

asl taboo expressions

asl taboo expressions are an intriguing and often misunderstood aspect of American Sign Language culture. While spoken languages have their own sets of taboo words and gestures, ASL possesses unique expressions considered inappropriate, offensive, or sensitive within Deaf communities. This article provides an in-depth exploration of what constitutes ASL taboo expressions, their social and cultural implications, and how their use differs from spoken language taboos. Readers will learn about the types of taboo signs, the boundaries of politeness, and the impact of context on meaning. By understanding asl taboo expressions, both Deaf and hearing individuals can communicate more respectfully and effectively, fostering inclusivity and awareness. The following sections cover the origins and nature of ASL taboo signs, cultural perspectives, social consequences, and recommendations for navigating sensitive language in ASL. Read on for a comprehensive, SEO-optimized guide designed for learners, interpreters, and anyone interested in the linguistic richness of American Sign Language.

- Understanding ASL Taboo Expressions
- Types of Taboo Signs in ASL
- Cultural Perspectives on ASL Taboo Language
- Social Consequences and Sensitivities
- Context and Nuance in ASL Taboo Usage
- Navigating Taboo Expressions Responsibly

Understanding ASL Taboo Expressions

ASL taboo expressions refer to specific signs, gestures, or language choices in American Sign Language that are deemed offensive, inappropriate, or culturally sensitive within the Deaf and signing communities. These taboo signs can range from direct insults and curse words to gestures that carry strong sexual or derogatory connotations. Just as spoken languages have their own set of profanities and socially unacceptable phrases, ASL taboo expressions serve as boundaries for respectful and polite communication. Understanding these signs is essential for interpreters, learners, and anyone interacting with Deaf individuals, as misuse can lead to misunderstandings, offense, or damaged relationships. The study of ASL taboo expressions reveals the richness and complexity of sign language, including how visual-spatial language encodes meaning differently than spoken words.

Types of Taboo Signs in ASL

Profanity and Vulgarity in ASL

American Sign Language includes a range of signs that are considered profane or vulgar. These expressions often mirror the intensity and directness of spoken curse words but take on unique forms through handshapes, facial expressions, and movement. ASL profanity frequently involves signs for bodily functions, sexual acts, or strong insults. The cultural weight of these signs varies, but many are universally recognized as inappropriate in formal or public settings.

- Sexual gestures and signs
- Bodily function references
- Insults or slurs
- Obscene handshapes and movements

Derogatory and Offensive Signs

Some ASL taboo expressions are direct insults targeting personal characteristics, ethnicity, gender, or disabilities. These signs are highly offensive and can carry lasting social consequences. Unlike spoken language, the visual nature of ASL makes these expressions immediately noticeable, often accompanied by strong facial expressions that amplify meaning.

Context-Specific Taboo Gestures

Certain signs in ASL are not inherently taboo but become offensive depending on context. For example, using a sign with an exaggerated or aggressive movement may alter its meaning, making it inappropriate. Additionally, some signs have double meanings, and their interpretation depends on the situation and the relationship between communicators.

Cultural Perspectives on ASL Taboo Language

Origins of Taboo Signs in Deaf Culture

The development of taboo expressions in ASL is deeply rooted in Deaf culture and history. Some signs evolved as direct translations from English profanity, while others emerged organically within Deaf communities. The use and perception of these signs can differ between regions, generations, and social groups.

Comparing ASL Taboos to Spoken Language

While there are similarities between ASL and spoken language taboos, there are also important differences. In ASL, the physicality and visibility of signing intensify the impact of taboo expressions.

The absence of vocal tone means that facial expressions and body language play a critical role in conveying intent and emotion, making taboo signs potentially more striking and memorable.

Social Consequences and Sensitivities

Impact on Communication and Relationships

Using ASL taboo expressions can have significant consequences for interpersonal relationships and social standing. Offending someone in the Deaf community may lead to ostracism or damaged trust, particularly in formal or professional settings. The social sensitivity surrounding certain signs makes it essential for signers to understand cultural norms and boundaries.

Taboo Signs in Public and Private Settings

The appropriateness of using taboo signs varies depending on the setting. In private conversations among close friends, certain expressions may be used jokingly or as terms of endearment. However, in public, academic, or professional environments, the use of such signs is considered highly inappropriate and disrespectful.

