

**Ministry Of Education And Science Of Ukraine  
Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv  
Educational and Scientific Institute of Philology  
Department of English Philology and Intercultural Communication**

**Bachelor's Thesis**

**MINCED OATHS ON AMERICAN TV**

**Solomiia Stupak,**

4th year student of the Education Program

‘English Studies and Translation  
and Two Western European Languages’

Field of science: 03 “Humanities”

Specialty: 035 “Philology”

Supervised by:

**Anna Karaban, PhD**

«Допущено до захисту»

Протокол засідання кафедри англійської філології

та міжкультурної комунікації

Протокол № 11 від 26.05.2025

Зав. кафедри \_\_\_\_\_ д. філол. н., проф. Алла БЄЛОВА

KYIV – 2025

## ABSTRACT

This bachelor's thesis focuses on the study of minced oaths in American television, examining their linguistic function as euphemistic substitutes for profane language, allowing speakers to express strong emotions without violating social norms or legal regulations. The study **aims** to analyze the frequency, distribution, and thematic categorization of minced oaths across decades, using corpus linguistics tools and TV transcripts from the 1950s to 2018.

The main **objectives** of the study included defining key concepts such as expletives, euphemisms, and minced oaths, investigating their communicative roles, and examining the legal framework surrounding language use on television, particularly the role of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in regulating broadcast content. The research further focused on compiling a comprehensive list of minced oaths from authoritative linguistic sources, categorizing them thematically, and analyzing their frequency and distribution within the TV Corpus.

The **findings** of the study demonstrate that minced oaths have evolved significantly over time, with religious-themed minced oaths dominating early television dialogue. In contrast, expressions related to taboo bodily functions saw a dramatic rise in the 2000s and 2010s. The study highlights the shift in cultural attitudes towards profanity and the growing use of euphemisms as a way to express strong emotions and convey intensity, while still conforming to social expectations and maintaining a certain level of decorum in media language.

The thesis contributes to the understanding of how language adapts to cultural sensitivities, media regulations, and societal changes, offering insights into the role of minced oaths as both linguistic tools and cultural markers within American television discourse.

**Key words:** minced oath, euphemism, expletive, American television, censorship, corpus linguistics, language regulation, language policy.

## АНОТАЦІЯ

Ця бакалаврська робота присвячена дослідженню евфемістичного маскуванню вульгаризмів та профанної лексики на американському телебаченні, зокрема їхній мовній, культурній та регуляторній значущості. Дослідження розглядає, як ці евфемізми функціонують як замітники ненормативної лексики, що дозволяє мовцям виражати сильні емоції, не порушуючи соціальних норм або правових регулювань. **Метою** дослідження є аналіз частоти, розподілу та тематичної категоризації таких евфемізмів за десятиліттями з використанням інструментів корпусної лінгвістики та транскриптів телевізійних передач з 1950-х до 2018 року.

Основними **завданнями** дослідження були визначення ключових понять, таких як експресиви, евфемізми та евфемістичне маскуванню вульгаризмів та профанної лексики, вивчення їхніх комунікативних функцій і аналіз правового контексту використання мови на телебаченні, зокрема ролі Федеральної комісії зі зв'язку (FCC) у регулюванні мовного контенту. Дослідження також включало складання повного списку таких евфемізмів з авторитетних лінгвістичних джерел, їх тематичну категоризацію та аналіз частоти і розподілу в корпусі телевізійних передач.

**Результати** дослідження показали, що евфемістичні маскуванню вульгаризмів та профанної лексики еволюціонували з часом, при цьому релігійно орієнтовані евфемізми домінували на ранньому етапі розвитку телевізійного мовлення. Натомість вирази, пов'язані з табуйованими тілесними функціями, зазнали значного зростання в 2000-х і 2010-х роках. Дослідження підкреслює зміни в культурних ставленнях до профанної лексики та зростання використання евфемізмів як способу вираження сильних емоцій та передачі інтенсивності, при цьому зберігаючи відповідність соціальним очікуванням і певний рівень етикету в медіа-мовленні.

Дослідження робить внесок у розуміння того, як мова адаптується до культурних норм, медіа-регулювань та соціальних змін, надаючи нові погляди на роль евфемістичного маскуванню вульгаризмів та профанної лексики як

мовних інструментів і культурних маркерів у дискурсі американського телебачення.

**Ключові слова:** евфемістичне маскування вульгаризмів та профанної лексики, евфемізм, експресив, американське телебачення, цензура, корпусна лінгвістика, мовне регулювання, мовна політика.

## CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	6
1. DEFINITIONS AND DELIMITATIONS FOR THE STUDY OF MINCED OATHS.....	8
1.1. Terminology and Conceptualization of Expletives .....	8
1.1.1. Key Terms and Definitions in the Field of Profanity .....	8
1.1.2 Functions of Expletives in Communication .....	12
1.2 Terminology and Conceptualization of Euphemisms.....	14
1.3 Taboo Deformation and the Place of Minced Oaths.....	16
1.4 Corpora and Corpus Techniques.....	19
1.4.1 Corpus Linguistics .....	19
1.4.2 TV Corpus Overview .....	22
2. CATEGORIZATION OF MINCED OATHS AND THEIR PATTERNS OF USE ON AMERICAN TV .....	26
2.1 Censorship and Regulations of American TV .....	26
2.2 Data Collection .....	27
2.3 Query Parameters .....	32
2.4 Thematic Categorization of Minced Oaths .....	33
2.5 Frequency and Distribution of Minced Oaths Across Decades.....	36
2.5.1 Religious-themed Minced Oaths .....	36
2.5.2 Taboo Bodily Functions Minced Oaths .....	43
CONCLUSION .....	50
SUMMARY .....	52
REFERENCES .....	54
APPENDIX 1 .....	58

## INTRODUCTION

Language is a vital tool for human communication, shaping how people share ideas, express emotions, and interact socially. Among its many facets, the use of taboo language and euphemisms offers insight into cultural values and social norms. This study focuses on minced oaths that speakers use to express strong emotions without offending social conventions. Minced oaths are especially prominent in American television, where language is heavily regulated to balance expressive freedom and broadcast standards.

Television as a medium plays a significant role in reflecting and influencing everyday language use. Due to legal restrictions imposed by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) on the use of profane or indecent language, content creators have developed creative strategies to comply with regulations while maintaining realistic and engaging dialogue. Minced oaths serve as one such strategy, allowing speakers to convey intensity or emotion indirectly and politely.

**The relevance of this research** stems from the need to better understand how minced oaths function linguistically and socially within a regulated communication environment. While minced oaths have been studied in linguistic literature, their detailed usage patterns, evolution, and cultural significance in American television have not been comprehensively explored. This study aims to fill that gap by offering an in-depth analysis of minced oaths as linguistic tools shaped by cultural sensitivities, media regulation, and social attitudes.

**The purpose of the study** is to examine the characteristics, functions, and trends in the usage of minced oaths in American television discourse. To achieve this, the following research **objectives** are set:

- to define key concepts such as expletives, euphemisms, and minced oaths;
- to investigate the communicative roles that minced oaths play in language;
- to review the legal and cultural framework regulating language on American TV;
- to compile and categorize minced oaths from authoritative linguistic sources;

- to analyze the frequency and distribution of minced oaths in television transcripts across decades using corpus linguistics tools;
- to interpret thematic patterns and social meanings associated with minced oaths in media language.

**The object of the study** is minced oaths as a linguistic and social phenomenon, while **the subject** is the usage and representation of these expressions in American television dialogue.

This research applies a mixed **methodology**, combining theoretical analysis with empirical methods. It utilizes literature review, content and discourse analysis, and corpus linguistics techniques to examine large-scale linguistic data. This study utilizes both qualitative and quantitative techniques to analyze the TV Corpus. The qualitative analysis will identify and categorize minced oaths, examining their role in informal language use, while the quantitative approach will measure the frequency and distribution of these euphemisms over time. The primary corpus used is the TV Corpus, a vast database of American television transcripts from the 1950s to 2018, supplemented by data extracted from dictionaries, encyclopedias, and reputable online linguistic resources.

**The academic value of the study** lies in its systematic categorization and diachronic analysis of minced oaths, contributing to the understanding of how language adapts to social norms and legal constraints. **Practically**, this research benefits linguists, media analysts, and communication professionals interested in the dynamics of taboo language, euphemisms, and broadcast discourse.

The thesis is **structured** into an introduction, two main chapters that cover theoretical foundations and empirical analysis, followed by a conclusion, references, and an appendix.

# 1. DEFINITIONS AND DELIMITATIONS FOR THE STUDY OF MINCED OATHS

## 1.1. Terminology and Conceptualization of Expletives

### 1.1.1. Key Terms and Definitions in the Field of Profanity

Swearing is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that plays a significant role in language, emotion, and social interaction. As defined by various scholars, swearing involves the use of taboo words and phrases that express strong emotions and attitudes. These utterances often violate social norms and expectations, yet they hold significant communicative power. Ljung [26], Allan and Burrige [1], and Hughes [20] all emphasize different aspects of swearing, including its emotive function, its role in expressing social identity, and the complex interactions between language, taboo, and society.

