the information, to a benevolent fund for our boys. If not, then take all the sob stuff with a pinch of salt.

Many an honourable whistleblower has risked livelihood for truth. There was nothing to stop this chap doing the same.



**Ann Widdecombe**

**You're as old as you feel in the workplace**



SERENE: But when will Kate become an HRH?

IT IS becoming an article of faith that as the population ages we are all going to have to work longer. As pensions minister I began the process of raising women's state pension age to 65 and now both sexes are facing a rise to 68. This will not affect anybody immediately about to retire but by the time today's newest recruits come to draw their pensions there could easily be moves afoot to raise the retirement age even further.

It is against this background that judges have been deciding whether bosses should be able to dismiss employees at 65. There is here an obvious dilemma: some people retain their cutting edge until well into their 90s while others begin slowing down in their 60s. I know very well that I cannot now do things which I took for granted in my 30s, such as existing on very little sleep.

It is therefore essential that there is a line at which contracts come to a natural end and can only be continued with the consent of both parties. Traditionally that line has always been regarded as state pension age.

When I was in the Department for Employment I held a competition to find Britain's oldest worker. I was keen to find somebody of 75 because I thought it would send a powerful message to employers, who were reluctant to take people 20 years before that age. To be eligible people had to be working full time and not for themselves.

At 75 indeed! The oldest male worker in this country at that time turned out to be 94. He went to work on his bicycle and did so six days a week. The oldest female worker was 83, worked five days a week and still sang in a choir.

She lived to be 100 and was still singing in that choir up to a couple of years before her death.

It is perfectly possible therefore for

people to work productively at very considerable ages but it is hardly the norm and there needs to be a break point at which employers can assess whether energy and talent are present in sufficient quantities.

It will always be the case that some people are young at 90 and some are old at 40. If there is no natural point at which it is lawful to terminate employment then employers will have no choice but to dismiss workers on grounds of performance with all the hurt and legal procedures involved.

Ageism is much in the news with television companies being accused of routinely practising it. What we really need is flexibility: some people want to work until they drop while others want to reap the rewards of a lifetime's hard work and spend their latter years at a more leisurely pace.

Some want to work part-time but not full-time and some change course altogether, setting up businesses with lump sum pension payments. The law should not produce a line so rigid that it destroys those choices.

Future governments are going to have to make hard decisions, especially when medical science produces the breakthroughs that will remove some of the diseases which shorten our lives.

It is doubly regrettable that Gordon Brown should have so comprehensively plundered the pension schemes which would have underpinned people's financial security into old age.

He is desperate to cling on to his job despite doing it badly - many others who have done their jobs well are being forced to work on because he has taken their money.

A comprehensive policy for an ageing population is long overdue and parts of it are unlikely to be popular but we need vision not piecemeal legislation.

**WE'RE ALL WAITING FOR WILLIAM**

EVERY time we see Kate Middleton she's glamorous, smiling, happy. She has been much mocked for waiting for William but I think we are now all waiting for him. He could lighten these gloomy times with a simple announcement.

**Television must clean up its act**

FOUL language has become so common that a third of us hear or swear words every five minutes. Indeed it is now almost impossible to shop without hearing serious and loud swearing uttered by young girls as often as older men.

According to the Daily Express, over half of 16 to 29-year-olds believe swearing is acceptable. The media are hardly blameless as it is almost impossible to get through an evening's television viewing without hearing "strong" language on the screen. Strong, of course, is a

euphemism for disgusting but the trends which produce the offending programmes would not know the meaning of the word disgusting, whereas once the younger age group wouldn't have known the meaning of the words themselves.

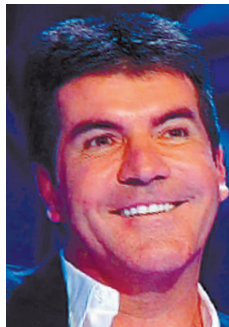
Perhaps the BBC should issue a swear-box to all its script writers so that they can ask them to put in 10 per cent of their salary for each bad word used. That should save the licence payers a mint.





# How shaking Cheryl stirred the nation

Pictures: KEN MCKAY/XPOSUREPHOTOS.COM/WEN.COM/TV



A resounding 'yes' from Simon Cowell  
By **Elisa Roche**  
Showbusiness Editor



Jubilant and relaxed, Cheryl waves to fans as she leaves the studios on Sunday

CHERYL Cole was crippled by nerves and left shaking uncontrollably before her first live solo performance, on *The X Factor* at the weekend.

The nation's sweetheart put on the show of a lifetime on Sunday night - but only after she was comforted and encouraged by the very pop acts she is mentoring in the TV talent contest.

Cheryl, 26, started laughing when she realised she had become the pupil, telling the three young men in her *X Factor* category: "Shouldn't this be the other way around?"