Context and Nuance in ASL Taboo Usage

Role of Facial Expressions and Non-Manual Signals

Facial expressions and non-manual signals are integral to ASL communication, especially in expressing taboo language. A neutral sign can become offensive when paired with aggressive or exaggerated facial cues. Understanding these nuances is crucial for interpreting intent and preventing miscommunication.

Regional and Generational Differences

Taboo expressions in ASL are not static; they evolve over time and differ across regions. Younger signers may use slang or taboo signs differently than older generations, and attitudes towards certain expressions can shift with cultural change. It's important to stay informed about current norms and sensitivities.

Navigating Taboo Expressions Responsibly

Recommendations for Learners and Interpreters

For those learning ASL or working as interpreters, it is essential to approach taboo expressions with caution and respect. Avoid using or interpreting taboo signs unless absolutely necessary, and always

consider the audience, context, and cultural norms. Responsible use of language fosters trust and prevents unintended offense.

1. Study the cultural background of ASL taboo expressions.
2. Learn the signs in a controlled, educational environment.
3. Consult with native signers for appropriate usage.
4. Avoid using taboo signs in professional or public settings.
5. Respect the sensitivities of different communities and individuals.

Promoting Respectful Communication

Awareness and education about ASL taboo expressions contribute to more respectful and inclusive communication. By understanding the boundaries of polite language and the cultural significance of certain signs, signers can navigate sensitive topics with empathy and professionalism.

Questions and Answers about asl taboo expressions

Q: What are asl taboo expressions?

A: ASL taboo expressions are signs, gestures, or language choices in American Sign Language considered offensive, inappropriate, or sensitive within Deaf communities, including profanity, insults, and culturally taboo gestures.

Q: Are asl taboo expressions the same in all regions?

A: No, the meaning and use of asl taboo expressions can differ by region, age group, and cultural background, reflecting the diversity within Deaf communities.

Q: How do facial expressions affect asl taboo signs?

A: Facial expressions and non-manual signals amplify the meaning of taboo signs in ASL, making them more intense or offensive depending on the signer's emotion and intent.

Q: Can asl taboo expressions be used jokingly?

A: In private or informal settings among close friends, some taboo signs may be used jokingly, but context and relationships are crucial to avoid unintended offense.

Q: What should interpreters do when encountering asl taboo signs?

A: Interpreters should approach taboo expressions with caution, only interpret them when contextually necessary, and respect the sensitivities of the audience and environment.

Q: Are there asl signs that are only taboo in certain contexts?

A: Yes, some signs are not inherently offensive but become taboo based on context, movement, or accompanying facial expressions.

Q: How can learners avoid misuse of asl taboo expressions?

A: Learners should study the cultural background, consult native signers, and refrain from using taboo signs in formal or public settings to avoid miscommunication.

Q: Why is it important to understand asl taboo expressions?

A: Understanding asl taboo expressions helps foster respectful communication, prevent misunderstandings, and maintain positive relationships within Deaf communities.

Q: Do asl taboo expressions change over time?

A: Yes, the perception and use of asl taboo expressions evolve with cultural changes, generational differences, and regional influences.

Q: Are there resources for learning about asl taboo signs responsibly?

A: Educational programs and consultations with native signers provide safe environments to learn about asl taboo expressions and appropriate usage.

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asl taboo expressions: Taboo in Sign Languages Donna Jo Napoli, Jami Fisher, Gene Mirus, 2023-10-26 Taboo topics in deaf communities include the usual ones found in spoken languages, as

well as ones particular to deaf experiences, both in how deaf people relate to hearing people and how deaf people interact with other deaf people. Attention to these topics can help linguists understand better the consequences of field method choices and lead them to adopt better ones. Taboo expressions in American Sign Language are innovative regarding the linguistic structures they play with. This creativity is evident across the grammar in non-taboo expressions, but seems to revel in profane ones. When it comes to the syntax, however, certain types of structures occur in taboo expressions that are all but absent elsewhere, showing grammatical possibilities that might have gone unnoticed without attention to taboo. Taboo expressions are innovative, as well, in how they respond to changing culture, where lexical items that are incoherent with community sensibilities are 'corrected'.

asl taboo expressions: The Oxford Handbook of Taboo Words and Language Keith Allan, 2019 This volume brings together experts from a wide range of disciplines to define and describe taboo words and language and to investigate the reasons and beliefs behind them. It examines topics such as impoliteness, swearing, censorship, taboo in deaf communities, translation of tabooed words, and the use of taboo in banter and comedy.