At its core, swearing uses words that are deemed taboo - words associated with areas such as bodily functions, sexuality, and religious concepts. These words, rather than being used literally, are often employed figuratively, to convey a range of emotions and intensities. Ljung defines swearing as an emotive language that reflects the speaker's feelings, a criterion that is widely accepted across studies. For example, exclamations such as *Damn!* or *Shit!* are not merely referring to the literal concepts of damnation or excrement; they express the speaker's emotional reaction, whether it is anger, frustration, or astonishment. This figurative use is central to understanding how swearing functions within language [26, pp. 22-23].

A key characteristic of swearing is its formulaic nature. Many swear words are learned and repeated in fixed, recognizable forms that speakers use in specific emotional contexts. This repeated use can be seen as part of a broader category of formulaic language, which includes expressions that are memorized and employed in predictable ways [39]. Such expressions, as highlighted by Ljung, are not only emotionally charged but also linguistically constrained, often featuring irregular or abbreviated syntax [26, pp. 74-83]. These irregularities contribute to the emotional impact of swearing, allowing it to bypass standard language structures and

communicate feelings directly and with force [26, p. 22]. The emotive nature of swearing, as discussed by Ljung aligns with Jakobson's theory of language functions, where the emotive function focuses on the speaker's feelings towards the subject of their speech. Swearing, therefore, can be seen as an intense form of emotive expression that transcends grammatical norms to convey raw emotion [21].

Swearing frequently falls into the category of interjections, a part of speech traditionally described as emotionally expressive and syntactically independent. Scholars such as Quirk et al. [34] and Huddleston and Pullum [19] have explored the role of interjections in language, noting their ability to convey strong feelings without being part of a full sentence. These interjections are particularly prominent in swearing, where words like *fuck* or *damn* function as emotional outbursts. Carter and McCarthy extend this understanding by treating interjections as utterances rather than simple word classes. Their work acknowledges that swearing can include short phrases such as *bloody hell* or *oh my God*, which not only serve as interjections but also reflect a cultural evolution in the use of taboo language. By analyzing these phrases, it can be seen how swearing operates in a manner distinct from standard sentence structure, further complicating the conventional understanding of interjections [4].

The categorization of interjections into primary and secondary types, as proposed by Gehweiler, offers further insight into the nuances of swearing. Primary interjections, such as *wow* or *ouch*, are considered standalone exclamations with no other grammatical function [18]. Secondary interjections, however, are words that also exist in other grammatical roles, like *shit* or *fuck*, which serve as both verbs and interjections depending on their context. Gehweiler's categorization includes taboo expletives, which are direct and emotionally charged (e.g., *shit*), moderated expletives, which have softened over time (e.g., *gosh*), and euphemistic expletives, which are used as less offensive substitutes (e.g., *heck*) [18, p. 71]. These categories allow us to understand the varied forms that swearing can take, from highly offensive to socially acceptable, depending on the social context and the speaker's intent.

Swearing's formulaic structure is not only a linguistic feature but also serves a social function. According to Wray, formulaic language allows for rapid and efficient

emotional expression. Swear words like *for fuck's sake* or *bloody hell* are part of established linguistic patterns that enable speakers to react quickly to situations [39]. These patterns, which become ingrained through repeated usage, make swearing an emotionally efficient tool for expression. As Ljung notes, swearing is often used to express emotions such as anger, surprise, or even joy, depending on the context. The specific emotion conveyed can vary, but the overall function of swearing remains constant: it serves as an outlet for powerful feelings that need to be expressed in an immediate and impactful way [26, p. 22].

Swearing also plays a role in social interactions, as it often marks solidarity within groups and can serve as a tool for social bonding. As Allan and Burrige point out, swearing is not only a form of personal expression but also a linguistic mechanism that helps define group identity. It is especially prevalent in informal contexts, where it can serve as a sign of belonging and mutual understanding. However, the use of swear words is not without its social risks. Tabooed language often carries a social stigma, which is why speakers may opt for euphemisms or minced oaths in public or formal settings. Terms like *gosh* or *heck* allow speakers to convey strong emotions while adhering to social norms. These substitutes, which bear a phonetic resemblance to their more offensive counterparts, reflect the ongoing tension between emotional expression and social acceptability [1, p. 41].

In addition to its social and emotional functions, swearing interacts with other linguistic concepts, such as jargon, slang, and insult. Allan and Burrige suggest that swearing overlaps with these forms of language, often being used in a highly colloquial and informal manner. While jargon serves specific communicative functions within particular groups, swearing operates in a similar way, signaling group membership and social affiliation. Insults, which often rely on swearing, target individuals by using offensive language to undermine their character [1, p. 88]. While swearing is often seen as a violation of social norms, it can also serve to replace more primitive forms of aggression, providing an outlet for anger or frustration without resorting to physical violence .

The study of swearing also touches on broader cultural and legal issues, particularly in relation to obscenity, profanity, and blasphemy. According to Hughes, the term *profanity* originally had religious connotations, referring to language that desecrates or violates sacred concepts. Over time, profanity has come to represent vulgar language more generally, though it still retains its association with irreverence and disrespect. Similarly, obscenity has shifted from a term primarily associated with religious or moral violation to one focused on sexual content and public decency. Blasphemy, on the other hand, continues to be seen as a serious offense in many cultures, particularly when it involves disrespect toward religious figures or beliefs [20, p. 362]. These terms illustrate how the meanings of taboo words evolve over time, reflecting changes in societal values and attitudes toward language and morality.

The relationship between taboo language and society is deeply intertwined with cultural values and social norms. Taboos arise from the need to protect individuals from physical, emotional, and moral harm. Topics like bodily functions, death, and sexuality are often off-limits in polite conversation because they are associated with social discomfort or moral danger. Swearing, with its reliance on tabooed language, provides a way to navigate these sensitive topics, allowing speakers to express powerful emotions while simultaneously negotiating the boundaries of social acceptability. As Allan and Burridge explain, the creation of euphemisms, dysphemisms, and orthophemisms enables speakers to address these topics indirectly, depending on the social context and the severity of the taboo [1, p. 41].

In conclusion, swearing is a linguistic phenomenon that serves multiple functions: emotional, social, and cultural. It is a tool for expressing strong emotions, reinforcing social bonds, and negotiating cultural taboos. Through interjections, profanity, blasphemy, and euphemisms, it adapts to social norms and legal constraints, evolving over time to maintain emotional expression while adhering to social acceptability.

### 1.1.2 Functions of Expletives in Communication

Expletives have multiple roles in communication. While swearing is often seen as a way to express strong emotions like anger or frustration, it actually serves more complex purposes, including practical, emotional, and social functions within speech. These different uses can be grouped into categories such as stand-alone swearing, slot fillers, replacive swearing, and reactive and pragmatic expletive interjections. Based on Ljung's work on swearing in language, this section examines how expletives contribute to everyday conversations, showing that their role goes beyond just releasing emotions to shaping the flow and structure of dialogue [22].

One of the clearest ways expletives are used is as stand-alone expressions. These are complete utterances that do not depend on other parts of a sentence. Some of these stand-alone expletives act as speech acts - like oaths, curses, or unfriendly commands. For example, when someone says *Go to hell!* or *Kiss my ass!*, these expressions are usually directed at others to show anger, rejection, or disrespect. These types of swearing carry strong emotional and social weight and are often used in moments of tension or conflict. Oaths such as *By God!* or *I swear to God!*, which used to have serious religious or legal significance, have now become ways to stress a point or show strong feelings instead [26, p.31].

Besides curses and oaths, expletive interjections like *Shit!* or *Oh my God!* are also common stand-alone expressions. These interjections are often reactive, coming out quickly after something surprising, painful, or shocking happens. Although once thought mainly to be a way to vent frustration or emotion [5, p. 61], these expletive interjections also have other roles, such as showing emotional reactions or emphasizing parts of a conversation. They express emotions like anger, shock, or irritation, and are often seen as the most typical form of swearing because they quickly reveal what a speaker feels [26, p.35].

The second key function of expletives is as slot fillers, where swear words are placed inside larger sentences. These slot fillers perform various roles, such as intensifying adjectives or adverbs. For example, words like *bloody* or *damned* work as intensifiers in phrases like *bloody cold* or *damned quickly*, making the meaning

stronger [26, p.35]. Slot fillers are very flexible, as they can modify not just adjectives or adverbs, but also nouns and even full clauses.

Slot fillers also appear in more complex phrases, like *What the hell do you mean?* or *absobloodylutely*, where the swear word adds emphasis or emotional force. This shows that swearing can be deeply integrated into the way language is structured, helping speakers express stronger feelings and highlight what they want to say naturally.

Another important but less common role is replaceive swearing. Here, swear words take the place of normal words to create emphasis or evoke strong emotions. In some languages, a small group of taboo words can replace many everyday nouns and verbs, changing their meaning depending on the situation. While this might seem to conflict with the idea that swear words don't have fixed literal meanings, their meanings in replaceive swearing depend on how the speaker intends them and the context in which they are used [26, pp. 74-93].