And it seems a bit of humour was the best medicine for the Newcastle-born star.

After laughing it off, Cheryl went on to wow the studio audience with her live rendition of new single *Fight For This Love* with an ambitious dance routine and daring, military-inspired outfit, left.

"I can't believe I'm so nervous," Cole told Joe McElderry, Rikki Loney and Lloyd Daniels as she waited in the wings.

"She was just so nervous - really, really, really nervous," confirmed 22-year-old Scottish singer Rikki, who was booted off the show on Sunday.

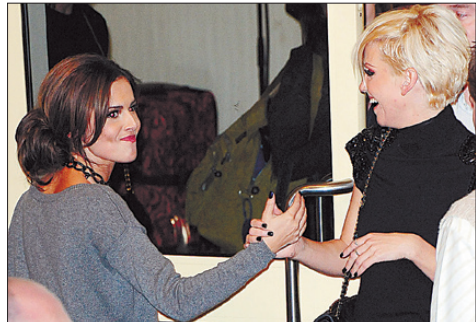
"She was shaking and she said she couldn't believe she was so nervous.

"We were trying to tell her, 'You're going to be all right.'"

"It felt a bit like we were mentoring her."

The special performance was watched by Cheryl's *Girls Aloud* band mates Nicola Roberts, Sarah Harding and Kimberley Walsh, who sat together in the studio, cheering loudly.

Her footballer husband Ashley Cole



Thank goodness I pulled that off - Cheryl later with *Girls Aloud* pal Sarah Harding

was also there, smiling proudly as his wife wowed the audience.

ITV chiefs were rubbing their hands with glee today after it emerged that Sunday's show was the most-watched episode of *The X Factor* - ever.

A record audience of almost 15 million viewers tuned in, trouncing the BBC's *Strictly Come Dancing* on Saturday night by six million viewers.

Soaring *X Factor* ratings were also fuelled by a rare, live comeback appearance on the show by soul diva Whitney Houston.

The singer looked fantastic but appeared jet-lagged as she stumbled through a stilted conversation with *X Factor* host Dermot O'Leary. Rat-

ings for Sunday's show peaked at 14.8 million, beating last year's final when 14.6 million tuned in to see Alexandra Burke crowned *X Factor* winner.

Millions of viewers who watched Cheryl's knock-out performance, which appeared to be brimming with confidence, will be surprised to learn she was so worried.

Wearing a bright red military jacket, army flat cap and trousers slit to the thighs, the pop star displayed some incredible, hip-popping choreography, backed by handsome dancers also dressed in military garb.

Afterwards, even Simon Cowell was forced to admit: "It pains me to say it ... but you will be No 1 next week."

## BBC: Vile Queen joke was OK

THE BBC's governing body provoked fury yesterday after declaring it was acceptable to tell a vile joke about the Queen - but not about lesbians.

Viewers reacted with astonishment when the BBC Trust rejected a complaint over remarks by comedian Frankie Boyle about the monarch, 83, on BBC2's topical comedy show *Mock The Week*.

The Trust admitted his joke was "sexist and ageist" and would have offended many viewers. But it decided it did not breach guidelines because it was well after the 9pm watershed and within audience expectations for the show. In contrast, the Trust upheld a

By **Richard Palmer**  
Royal Correspondent

complaint over radio presenter DJ Spooky and porn actor Ron Jeremy discussing the possibility of having sex with Hollywood actress Lindsay Lohan and her lesbian lover Samantha Ronson.

It found them guilty of reinforcing negative stereotypes of lesbians on BBC Three's *The Most Annoying People Of 2008*.

Stan Rosenthal, a retired civil servant from Mid Sussex whose complaint sparked the investigation into the Queen joke, said: "I am outraged."

## Children 'copying F Word'

DAME Joan Bakewell has blamed Gordon Ramsay's expletive-fuelled outbursts for the increase of swearing among schoolchildren.

The journalist and broadcaster argues that the frequency of bad language used by the TV chef has created a culture of "job-speak". Writing in the *Radio Times* she said: "Schoolchildren come out with mouthfuls of obscenities, copying perhaps one of the country's favourite chefs.

"They've become repetitive and tiresome. They've become jokes in themselves. Think of the advertising FCUK and the cookery programme *The F Word*. Ha ha."

However, the 76-year-old defends the use of

By **Nataliechalk**

bad language in certain circumstances and described BBC plans to clamp down on bad language in the wake of the phone scandal involving Jonathan Ross and Andrew Sachs as "far too sweeping a diktat".

She said: "Casual swearing is lazy, ugly - a glib way to let off steam on the football pitch or in the kitchen. But when it's part of a tense, gritty drama, then that's a proper use of the language and should be allowed."

Of plans to bleep out bad language post-watershed, she said: "Let grown-ups be responsible - get the kids to bed."