asl taboo expressions: Silence as Language Michal Ephratt, 2022-08-25 Verbal silence touches on every possible aspect of daily life. This book provides a full linguistic analysis of the role of silence in language, exploring perspectives from semantics, semiotics, pragmatics, phonetics, syntax, grammar and poetics, and taking into account a range of spoken and written contexts. The author argues that silence is just as communicative in language as speech, as it results from the deliberate choice of the speaker, and serves functions such as informing, conveying emotion, signalling turn switching, and activating the addresser. Verbal silence is used, alongside speech, to serve linguistic functions in all areas of life, as well as being employed in a wide variety of written texts. The forms and functions of silence are explained, detailed and illustrated with examples taken from both written texts and real-life interactions. Engaging and comprehensive, this book is essential reading for anyone interested in this fascinating linguistic phenomenon.

asl taboo expressions: The Routledge Handbook of Translation and Pragmatics Rebecca Tipton, Louisa Desilla, 2019-05-22 The Routledge Handbook of Translation and Pragmatics provides an overview of key concepts and theory in pragmatics, charts developments in the disciplinary relationship between translation studies and pragmatics, and showcases applications of pragmatics-inspired research in a wide range of translation, spoken and signed language interpreting activities. Bringing together 22 authoritative chapters by leading scholars, this reference work is divided into three sections: Influences and Intersections, Methodological Issues, and Applications. Contributions focus on features of linguistic pragmatics and their analysis in authentic and experimental data relating to a wide range of translation and interpreting activities, including: news, scientific, literary and audiovisual translation, translation in online social media, healthcare interpreting and audio description for the theatre. It also encompasses contributions on issues beyond the level of the text that include the study of interpersonal relationships in practitioner networks and the development of pragmatic competence in interpreter training. Each chapter includes many practical illustrative examples and a list of recommended reading. Fundamental reading for students and academics in translation and interpreting studies, this is also an essential resource for those working in the related fields of linguistics, communication and intercultural studies.

asl taboo expressions: *We Did What?!* Timothy B. Jay, 2016-11-28 This provocative guide profiles behaviors considered shocking throughout American history, revealing the extent of changing social mores and cultural perceptions of appropriate conduct since the Colonial period. The notion of what is offensive has evolved over time. But what factors dictate decorum and why does it change? This fascinating work delves into the history of inappropriate behavior in the United States, providing an in-depth look at what has been considered improper conduct throughout American history—and how it came to be deemed as such. The detailed narrative considers the impact of religion, sexuality, popular culture, technology, and politics on social graces, and it

features more than 150 entries on topics considered taboo in American cultural history. Organized alphabetically, topics include abortion, body odors, cannibalism, and voyeurism as well as modern-day examples like dumpster diving, breast feeding in public, and trolling. Each entry defines the behavior in question, provides an historical outline of the offensive behavior, and discusses its current status in American culture. Throughout the book, clear connections between offenses and social values illustrate the symbiotic relationship between popular opinion and acceptable behaviors of the time.

asl taboo expressions: The Oxford Handbook of Morphological Theory Jenny Audring, Francesca Masini, 2018-12-06 This volume is the first handbook devoted entirely to the multitude of frameworks adopted in the field of morphology, including Minimalism, Optimality Theory, Network Morphology, Cognitive Grammar, and Canonical Typology. Following an introduction from the editors, the first part of the volume offers critical discussions of the main theoretical issues within morphology, both in word formation and in inflection, as well as providing a short history of morphological theory. In the core part of the handbook, part II, each theory is introduced by an expert in the field, who guides the reader through its principles and technicalities, its advantages and disadvantages, and its points of agreement and disagreement with alternative theories. Chapters in part III explore the bigger picture, connecting morphological theory to other subdisciplines of linguistics, such as diachronic change, language acquisition, psycholinguistics, and sign language theory. The handbook is intended as a guide for morphologists from all theoretical backgrounds who want to learn more about frameworks other than their own, as well as for linguists in related subfields looking for theoretical connections with the field of morphology.