Expletives also function as reactive and pragmatic interjections. Reactive interjections are quick responses to sudden events, such as stubbing a toe or dropping something. These expressions often help the speaker release emotional tension caused by the event. For example, *Shit!* or *Ouch!* are immediate reactions to pain or surprise. These interjections act as a way for speakers to handle discomfort or irritation in a socially accepted way [26, p.74].

Pragmatic expletive interjections serve as pragmatic markers in conversation. Pragmatic markers are words or expressions that do not add to the main meaning of a sentence but help guide or organize the flow of talk. Examples include *Oh bloody hell!* or *Cor!* which show the speaker's feelings or attitude toward what they are saying. These markers also express the speaker's view on the truth or certainty of a statement [3, p. 33]. Pragmatic markers can have several roles at once, such as showing emotions, structuring talk, or encouraging interaction. They are especially important in informal speech and help shape the relationship between speakers. While reactive interjections mostly respond to external events, pragmatic expletive interjections reflect more

complex speaker attitudes, helping emphasize ideas or manage the flow of conversation.

In conclusion, expletives serve multiple functions beyond emotional outbursts. They express strong emotions, emphasize meaning, and help manage the flow of conversation. Stand-alone swearing, such as curses and interjections, allows for immediate emotional expression. Slot fillers intensify meaning in sentences, while replaceive swearing offers creative emphasis. Reactive and pragmatic interjections enable speakers to manage emotional responses and guide the conversation. Therefore, swearing is not just about emotion but also an essential tool for communication, adding depth and structure to everyday speech.

## **1.2 Terminology and Conceptualization of Euphemisms**

Euphemisms are generally understood as words or phrases that substitute for expressions deemed socially dispreferred, taboo, or offensive. According to Allan and Burrige, three key categories can be distinguished: dysphemism, orthophemism, and euphemism [1]. Dysphemism denotes language that is intentionally offensive or derogatory and serves as the opposite of euphemism. It is often tabooed due to its social offensiveness and is motivated by emotions such as hatred, contempt, or frustration. Speakers use dysphemisms to insult, humiliate, or disparage others, frequently reflecting in-group hostility or social conflict. This type of language includes swear words, curses, and name-calling, all designed to wound or degrade, and it is typically characterized by strong negative connotations [1, pp.31-32].

In contrast, orthophemism represents the neutral, literal, and typically more formal term that refers to a concept without emotional or social connotation. For example, the word *faeces* functions as an orthophemism since it is a straightforward, clinical term free from the social coloring associated with euphemistic or dysphemistic alternatives. Euphemisms, by comparison, are milder, more indirect, or more polite expressions employed to avoid embarrassment or offense. They often arise from social imperatives to maintain face (the public self-image of individuals in social interactions) and thus function as strategies of politeness. Euphemistic expressions tend to be more

colloquial and figurative than orthophemisms and serve to soften references to unpleasant or taboo topics [1, pp. 31-32].

The notion of face is central to the use of euphemisms. This sociolinguistic concept refers to individuals' desire to preserve a positive social image and to avoid embarrassment both for themselves and for their interlocutors. By employing euphemisms, speakers protect both their own and their hearers' face, thus promoting respectful and harmonious communication [1, p. 32]. Ljung further develops this perspective by discussing minced oaths, a type of euphemism involving the alteration of taboo words through sound substitution or nonsense equivalents, such as replacing *God* with *Gosh* or *Damn* with *Darn*. This process exemplifies how speakers balance the need to express strong emotion with social constraints on language use [26, p. 11].

Hughes adds that euphemisms are deliberate, socially comfortable ways of referring to taboo, embarrassing, or unpleasant subjects. This process is ongoing and deeply embedded in cultural and psychological frameworks, as seen in the ancient belief that directly naming certain things can invoke harm. The Greek etymology of the term euphemism - literally meaning "to speak well" - reflects the intention to describe situations more gently or indirectly to avoid offense. Euphemism thus fulfills a universal human function, varying in form and degree across cultures but always connected to social sensitivities and politeness [20, p. 153].

Euphemisms also serve important social and pragmatic functions. Allan and Burridge emphasize that verbal taboos, enforced by social conventions, help maintain social cohesion by censoring blunt mentions of topics that might cause danger, distress, or offense [1]. The primary social role of euphemisms is face-saving: they enable speakers to navigate delicate topics while protecting both their own and others' social self-image [10]. Since people are seldom free to express thoughts in the most direct or explicit terms, euphemisms offer strategies to manage social tensions and allow sensitive subjects to be discussed with tact and respect [1, pp. 110-111].

In pragmatic terms, euphemisms help avoid conflict, soften negative messages, and conform to cultural expectations about politeness. Political correctness, a recent development in euphemistic language, uses neutral or positive alternatives to reduce

stigma and promote inclusivity, although it can sometimes take on ideological or confrontational characteristics. The use and reception of politically correct language depend heavily on social context, as what is acceptable in one situation may be objectionable in another [1, pp. 110-111].

Additionally, the desire for linguistic purity reflects a widespread social impulse to regulate and “cleanse” language from perceived impurities such as vulgarity, slang, or foreign influences. This linguistic purism is enforced not only by language professionals like editors and lexicographers but also by ordinary speakers who police language use according to social norms. These processes reinforce euphemistic avoidance and contribute to the ongoing evolution of language taboos [1, p. 124].

In conclusion, euphemisms are key tools in language, helping speakers navigate sensitive or taboo topics in a socially acceptable manner. They soften potentially offensive terms, protect both the speaker’s and listener’s social image, and maintain politeness in communication. By replacing harsh or direct language with milder alternatives, euphemisms fulfill a social function, balancing emotional expression with societal norms. The evolution of euphemisms reflects cultural changes, including shifts in attitudes toward politeness, sensitivity, and political correctness.

### **1.3 Taboo Deformation and the Place of Minced Oaths**

Minced oaths are a particular type of euphemism, defined as the deliberate distortion or alteration of taboo words or phrases to render them less offensive. According to Hughes, minced oaths function as a disguise mechanism, whereby an offending term or taboo phrase is “minced” so that it no longer offends the listener [20, pp. 316-318]. Classic examples include expressions like *zounds* (from *God’s wounds*), *’sblood* (*God’s blood*), and more modern forms such as *gosh* for *God* or *heck* for *hell*. These linguistic alterations enable speakers to express strong emotions or attitudes without violating social or religious taboos.

Historically, minced oaths have been present in the English language since at least the sixteenth century. The rise of Puritanical moral standards and legislation against profanity, especially on the stage, stimulated the proliferation of minced oaths

as playwrights and speakers sought to comply with social decorum while retaining expressive force [1, pp. 29-30]. For example, Shakespeare and Ben Jonson's plays were revised to replace explicit blasphemies with minced forms that were socially acceptable to contemporary audiences [20, p. 317]. This historical evolution demonstrates how minced oaths served both as polite substitutes and as subtle linguistic resistances to censorship.

The emergence of minced oaths can be attributed to a blend of spontaneous politeness and external social pressure. Chaucer's medieval use of phrases like *by cokkes bones* instead of *by Godes bones* likely reflected sensitivity to the audience's moral expectations in a largely uncensored society. However, as social taboos around profanity intensified, especially in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, minced oaths became more standardized and widely used as a form of linguistic self-regulation [20, p. 317].

Beyond religious taboos, minced oaths address a range of taboo topics, including excretion and sexual activity. Common contemporary examples include *shoot* for *shit*, *darn* for *damn*, and *heck* for *hell* [20, p. 316]. Some minced oaths have become so altered that their origins are obscure, such as *gor blimey*, derived from *God blind me*.

Ecker emphasizes that minced oaths allow speakers to balance expressiveness with social acceptability, enabling emotional release while avoiding offense. Minced oaths often function as markers of social identity and group cohesion, as exemplified in popular media such as *The Good Place*, where characters substitute explicit profanity with words like *fork* or *shirt*, and *Father Ted*, where *feck* serves as a humorous euphemism [12].

Linguistically, minced oaths are formed through various processes. Hughes identifies rhyme and alliteration as common mechanisms - *bloody* becomes *blooming* or *ruddy*, and *damn* becomes *darn*. Other methods include shortening (*bloody* to *b*), borrowing from other languages (e.g., *poppycock* from Dutch *pappe kak* meaning 'soft dung'), and ironic substitutions [20, pp. 12-19]. These processes maintain enough similarity to the original terms to be understood, while mitigating their offensiveness.

The social function of minced oaths is closely linked to the concept of politeness and face-saving strategies. Allan and Burridge explain that politeness is context-dependent and varies across cultures, communities, and situations [1]. Minced oaths serve to reduce the face-threatening potential of taboo language, allowing speakers to express strong emotions in a socially acceptable way [1, pp. 29-30]. What counts as polite or offensive language changes over time and across social groups, which accounts for the persistence and evolution of minced oaths.

Echols provides historical evidence that the deformation of oaths to avoid taboo is an ancient practice. He notes that in ancient Crete, swearing by gods was forbidden and people substituted oaths by animals or other less sacred entities [11]. This illustrates that the linguistic deformation of taboo language is not limited to modern English but is a widespread human strategy.

Young further discusses the role of minced oaths in literature and media, highlighting their use to navigate censorship and maintain realism or humor. Minced oaths are variations of offensive language that soften or replace taboo words, such as using *fug* for *fuck* in Norman Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead* or *frack* in the TV series *Battlestar Galactica*. These substitutions allow writers and filmmakers to depict rough or vulgar characters while avoiding explicit language, making content more socially acceptable. This technique has been used in works like Somerset Maugham's *The Moon and Sixpence*, where a rough character's dialogue is softened for family reading.[40].

In conclusion, minced oaths have evolved into a significant linguistic tool for navigating societal taboos, allowing speakers to express strong emotions without offending social or cultural norms. These altered forms of swearing have historical roots, with their usage expanding as a response to increasing censorship and moral standards. While initially developed as a way to comply with religious and social decorum, minced oaths have persisted in modern language as both polite substitutes and cultural markers. In contemporary media, they continue to serve as a way to maintain realism and humor without explicit profanity

## **1.4 Corpora and Corpus Techniques**

### **1.4.1 Corpus Linguistics**

Corpus linguistics is a significant methodological approach in the study of language that differs from traditional linguistic methods, which often rely on introspection or small-scale data analysis. Instead, corpus linguistics emphasizes the systematic collection and analysis of large, real-world linguistic datasets, called corpora, to study various linguistic phenomena [28, p. 1]. Unlike traditional approaches that focus on theoretical speculation, corpus linguistics uses empirical data to explore language in use, offering both qualitative and quantitative insights through computational tools such as concordancers and frequency analysis software [23, p. 5].

The defining feature of corpus linguistics is its empirical approach. Instead of forming linguistic theories based on intuition or observations of a limited set of examples, corpus linguistics allows researchers to test linguistic questions using large-scale, real-world language data. This empirical methodology not only refines and validates existing theories but also has the potential to generate new linguistic insights [28, pp. 2-3]. By providing a way to study actual language use at scale, corpus linguistics has reshaped how linguists approach language, moving away from purely theoretical assumptions and toward evidence-based inquiry.

Despite its broad applications, corpus linguistics is not a monolithic field but is instead marked by diversity in its methods, tools, and approaches to data collection and analysis. These methods include qualitative analysis, where researchers identify patterns manually, and quantitative analysis, using statistical tools to examine frequencies, collocations, and distributions. Common tools in corpus linguistics are concordancers for searching word occurrences, frequency analysis software for measuring term frequency, and corpus annotation tools to label linguistic features like parts of speech, syntax, and semantics. A key aspect of corpus linguistics is ensuring that the corpus used is appropriately aligned with the research questions posed. For example, a study on spoken English requires a corpus that represents spoken language, while written language studies need a corpus that reflects written discourse. Researchers must carefully select corpora to suit their specific research needs, as

drawing conclusions from limited or genre-specific data can lead to misleading results [23, p. 7].

Corpora come in different forms depending on their design, purpose, and use. Monitor corpora are continuously updated over time, providing an evolving snapshot of language use. Examples include the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) and the Bank of English (BoE), both of which allow researchers to track linguistic changes and correct any initial data imbalances as the corpus grows [28, p. 71-74]. This dynamic approach ensures that the corpus remains representative of language use as it changes over time.

Another type of corpus is the Web as Corpus, which leverages the vast amount of linguistic data available on the internet. Although the web provides a rich and diverse linguistic resource, it also presents challenges, such as inconsistent genres, varying data quality, and issues with replicability over time. Nevertheless, it is an invaluable tool, particularly when studying low-frequency expressions or phenomena that might be absent in more traditional corpora [28, p. 71-74].

In contrast to monitor corpora, sample or balanced corpora are designed to represent specific language varieties within a given time period. For instance, the Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen (LOB) Corpus provides a snapshot of British English from the 1960s and is often used in diachronic comparisons alongside similar corpora from different time periods, such as the Brown Corpus of American English [23, p. 6]. These corpora are constructed with care to ensure that they represent the range of language used in particular social, cultural, or historical contexts.

Additionally, opportunistic corpora are often created in response to specific data needs, especially for minority, endangered, or under-researched languages. These corpora may not adhere to strict design principles, but they can still be valuable, particularly when ideal data is scarce [28, p. 71-74].

Corpora can also be classified based on whether they are annotated or unannotated. Annotated corpora are tagged with linguistic information, such as parts of speech, syntactic structures, and semantic data. While this tagging facilitates more structured and systematic analysis, it can also introduce potential biases, leading some

researchers to avoid annotation in favor of raw, unannotated data [23, p. 7]. Despite these concerns, annotated corpora are invaluable for detailed studies of grammar, syntax, and semantics.

On the other hand, unannotated corpora consist of raw text, without additional linguistic tags. While these corpora require more sophisticated tools for analysis, they allow researchers to apply their own interpretive frameworks without the constraints of pre-existing annotations. Both annotated and unannotated corpora have their own advantages, depending on the nature of the analysis being conducted.

Corpus linguistics has a wide range of practical applications in various linguistic fields. It plays a central role in lexicography, where corpus data is used to develop comprehensive and accurate dictionary entries. Major dictionary projects, such as the Oxford English Dictionary and various learners' dictionaries, rely heavily on corpus data to ensure the inclusion of up-to-date and representative word descriptions. Similarly, corpus linguistics is essential in historical linguistics, discourse analysis, and computational linguistics, where large corpora provide insights into language variation, change, and usage patterns across different social or historical contexts [23, p. 7].

One of the primary goals of corpus linguistics is the analysis of language in use. Unlike theoretical approaches that focus on idealized notions of language competence, corpus linguistics centers on performance - how language is actually used by speakers and writers. By examining large amounts of real-world data, corpus linguistics allows researchers to identify patterns of collocations, word combinations, and syntactic structures that would be difficult to detect through traditional methods. This empirical approach leads to more robust linguistic theories and provides a clearer understanding of language as it is actually spoken and written [28, p. 1-15].

In conclusion, corpus linguistics is a powerful and evolving field that provides valuable insights into language use through the collection and analysis of large-scale, real-world data. It offers a way to test linguistic theories empirically, moving away from intuition-based approaches. By making use of various types of corpora, from monitor corpora to web-based resources, corpus linguistics allows researchers to investigate a wide range of linguistic phenomena, making it an essential tool in modern

linguistic research. As computational tools continue to improve, the scope and depth of corpus-based analysis will continue to expand, offering new opportunities for understanding how language functions across different contexts and over time.

### **1.4.2 TV Corpus Overview**

The TV Corpus is a highly important resource for studying informal spoken English. It is part of the larger English-Corpora.org project and contains a massive collection of 325 million words taken from 75,000 television episodes broadcast between 1950 and 2018. As one of the largest corpora of its kind, it is especially useful for researchers who want to explore how everyday language is used in popular media, such as sitcoms, dramas, and talk shows [7].

What makes the TV Corpus particularly valuable is both its size and its focus on informal language. Unlike more formal collections like the British National Corpus (BNC), which include more academic or literary styles, the TV Corpus reflects casual and conversational speech. This allows researchers to analyze spoken English as it appears in popular culture across different decades, genres, and regional varieties.

The corpus includes a wide range of television genres - from comedies and dramas to talk shows and reality TV - capturing language that closely resembles real-life interaction. Although the dialogue in these shows is scripted, it still serves as a useful way to examine how informal language is used in television writing. The inclusion of data from 1950 to 2018 also allows for the study of how language has changed over time [7].

One of the main strengths of the TV Corpus is that it offers access to large amounts of informal language. It contains many colloquial expressions and everyday phrases that are commonly heard in speech but not often found in written texts [7]. Because of its informal nature, the corpus better represents how people speak in everyday situations. It is especially helpful for studying features of spoken language, such as ellipsis, contractions, and shortened forms. Researchers can also investigate syntactic trends typical of informal English, like the frequent use of the progressive aspect [7].

Even though the language in TV shows is not truly spontaneous, it still gives meaningful insight into informal communication. Levshina points out that television dialogue often closely reflects real conversations, particularly in how it uses expressive and emotional language [24]. This makes the corpus especially relevant for research on television discourse and how language is used in this unique form of media.

The TV Corpus also makes it possible to study historical changes in language. Because it covers several decades, researchers can track the development and disappearance of certain words and expressions, the appearance of new slang, and changes in sentence structure. This long time span supports detailed studies of how informal English has evolved in TV scripts [7]. This feature is particularly relevant to this study, as it enables the analysis of how minced oaths have evolved over time in American TV shows. By examining this linguistic shift, the corpus helps reveal trends in the use of euphemistic expressions, such as the replacement of taboo words with socially acceptable alternatives, across different periods

Another key feature is the ability to create custom virtual corpora using metadata from IMDb (the Internet Movie Database). Users can sort and filter the data based on genre, time period, country, or rating to build smaller, focused corpora suited to specific research questions [7]. For example, someone could create a corpus of crime shows from the 1990s or sitcoms from the 2000s. This function allows for targeted and flexible analysis.