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asl taboo expressions: Deaf People and Society Irene W. Leigh, Jean F. Andrews, Cara A. Miller, Ju-Lee A. Wolsey, 2022-12-16 Deaf People and Society is an authoritative text that emphasizes the complexities of being D/deaf, DeafBlind, Deaf-Disabled, or hard of hearing, drawing on perspectives from psychology, education, and sociology. This book also explores how the lives of these individuals are impacted by decisions made by professionals in clinics, schools, or other settings. This new edition offers insights on areas critical to Deaf Studies and Disability Studies, with particular emphasis on multiculturalism and multilingualism, as well as diversity, equity, and inclusion. Accessibly written, the chapters include objectives and suggested further reading that provides valuable leads and context. Additionally, these chapters have been thoroughly revised and incorporate a range of relevant topics including etiologies of deafness; cognition and communication; bilingual, bimodal, and monolingual approaches to language learning; childhood psychological issues; psychological and sociological viewpoints of deaf adults; the criminal justice system and deaf people; psychodynamics of interaction between deaf and hearing people; and future trends. The book also includes case studies covering hearing children of deaf adults, a young deaf adult with mental illness, and more. Written by a seasoned D/deaf/hard of hearing and hearing bilingual team, this unique text continues to be the go-to resource for students and future professionals interested in working with D/deaf, DeafBlind, and hard-of-hearing persons. Its contents will resonate with anyone interested in serving and enhancing their knowledge of their lived experiences of D/deaf, DeafBlind, Deaf-Disabled, and hard-of-hearing people and communities.

asl taboo expressions: Advances in Experimental Social Psychology Bertram Gawronski,

2023-02-24 The Advances in Experimental Social Psychology series is the premier outlet for reviews of mature, high-impact research programs in social psychology. Contributions to the series provide defining pieces of established research programs, reviewing and integrating thematically related findings by individual scholars or research groups. Topics discussed in Volume 67 include Moral Inconsistency, Reasoning Errors, Identity Restoration and Reconciliation, Effects of Threats to Belonging, and Affect Contagion. - Provides one of the most cited series in the field of experimental social psychology - Contains contributions of major empirical and theoretical interest - Represents the best and brightest in new research, theory and practice in social psychology

asl taboo expressions: *On looking into words (and beyond)* Claire Bower, Laurence Horn, Raffaella Zanuttini, 2017-05-18 While linguistic theory is in continual flux as progress is made in our ability to understand the structure and function of language, one constant has always been the central role of the word. *On looking into words* is a wide-ranging volume spanning current research into word-based morphology, morphosyntax, the phonology-morphology interface, and related areas of theoretical and empirical linguistics. The 26 papers that constitute this volume extend morphological and grammatical theory to signed as well as spoken language, to diachronic as well as synchronic evidence, and to birdsong as well as human language.

asl taboo expressions: *Offensive Language* Jim O'Driscoll, 2020-11-12 Why do people take offence at things that are said? What is it exactly about an offending utterance which causes this negative reaction? How well motivated is the response to the offence? *Offensive Language* addresses these questions by applying an array of concepts from linguistic pragmatics and sociolinguistics to a wide range of examples, from TV to Twitter and from Mel Gibson to Donald Trump. Establishing a sharp distinction between potential offence and actual offence, Jim O'Driscoll then examines a series of case studies where offence has been caused, assessing the nature and degree of both the offence and the documented response to it. Through close linguistic analysis, this book explores the fine line between free speech and criminal activity, searching for a principled way to distinguish the merely embarrassing from the reprehensible and the censurable. In this way, a new approach to offensive language emerges, involving both how we study it and how it might be handled in public life.

asl taboo expressions: *What the F* Benjamin K. Bergen, 2016-09-13 It may be starred, beeped, and censored -- yet profanity is so appealing that we can't stop using it. In the funniest, clearest study to date, Benjamin Bergen explains why, and what that tells us about our language and brains. Nearly everyone swears-whether it's over a few too many drinks, in reaction to a stubbed toe, or in flagrante delicto. And yet, we sit idly by as words are banned from television and censored in books. We insist that people excise profanity from their vocabularies and we punish children for yelling the very same dirty words that we'll mutter in relief seconds after they fall asleep. Swearing, it seems, is an intimate part of us that we have decided to selectively deny. That's a damn shame. Swearing is useful. It can be funny, cathartic, or emotionally arousing. As linguist and cognitive scientist Benjamin K. Bergen shows us, it also opens a new window onto how our brains process language and why languages vary around the world and over time. In this groundbreaking yet ebullient romp through the linguistic muck, Bergen answers intriguing questions: How can patients left otherwise speechless after a stroke still shout Goddamn! when they get upset? When did a cock grow to be more than merely a rooster? Why is crap vulgar when poo is just childish? Do slurs make you treat people differently? Why is the first word that Samoan children say not mommy but eat shit? And why do we extend a middle finger to flip someone the bird? Smart as hell and funny as fuck, *What the F* is mandatory reading for anyone who wants to know how and why we swear.