The virtual corpus feature also supports comparisons between different groups of shows or movies. This is helpful for identifying patterns in genre-specific language or comparing how language use has changed over time. Users can quickly generate keywords or collocations within selected data sets, making the research process faster and more precise [7].

In conclusion, the TV Corpus is an essential resource for studying informal language across different genres and historical periods. Its large size, variety of TV content, and extended time coverage make it ideal for exploring casual, spoken-like English. Whether the research focuses on vocabulary, dialects, or grammar, the TV Corpus offers rich and flexible data. Features like virtual corpora and detailed metadata

further increase its usefulness, making it a powerful tool for linguistic research on media language.

The TV Corpus is an ideal resource for studying the evolution of minced oaths in American television over time. Its extensive collection of scripted yet conversational dialogue from U.S. television shows spanning from the 1950s to 2018 allows for a detailed examination of how euphemistic expressions have changed across decades. The corpus provides data from various genres, such as sitcoms, dramas, and talk shows, enabling a focused analysis of how minced oaths were used in informal and emotionally charged contexts throughout different historical periods. By tracking the development and disappearance of specific minced oaths over time, this resource facilitates a diachronic perspective on the linguistic shifts in American TV. Additionally, the ability to sort the data by time periods allows for targeted analysis of how minced oaths evolved, making the TV Corpus especially valuable for studying the historical progression of euphemistic language in American television.

### **Conclusion to Chapter 1**

This chapter has provided a theoretical and methodological framework for the study of minced oaths in American television. The chapter defined swearing as a complex linguistic phenomenon, emphasizing its role in expressing strong emotions and social attitudes. It further explained that minced oaths, as a type of euphemism, serve as substitutes for taboo words, enabling speakers to express powerful emotions while adhering to social and cultural norms. This directly informs the current research, which examines how minced oaths function in TV dialogue over time.

The exploration of the emotive function of swearing, particularly Ljung's work on swearing as a reflection of the speaker's emotional state, aligns with the focus on minced oaths in this study. Minced oaths maintain the emotional intensity of swearing while mitigating the offense. The historical context provided in the chapter also sheds light on how minced oaths evolved, especially in response to increasing social pressures and moral standards, which is particularly relevant to the study of their evolution across several decades of American television.

Additionally, the concept of taboo deformation discussed in the chapter is central to understanding how minced oaths operate as both polite substitutes and linguistic resistances to censorship. The chapter also introduced the TV Corpus, which is an essential resource for this research. The TV Corpus contains millions of words from American television shows broadcast between 1950 and 2018, making it an ideal tool for tracking how minced oaths have changed over time. This corpus provides the necessary data to examine how euphemistic expressions like minced oaths have evolved across different historical periods, offering a diachronic perspective on language use in American TV. By examining the frequency and distribution of these expressions over time, this resource enabled an in-depth look at how their use changed, reflecting shifts in societal norms, media regulations, and audience expectations.

## **2. CATEGORIZATION OF MINCED OATHS AND THEIR PATTERNS OF USE ON AMERICAN TV**

### **2.1 Censorship and Regulations of American TV**

Euphemistic language, including minced oaths, is widely used in the United States as a reflection of the country's language policy, which is heavily influenced by censorship practices. These practices stem from a Puritanical linguistic and cultural tradition that has long emphasized the regulation of language in public discourse. The use of euphemisms, such as minced oaths, is a direct response to these cultural values, particularly in broadcast media, where profanity and indecency are subject to strict legal restrictions. These regulations, shaped by both societal norms and legal frameworks, have played a key role in fostering the widespread use of euphemistic expressions in American speech.

Television in the United States is subject to strict rules about language, particularly regarding profanity, obscenity, and indecency. These rules are enforced by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and are based on federal laws and court decisions [15]. The main legal foundations for these regulations are Section 1464 of Title 18 of the United States Code, Section 503 of Title 47, and Section 73.3999 of the FCC's Rules.

According to Section 1464 of Title 18, it is illegal to broadcast obscene, indecent, or profane language on radio or television [14]. The FCC has the authority, under Section 503 of Title 47, to fine broadcasters who break this rule. These laws apply mainly to free-to-air television and radio, as they use public airwaves, which the government has the right to regulate [36].

However, the First Amendment, which protects free speech, complicates the issue. While free speech is a fundamental right, the Supreme Court has ruled that certain types of speech, such as obscenity, are not protected. The Court has also decided that while indecent language is legally allowed, the government can still restrict it, especially to protect children. Since television is widely accessible and difficult to control in real-time, the law allows for some government oversight [33].

A significant court case in this field is *FCC v. Pacifica Foundation* (1978), which addressed comedian George Carlin's "Seven Dirty Words" routine. The ruling established that the government could regulate indecent speech on television, particularly during hours when children are likely to be watching [17]. Following this decision, the "seven dirty words" - *shit, fuck, piss, cunt, cocksucker, motherfucker, and tits* along with their variations, have generally been avoided by broadcast stations. However, in later rulings, the Commission determined that some of these words may be acceptable in specific contexts [33]. As a result, the distinction between obscene and indecent language remains an ongoing debate.

More recently, in *FCC v. Fox Television Stations* (2009, 2012), the Supreme Court examined whether broadcasters should be fined for accidentally airing profanity during the 2002 and 2003 Billboard Music Awards. The FCC changed its policy and imposed fines, but Fox challenged the decision, arguing the shift was unfair. The Second Circuit Court agreed, ruling the FCC's sudden change was not properly justified. However, in a 5-4 ruling, the Supreme Court sided with the FCC, stating that it only needed to prove the new policy was reasonable. Dissenting Justices criticized the decision, arguing that the FCC failed to justify its policy shift and raised concerns about free speech [16]. This case reflects the ongoing tension between media regulation and the First Amendment.

Since broadcasters face fines and penalties for airing explicit language, television networks and media personalities often use minced oaths to avoid legal consequences. These regulations have significantly influenced programming, prompting broadcasters to find ways to comply while maintaining the tone of dialogue. As a result, minced oaths are more common in American usage than in British. The regulation of language on American television is shaped by a balance between legal requirements, industry practices, and public attitudes.

## **2.2 Data Collection**

The compilation of a comprehensive list of minced oaths is an essential part of this study, as no such complete resource currently exists. This list represents one of the

main outcomes of the research, aimed at identifying the various minced oaths in use, particularly in television. By gathering these terms, the study focuses on understanding how language changes in response to societal norms and legal restrictions, and how euphemistic language has evolved over time.

To begin the data collection, the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) was utilized as a key resource. By using the advanced search feature, results were filtered to include terms identified as variants, euphemistic, currently in use, and specific to North American English. This search produced a list of minced oaths such as *fricking*, *golddarn*, *goldarned*, *dog* (a substitute for *damn*), *dagnab* (another form of *damn*), and *motherferyer* (a variation of *motherfucker*).

The next stage of data collection involved using the Merriam-Webster Dictionary. This resource was selected because of its comprehensive coverage of American English vocabulary and its historical and cultural insights into language usage. Preliminary research was conducted to understand how the dictionary categorizes minced oaths. Initially, the term *gosh* was examined, as it is listed as an example of a minced oath in the Cambridge Dictionary's definition of the term. The Merriam-Webster entry for "gosh" included the label "mild oath."

Based on this finding, the search strategy was refined by entering the query "site:https://www.merriam-webster.com 'mild oath'" into the search bar. This approach provided results for entries that contained the phrase "mild oath" in their definitions. The search yielded a variety of minced oaths, such as *zounds* (short for *God's wounds*), *egad* (from *oh God*), *begad* and *begod* (both from *by God*), *Gadzooks* (*God's hooks*), *odzooks* (*God's hooks* where *od* stands for *God*), *od* (another form of *God*), *struth* (*God's truth*), *bejesus* or *bejeezus* (from *by Jesus*), *geez* or *jeez* (from *Jesus*), *gadsbodikins* (*God's bodykins*), *criminy* (*Jesus Lord*), *jeepers* (from *Jesus*), *gad* (from *God*), *gar* (from *God*), *gosh* (from *God*), and *dickens* (a substitute for *devil*).

While investigating the definition and origin of one of the minced oaths from the Merriam-Webster search, Dictionary.com was encountered. This resource was included in the research due to its extensive database and its focus on both contemporary and historical usage of American English. Given its relevance to the

study, the same search method was applied by entering “site:https://www.dictionary.com ‘mild oath’” into the search bar to identify entries containing this label. The results included *bejabbers* (derived from *by Jesus*), *Sam Hill* (a substitute for *hell*), *cripes* (from *Christ*), *gum* (from *God*), and *dratted* (a variation of *damned*).

Additionally, an article on the site discussing mild oaths was discovered, which provided further examples [8]. These included *deuce* (meaning *devil*), *drat* (an alteration of *od rot*, short for *God rot*, implying a curse), and *heck* (a euphemism for *hell*).