asl taboo expressions: *A Bibliography of Sign Languages, 2008-2017*, 2018-07-17 This concise bibliography on Sign Languages was compiled on the occasion of the 20th International Congress of Linguists in Cape Town, South Africa, July 2018. The selection of titles is drawn from the Linguistic Bibliography and gives an overview of scholarship on Sign language over the past 10 years. The introduction is by Myriam Vermeerbergen (KU Leuven & Stellenbosch University) and Anna-Lena Nilsson (NTNU - Norwegian University of Science and Technology) discusses the most recent developments in the field. The Linguistic Bibliography is compiled under the editorial

management of Eline van der Veken, René Genis and Anne Aarssen in Leiden, The Netherlands. Linguistic Bibliography Online is the most comprehensive bibliography for scholarship on languages and theoretical linguistics available. Updated monthly with a total of more than 20,000 records annually, it enables users to trace recent publications and provides overviews of older material. For more information on Linguistic Bibliography and Linguistic Bibliography Online, please visit brill.com/lbo and linguisticbibliography.com. The e-book version of this bibliography is available in Open Access on brill.com.

asl taboo expressions: *The Emotional Antecedents and Consequences of Social Rejection* Richard Pond, John Terrizzi, Shanmukh V. Kamble, 2023-10-24 Humans are social animals. Our need to belong is a cross-cultural human universal. When our desire for social connection is frustrated, we can suffer from a host of harmful psychological and physiological consequences. As a result, social rejection can be an extremely aversive experience that can be strategically employed to inflict harm/punishment (e.g., relational aggression). Social rejection has both emotional antecedents and consequences. That is, social rejection can be elicited by emotions (e.g., anger, disgust, etc.) within the rejecter and can evoke emotional reactions within the rejected (e.g., anger, sadness, etc.). Thus, the role that emotion plays in social rejection is not simple. It is multifaceted. Negative emotions such as anger and disgust can provoke social rejection and, reciprocally, they can evoke negative emotions in those who are socially rejected. Positive emotions, however, may act as a buffer or shield that insulates us from the deleterious consequences of rejection.

asl taboo expressions: *Interactive Learning Technology for the Deaf* Ben A. G. Elsendoorn, Frans Coninx, Annelies Brekelmans, 1993 This book is the final result of the NATO Advanced Research Workshop 'Interactive Learning Technology for the Deaf', which was held between June 4 -7, 1991, in Sint-Michielsgestel, the Netherlands. The scientific organizing committee consisted of Frans Coninx (director), Ben Elsendoorn, Richard Foulds and Christopher Jones. The idea for this workshop originated from the observation that interactive learning technology seemed to be very promising in that it might help improve education of deaf children, but also from the given fact that general achievements in helping deaf children to acquire language could still be improved. Before this workshop, results on research in the areas of (sign) language acquisition and education of deaf children, improvement of speech production and listening skills, as well as the use of interactive learning technology, could be gathered in journals and at congresses. However, no meeting was ever organised where experts from these different fields were present at the same time. The aim of the workshop was to bring together experts in the fields of deaf education as well as interactive learning technology, to construct a multi disciplinary platform where ideas and research results could be discussed from various angles and which would serve as a jumping-board for future collaboration. We thought it essential that specialists from various directions in deaf education -i.e. bilingual, oral, and Total Communication (TC) approaches -were present, to contribute to the multi-disciplinary character of the workshop.