Further sources, including *An Encyclopedia of Swearing* by Hughes, G. I. [20], were consulted. It is a comprehensive reference work that covers a wide range of profane and taboo words, along with their euphemistic substitutions. This made it an ideal resource for identifying minced oaths, as it provides detailed insights into softened forms of offensive expressions [20].

For each profane or taboo word listed, corresponding minced oaths were extracted. The results were as follows: for *bloody*, the forms *blooming*, *b*, and *ruddy* were identified; for *damned*, the substitutions were *darned*, *durned*, and *blasted*; for *damnation*, the equivalent was *tarnation*; and for *damn*, the variants included *darn*, *dang*, *hang it*, *bang*, *blast*, and *ding*.

The exclamation *Gorblimey!* (derived from *God blind me*) appeared alongside its variation *Blimey*, while *snails!* represented *God’s nails*. Substitutes for *fuck* included *the f-word*, *a four-letter word*, *eff*, and *fug*, with *fucking* softened to *effing* and *frigging*. For *bugger*, the forms *bug* and *footling* were identified. Euphemisms for *bastard* included *love child*, and for *bitch*, examples were *doggess*, *lady dog*, *she dog*, and *puppy’s mother*.

Additional findings revealed forms like *sblood* (from *God’s blood*) and a range of expressions for *piss off*, including *peed off*, *teed off*, and *kissed off*. Variants of *goddamn(ed)* appeared as *consarned*, *confounded*, *doggone(d)*, and *dad-burn(ed)*.

The word *God* produced numerous creative substitutions, such as *by Godfrey!*, *Good grief*, *Great Scott*, *by George*, *begorra*, *ye gods!*, *odrabbit it*, *golly*, *goles*, *ecod*,

*agad, odso, godsookers, odsbobs, sfoot* (short for *God's foot*), *'sbody* (short for *God's body*), *gog, Jove, and codd*. Variants of *Godblimey* also derived from *God blind me*.

For *Jesus*, minced oaths included *Jeepers Creepers, Judas Priest, Jesus wept, Gee, Jingo, Jiminy, and Jiminy Crickets*. Related to *Lord*, expressions such as *Lumme!* (from *Lord love me*) emerged. The term *motherlover* was commonly used in place of *motherfucker*, while euphemisms for *bullshit* included *bullsh* and *bull*, and *cursed* was softened to *blessed*.

Subsequent analysis involved language blogs, with a focus on the Duolingo blog due to its engagement with language learners in discussions on slang and informal expressions [9]. However, the definitions of many phrases were absent, possibly due to content moderation policies. To verify their status as minced oaths, each phrase was cross-referenced with other reputable dictionaries.

The results revealed the following minced oaths: *dagnabbit* as a variation of *goddamnit*, *shoot* and *sugar* as substitutes for *shit*, and *oh snap* as a softened form of *oh, shit*. For *frack, frig, freaking, and fracking*, the minced versions corresponded to *fuck* or *fucking*. Expressions such as *good gravy* and *good heavens* stood in for *Good God*, while *holy cow* substituted for *holy shit* and *holy moly* derived from *Holy Mary*.

Additional findings included *geez Louise* and *gee whiz* as variations of *Jesus Christ* and *Jesus*, respectively, and *crikey* as a minced form of *Christ*. Euphemisms for *shit* included *crap* and *crapola*. The phrase *for crying out loud* was identified as a softened substitute for *for Christ's sake*.

Finally, Wiktionary was consulted, specifically its category page dedicated to English minced oaths [37]. This source was valuable because it offers a compilation of informal and euphemistic expressions, many of which are not always comprehensively covered in traditional dictionaries. After reviewing the entries, a wide range of minced oaths and their corresponding original profanities were extracted.

The results listed expressions such as *a-double-s* for *ass* and *a-hole* for *asshole*. Variations of *goddamn* included *dadgum, dadgummit, goldarnit, and doggonit*. Other examples included *bish* for *bitch*, *berk* as a softened form of *cunt*, and *bleeding, blimming, and blinking* as substitutes for *bloody*.

Additional minced forms revealed *cheese and rice* (standing for *Jesus Christ*), *for cripes' sake* and *for goodness' sake* (both substitutes for *for Christ's sake* and *for God's sake*, respectively), and *shut the front door* or *shut the fridge* (both euphemisms for *shut the fuck up*). Noteworthy entries also presented *pooh* for *shit*, *fuddle-duddle* for *fuck off*, and *mollyfogging* for *motherfucking*.

Substitutions for *my God* comprised *my goodness*, while *lawks* and *lawks a-mercy* derived from *Lord* and *Lord have mercy*. Minced forms for *motherfucker* featured *mothereffer*, *motherflipper*, and their variations, such as *motherflipping*. The phrases *son of a bachelor*, *son of a gun*, and *sonova* served as alternatives for *son of a bitch*. Other euphemisms included *w-anchor* for *wanker*, *what the hey* for *what the hell*, and *by Jupiter* or *by guess* for *by God*.

Other minced oaths found in Wiktionary include *doofbag* for *douchebag*, *feck* for *fuck*, *foo* for *fool*, *forkhead* for *fuckhead*, *for Pete's sake* and *for pity's sake* for *for God's sake*, *frick* for *fuck*, *fudgebag* for *fuckbag*, *fugghead* for *fuckhead*, *Gall Dang* for *goddamn*, *goldang* for *goddamn*, *ish* for *shit*, *mothereffing* for *motherfucking*, *'nation* for *damnation*, and *'sheart* for *God's heart*.

The data collection process resulted in a total of 165 minced oaths from various linguistic sources (see Appendix 1). The Oxford English Dictionary contributed six 6, while Merriam-Webster provided 17. Dictionary.com added 8 entries, and An Encyclopedia of Swearing was the most extensive source, offering 68 examples. The Duolingo blog contributed 18 terms, while Wiktionary provided 48.

A closer look at the compiled list shows that minced oaths replace a variety of profane and taboo words, with some appearing more frequently than others. The most common is *God*, with 22 different substitutions. Variations of *damn*, including *damned* and *damnation*, account for 15 minced oaths, while softened forms of *goddamn* or *goddamn it* appear 13 times. The expletive *fuck* and its variations, including *fucking*, have 14 substitutes, while euphemisms for *motherfucker* and *motherfucking* appear 7 times.

Religious-based minced oaths are widespread. Variants of *Jesus* appear 14 times, while *Jesus Christ* has 2, and *Jesus Lord* has 1. Similarly, softened expressions

for *Lord* appear 3 times, while *by God* has 4 variations, and *by Jesus* has 2. Substitutes for *Good God* appear 2 times, while minced forms for *for Christ's sake* and *for God's sake* appear 2 and 3 times, respectively. Some older minced oaths derived from religious phrases - such as *God's body*, *God's bodykins*, *God's foot*, *God's heart*, *God's hooks*, *God's nails*, *God's truth*, and *God's wounds* - each appear once. The phrase *God blind me* has 2 variations.

Minced forms of *bitch* appear 5 times, while substitutes for *bloody* total 6. The terms *bugger*, *bullshit*, *hell*, and *shut the fuck up* each have 2 substitutions. Other frequently softened words include *shit*, with 6 variants; *piss(ed) off* and *son of a bitch*, each with 3; and *fuckbag* or *fuckhead*, also with 3. Minced forms of *devil* and *Lord* each appear 3 times. Substitutes for *Holy Mary* and *Holy shit* appear once each. Finally, some words have only one recorded minced form, including *wanker*, *fool*, *douchebag*, *cunt*, *cursed*, *bastard*, *asshole*, and *ass*.

Minced oaths were gathered and analyzed from a range of sources, including dictionaries, encyclopedias, and online platforms, as part of this research. The results show that most minced oaths are based on religious phrases, while softer versions of strong swear words like *fuck* and *damn* are also common.

### 2.3 Query Parameters

The study began with a compiled list of 165 minced oaths drawn from various linguistic sources. However, not all of these terms function exclusively as euphemistic substitutes for profanities. Some words, such as *dog* and *gum*, have alternative meanings in everyday language that are unrelated to their use as minced oaths. To maintain accuracy in the analysis, 25 terms were removed, resulting in a refined dataset of 140 minced oaths. The eliminated words included *Dog*, *Dickens*, *Gum*, *Deuce*, *Blooming*, *Ruddy*, *Blasted*, *Darn*, *Hang it*, *Bang*, *Blast*, *Ding*, *Fug*, *Bug*, *Bull*, *Blessed*, *Shoot*, *Sugar*, *Crap*, *Berk*, *Bleeding*, *Foo*, *Blinking*, *Dash*, and *Ish*.

Following this refinement, the remaining minced oaths were examined in the TV corpus to assess their frequency and distribution. The search process involved inputting each term into the corpus to identify instances of its occurrence. However, a significant

number of words did not appear in any television transcripts. Specifically, 33 minced oaths showed zero results, indicating that they are either obsolete, highly specialized, or not commonly used in contemporary televised speech. The absent terms included *Golddarn, Motherferyer, Odzooks, Gadsbodikins, Snails, Doggess, Puppy's mother, Goles, Ecod, Agad, Odso, Godsookers, Odsbobs, Sfoot, Sbody, Cokk, Godblimey, Blimming, Doofbag, For Pete's Sake, For Pity's Sake, Fuddle-duddle, Fugghead, Gall Dang, Goldarnit, Mollyfogging, Mothereffing, Motherflipper, Motherflipping, 'Nation, 'Sheart, Son of a bachelor, and W-anchor.*

Following this elimination, the dataset was reduced to 107 minced oaths with at least one appearance in the corpus. To ensure the subsequent analysis focused on statistically and culturally meaningful data, a final filter was applied: only oaths with a minimum of 100 occurrences were retained. This threshold was chosen to exclude marginal expressions and prevent overanalysis of terms that appear rarely or incidentally in dialogue.

After applying this filter, 45 minced oaths remained in the dataset. These represent the most frequently used euphemistic expressions in American television, appearing consistently across a wide range of shows and time periods. The retained terms are: *Gosh, Freaking, Gee, Heck, Jeez, My Goodness, Geez, Dang, Blimey, Good Heavens, Golly, For crying out loud, Frigging, Holy Cow, Good grief, Son of a gun, Gar, Fricking, Pooh, Drat, For Goodness' Sake, Darned, Love child, Doggone, Holy Moly, Frick, By George, Crikey, Jiminy, Fracking, Eff, Gee Whiz, Feck, Confounded, Effing, A-hole, Jeepers, Frig, Frack, Great Scott, Egad, Sam Hill, Tarnation, Cripes, and Judas Priest.*

In conclusion, the initial list of 165 minced oaths was refined by removing 25 terms with alternative meanings. A search in the TV corpus showed that 33 terms had no occurrences, leaving 107 terms. After applying a threshold of 100 occurrences, 45 minced oaths remained, representing the most frequently used euphemisms in American television, which will be used for further analysis.

## 2.4 Thematic Categorization of Minced Oaths

The 45 remaining minced oaths in the dataset have been categorized based on the thematic features of the original profanities they replace (see Table 2.1). This classification focuses on grouping terms by the broader categories of taboo language, with particular attention to the types of profanities being substituted. The minced oaths are divided into two primary themes: religious references (31) and taboo bodily functions (14).

**Table 2.1**

### *Categorization of Minced Oaths*

Category	Subcategory	Examples
Religious References	General Divinity	<i>Gosh, My Goodness, Blimey, Good Heavens, Golly, Holy Cow, Good Grief, Gar, For Goodness' Sake, Holy Moly, By George, Great Scott, Egad</i>
	Christ / Jesus	<i>Gee, Jeez, Geez, For crying out loud, Crikey, Jiminy, Gee Whiz, Jeepers, Cripes, Judas Priest</i>
	Hell / Damnation / Devil	<i>Heck, Dang, Drat, Darned, Doggone, Confounded, Sam Hill, Tarnation</i>
Taboo Bodily Functions	Sexual Acts	<i>Freaking, Frigging, Fricking, Frick, Fracking, Eff, Feck, Effing, Frig, Frack</i>
	Bowel Functions	<i>Pooh, A-hole</i>
	Sexual-result Epithets	<i>Son of a gun, Love child</i>

Religious-themed minced oaths primarily replace words or expressions invoking God, a deity, Christ, hell, or notions of holiness. These terms reflect a cultural sensitivity towards avoiding direct references to divine figures or concepts associated with damnation. As discussed in the previous chapter, the emergence of minced oaths can be seen as a response to the need for linguistic self-regulation in light of societal taboos, especially regarding religious expressions. The avoidance of swearing in the name of God or religious figures became a linguistic strategy to adhere to moral and cultural norms, thus leading to the development of euphemisms as polite substitutes.

This aligns with the broader notion of taboo deformation, where language adapts to social and religious constraints by creating softer alternatives that mitigate the potential offense of directly invoking sacred terms.

Next, a more detailed categorization was applied, focusing on the specific types of profanities being substituted. The first subcategory includes references to God or general divinity, comprising 13 terms such as *Gosh*, *My Goodness*, *Blimey*, *Good Heavens*, *Golly*, *Holy Cow*, *Good Grief*, *Gar*, *For Goodness' Sake*, *Holy Moly*, *By George*, *Great Scott*, and *Egad*. These words are often used as exclamations of surprise or frustration, offering speakers a way to express strong emotions without invoking divine authority. The widespread use of these expressions demonstrates a long-standing cultural effort to avoid using God's name in vain.

A second subcategory includes 10 minced oaths derived from Christ or Jesus, such as *Gee*, *Jeez*, *Geez*, *For crying out loud*, *Crikey*, *Jiminy*, *Gee Whiz*, *Jeepers*, *Cripes*, and *Judas Priest*. The third religious subcategory focuses on 8 terms replacing references to hell, damnation, or the devil. Examples include *Heck*, *Dang*, *Drat*, *Darned*, *Doggone*, *Confounded*, *Sam Hill*, and *Tarnation*.

These minced oaths function as substitutions for more offensive language, reflecting a societal effort to avoid invoking sacred or taboo terms. The use of these euphemisms aligns with the emotive and social functions of swearing discussed in the previous chapter. By replacing profanities associated with religion and damnation, these minced oaths allow speakers to express frustration or anger while adhering to social norms and avoiding potential offense. This demonstrates the balance between emotional expression and social propriety, as speakers navigate the boundaries of cultural taboos, specifically religious sensitivities. The prominence of religious-based minced oaths in this dataset suggests that, historically, there has been heightened awareness and caution regarding the use of religious references, further emphasizing the role of euphemisms in maintaining social and cultural decorum, as well as in mitigating the potential for face-threatening speech.

The second major category of minced oaths revolves around bodily functions, particularly those related to sexual acts and excretions. The first subcategory includes

10 expressions related to sexual acts, such as *Freaking*, *Frigging*, *Fricking*, *Frick*, *Fracking*, *Eff*, *Feck*, *Effing*, *Frig*, and *Frack*. These terms function as substitutes for the more explicit term *fuck*, which can be used in a variety of contexts, including to describe sexual intercourse or as a general expletive. As discussed in the previous chapter, swearing serves multiple functions: it can express intense emotion, reinforce social identity, and navigate social norms. In this case, minced oaths related to sexual acts allow speakers to convey strong feelings, such as anger or frustration, without resorting to the more offensive term *fuck*. This aligns with the social function of swearing, where euphemisms and minced oaths allow speakers to balance emotional expression with the need to adhere to social expectations and avoid violating societal taboos around sexuality.

A second subcategory addresses 2 minced oaths related to bowel functions, such as *Pooh* and *A-hole*. These words replace more crude references to bodily excretions and anatomical insults. *Pooh* serves as a softer version of *shit*, often used in children's programming or more family-friendly contexts. Similarly, *A-hole* is a less offensive alternative to *asshole*, which is used as an insult or to describe unpleasant behavior. These substitutes reflect a broader societal tendency to avoid direct references to bodily functions in public discourse.

Finally, the subcategory of sexual-result epithets includes 2 terms like *Son of a gun* and *Love child*. These expressions serve as milder substitutes for harsher insults like *son of a bitch* or *bastard*. *Son of a gun* emerged as a euphemism for the more offensive *son of a bitch*, allowing speakers to convey similar meanings without resorting to crude or insulting language. Similarly, *Love child* has evolved to soften the stigma traditionally associated with illegitimate children, replacing the term *bastard* with a more neutral, less judgmental expression.

The categorization of minced oaths in this study reflects the adaptation of language to specific cultural sensitivities within American society, particularly concerning religion and bodily functions. These themes are not only central to societal taboos but also align with the need to balance emotional expression with social decorum. The prominence of religious references in minced oaths highlights the

significant cultural concern in the U.S. with respect to maintaining reverence for divine figures and avoiding blasphemy, a practice deeply embedded in American history and identity. This sensitivity toward religious expressions likely arises from the nation's religious foundations, where such language was traditionally considered sacred and its violation socially unacceptable.

Moreover, minced oaths related to bodily functions demonstrate the ongoing effort in American culture to avoid crude or vulgar language in public discourse. This focus on cleanliness in expression reflects a broader cultural desire to maintain civility and propriety, especially in family-friendly or formal settings. These themes, which prominently appear in American minced oaths, are more relevant than similar expressions in British or other English varieties due to the United States' unique historical and social context. Furthermore, American media, subject to stricter regulations such as those from the FCC, has continuously emphasized these euphemisms, shaping their prevalence.

## **2.5 Frequency and Distribution of Minced Oaths Across Decades**

### **2.5.1 Religious-themed Minced Oaths**

In order to investigate the usage patterns of minced oaths across different decades, the TV corpus was utilized as the primary data source. By employing the chart feature on the corpus' main page and entering specific minced oaths into the search bar, it was possible to observe their frequency of use across each decade. Data were systematically collected for each selected term and organized into Table 2.2-2.5 for clarity.