asl taboo expressions: *Italian Sign Language from a Cognitive and Socio-semiotic Perspective* Virginia Volterra, Maria Roccaforte, Alessio Di Renzo, Sabina Fontana, 2022-09-01 This volume reveals new insights on the faculty of language. By proposing a new approach in the analysis and description of Italian Sign Language (LIS), that can be extended also to other sign languages, this book also enlightens some aspects of spoken languages, which were often overlooked in the past and only recently have been brought to the fore and described. First, the study of face-to-face communication leads to a revision of the traditional dichotomy between linguistic and enacted, to develop a new approach to embodied language (Kendon, 2004). Second, all structures of language take on a sociolinguistic and pragmatic meaning, as proposed by cognitive semantics, which considers it impossible to trace a separation between purely linguistic and extralinguistic knowledge. Finally, if speech from the point of view of its materiality is variable, fragile, and non-segmentable (i.e. not systematically discrete), also signs are not always segmentable into discrete, invariable and meaningless units. This then calls into question some of the properties traditionally associated with human languages in general, notably that of 'duality of patterning'.

These are only some of the main issues you will find in this volume that has no parallel both in sign and in spoken languages linguistic research.

asl taboo expressions: Introducing Sociolinguistics Rajend Mesthrie, 2009-05-29

Sociolinguistics is one of the central branches of modern linguistics and deals with the place of language in human societies. This second edition of *Introducing Sociolinguistics* expertly synthesises the main approaches to the subject. The book covers areas such as multilingualism, code-choice, language variation, dialectology, interactional studies, gender, language contact, language and inequality, and language and power. At the same time it provides an integrated perspective on these themes by examining sociological theories of human interaction. In this regard power and inequality are particularly significant. The book also contains two chapters on the applications of sociolinguistics (in education and in language policy and planning) and a concluding chapter on the sociolinguistics of sign language. New topics covered include speaking style and stylisation, while current debates in areas like creolisation, globalisation and language death, language planning, and gender are reflected. Written collaboratively by teachers and scholars with first hand experience of sociolinguistic developments on four continents, this book provides the broadest introduction currently available to the central topics in sociolinguistics. Features: * Provides a solid foundation in all aspects of sociolinguistics and explores important themes such as power and inequality, sign language, gender and the internet * Well illustrated with maps, diagrams, inset boxes, drawings and cartoons * Accessibly written with the beginner in mind * Uses numerous examples from multilingual settings * Explains basic concepts, supported by a glossary * Further Reading lists, a full bibliography, and a section on 'next steps' provide valuable guidance.

asl taboo expressions: Multimodal Im/politeness Andreas H. Jucker, Iris Hübscher, Lucien

Brown, 2023-02-21 Politeness and impoliteness are not just expressed by words. People communicate polite and impolite attitudes towards each other through their intonation, tone of voice, their facial expressions, their gestures, the positioning of their bodies towards each other, and so on. This volume brings together eleven empirical studies that investigate these various modalities of im/politeness across signed, spoken and written languages, plus a detailed introductory chapter that establishes a framework for the multimodal investigation of im/politeness. The papers cover a range of languages and cultures, including Swiss German Sign Language, Catalan Sign Language, English (as a native language and as a lingua franca), Korean, Catalan, Persian, Japanese and Spanish. Using a range of data sources and state-of-the art methodologies, the papers reveal that these multimodal features are essential aspects of im/politeness across different languages, cultures and modes of interaction. Put together, the findings from these studies lay the groundwork for a new understanding of im/politeness which is fundamentally multimodal.

asl taboo expressions: Language and Deafness Peter V. Paul, 2009 The Fourth Edition of

Language and Deafness covers language and literacy development from preschool through adolescence. Content includes the basics of language development and the relationship between language and cognition. Oral communication methods and English-like signing systems are also covered, along with linguistics/sociolinguistics of American Sign Language. Multicultural aspects, including bilingualism and second-language learning, are covered in detail.

asl taboo expressions: Cursing in America Timothy Jay, 1992 Who uses dirty words? And

when? How is the bad language we use reflected in the movies, in the courts, and elsewhere? With *Cursing in America*, psychologist Timothy Jay presents the first serious and extensive examination of American profanity from a psycholinguistic-contextual point of view. An amazing amount of factual data gathered through several field studies and numerous laboratory-based experiments reveals the relationship between cursing and language acquisition, anger expression, gender stereotypes and offensiveness. Sexual harassment, censorship, language content of film, obscene phone calls and cursing at public schools are some of the topics which are analyzed and related to the data.

Word-by-word tables demonstrate the influence that factors such as frequency of occurrence, degree of offensiveness, and gender and age of the speaker have on obscene language usage in America today.

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