The analysis initially focused on minced oaths related to general divinity, which represent the first subcategory of religious-themed expressions (see Table 2.2). According to the TV corpus, the earliest usage of these terms can be traced back to the 1950s. During this period, minced oaths such as *Gosh*, *My Goodness*, *Good Heavens*, and *Golly* each appeared over ten times, while expressions such as *For Goodness' Sake*, *Holy Moly*, *Great Scott*, and *Egad* were absent from the corpus.

The 1960s witnessed a general increase in the frequency of all the minced oaths analyzed. However, beginning in the 1970s, divergent trends emerged: while terms like *Blimey*, *Holy Cow*, *Good Grief*, and *Holy Moly* continued to rise in popularity, others - including *Gosh*, *My Goodness*, *Good Heavens*, and *Golly* - experienced a notable decline. Particularly interesting is the fact that terms which had previously dominated and shown upward trends (notably *Gosh*, *My Goodness*, and *Good Heavens*) began to decrease in frequency during this decade.

**Table 2.2**

*Frequency of General Divinity Minced Oaths Across Decades*

<b>General Divinity</b>	<b>1950s</b>	<b>1960s</b>	<b>1970s</b>	<b>1980s</b>	<b>1990s</b>	<b>2000s</b>	<b>2010s</b>
<i>Gosh</i>	68	357	106	399	871	2764	8124
<i>My Goodness</i>	40	124	96	272	295	778	2582
<i>Blimey</i>	2	72	87	75	137	315	418
<i>Good Heavens</i>	36	257	78	218	160	121	161
<i>Golly</i>	13	117	41	75	108	159	301
<i>Holy Cow</i>	1	13	39	42	49	137	338
<i>Good Grief</i>	2	38	75	44	46	93	161
<i>Gar</i>	1	8	5	27	99	84	171
<i>For Goodness' Sake</i>	0	18	15	24	30	90	118
<i>Holy Moly</i>	0	1	4	10	28	52	180
<i>By George</i>	9	71	9	14	26	37	96
<i>Great Scott</i>	0	22	17	9	40	10	31
<i>Egad</i>	0	7	4	8	93	5	8

In the 1980s, most minced oaths increased in usage once more, with the exception of *Blimey*, *Good Grief*, and *Great Scott*. Many expressions even surpassed their frequency levels from the 1960s. The 1990s marked a continuation of this pattern: *Blimey*, *Good Grief*, and *Great Scott* rose in popularity alongside the majority of other minced oaths, with *Good Heavens* being the only notable term to decline.

Entering the 2000s, *Good Heavens*, *Gar*, and *Great Scott* continued their downward trends, whereas most other expressions maintained or increased their frequency. The 2010s represented a peak usage period for nearly all the minced oaths examined, with the exception of *Good Heavens*, whose peak occurred in the 1960s, and *Great Scott* and *Egad*, which both reached their highest frequency in the 1990s.

Table 2.3 illustrates the frequency of minced oaths belonging to the second religious-themed category, namely references to Christ and Jesus. In the 1950s, the only widespread term was *Gee*, while other expressions were either recorded fewer than ten times or were entirely absent from usage.

**Table 2.3**

*Frequency of Christ/Jesus Minced Oaths Across Decades*

Christ / Jesus	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s	2010s
<i>Gee</i>	344	445	577	1063	1873	1442	1242
<i>Jeez</i>	1	6	44	116	691	1805	2576
<i>Geez</i>	4	1	63	159	364	903	2482
<i>For crying out loud</i>	1	20	15	50	132	239	310
<i>Crikey</i>	0	3	8	14	21	66	149
<i>Jiminy</i>	0	4	7	9	28	75	96
<i>Gee Whiz</i>	9	11	23	13	31	46	42
<i>Jeepers</i>	0	3	14	14	21	33	66
<i>Cripes</i>	0	1	3	4	17	36	44
<i>Judas Priest</i>	0	0	6	19	21	30	24

During the 1960s, all minced oaths in this category, with the exception of *Geez*, experienced growth. *Judas Priest* remained out of use during this decade. By the 1970s, however, all minced oaths from this group were in circulation, and the majority exhibited upward trends. The sole exception was *For crying out loud*, which experienced a decline in frequency. In the 1980s, the general trend of increasing usage continued, with all minced oaths rising in frequency apart from *Jeepers*, which

plateaued, and *Gee Whiz*, which declined. The 1990s witnessed further growth across all terms within this category.

Up until the 2000s, *Gee* remained the most widespread term among references to Christ and Jesus, consistently exhibiting upward trends. However, during this decade, *Gee* began to decline for the first time, while *Jeez* emerged as the dominant minced oath. In the 2010s, most minced oaths in this group continued their upward trajectory. *Jeez* and *Geez* became the most commonly used expressions, whereas *Gee*, *Gee Whiz*, and *Judas Priest* experienced a decline in frequency.

The third subcategory of religious-themed minced oaths, those referring to Hell, Damnation, and the Devil, is presented in Table 2.4. By the 1950s, all terms except *Drat* and *Confounded* were already in use.

**Table 2.4**

*Frequency of Hell/Damnation/Devil Minced Oaths Across Decades*

Hell / Damnation / Devil	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s	2010s
<i>Heck</i>	18	118	154	429	771	1198	3189
<i>Dang</i>	13	42	36	55	181	538	1183
<i>Drat</i>	0	133	25	31	43	28	38
<i>Darned</i>	7	32	22	83	51	38	58
<i>Doggone</i>	23	48	21	47	53	28	69
<i>Confounded</i>	0	24	19	18	16	35	51
<i>Sam Hill</i>	1	9	10	9	33	18	30
<i>Tarnation</i>	3	16	5	9	16	14	47

During the 1960s, all minced oaths in this group experienced growth. A particularly interesting trend emerged in this period: whereas *Heck* had been dominant and *Drat* nonexistent in the 1950s, by the 1960s *Drat* had surpassed *Heck* in frequency. However, *Drat*'s rise proved to be short-lived; it experienced a dramatic decline in the 1970s. In contrast, *Heck* and *Sam Hill* continued their upward trajectory during this decade, while other terms saw a decline.

The 1980s brought further shifts: all minced oaths except *Confounded* and *Sam Hill* showed upward trends. In the 1990s, most terms continued to rise, although *Darned* and *Confounded* experienced a decline. Different patterns emerged in the 2000s. *Heck* and *Dang*, the most common minced oaths in this category, continued to rise. Notably, *Confounded*, which had been in decline for the three previous decades, reversed course and also increased in frequency. Meanwhile, other expressions began to decline. In the 2010s, all minced oaths within this category experienced growth. *Heck*, *Dang*, *Doggone*, *Confounded*, and *Tarnation* all reached their peak usage during this decade. It is especially significant that *Heck* was the only minced oath across all categories to demonstrate a consistent upward trend throughout the entire period analyzed.

The analysis of religious-themed minced oaths, categorized into references to general divinity, Christ/Jesus, and Hell/Damnation/Devil, reveals both shared patterns and distinct trajectories across the decades.

Across all three groups, the 1960s marked a notable period of growth. Almost every minced oath, regardless of category, increased in usage during this decade. There are a few likely reasons for this. First, television expanded rapidly: in 1950, only 9% of American households had a TV, but by 1960, that number had reached 90% [25]. With more television shows being produced and watched, minced oaths became more widely used and heard. Second, the popularity of religion-themed minced oaths suggests that many people still wanted to avoid blasphemy, reflecting the religious nature of society at the time. U.S. church membership was around 73% when Gallup first measured it in 1937 and stayed near 70% for six decades before declining in the early 2000s [22]. This widespread religious affiliation may have influenced TV producers to avoid using sacred references directly and instead rely on minced oaths to stay within cultural expectations.

The 1970s introduced greater divergence among the groups. While minced oaths referring to Christ and Hell largely continued to rise, several expressions associated with general divinity - particularly those that had been dominant in previous decades, such as *Gosh*, *My Goodness*, and *Good Heavens* - began to decline. Before the 1970s,

mainline Protestant churches dominated American religious life, focusing on God's work in the world, social responsibility, and collective worship. This broader religious language likely encouraged the use of general divinity minced oaths. But in the 1970s, Evangelical Christianity became more vocal. Evangelicals emphasize a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord [29, pp.18-23]. Around the same time, the Jesus Movement gained momentum, with "Jesus People" promoting a Christ-centered faith [13]. This religious shift may explain why general divinity minced oaths declined while references to Christ became more popular.

The 1980s witnessed a general revival for all groups, with most minced oaths increasing in frequency once again. This may have been shaped in part by the rise of the Moral Majority and the continued growth of television. Founded in 1979 by Jerry Falwell, the Moral Majority was a conservative political organization created in response to the social changes of the 1960s and 1970s. Christian fundamentalists were alarmed by movements like civil rights, feminism, and changing views on sexuality and education, which they believed were eroding traditional moral values. Their activism had a quick impact, including support for Ronald Reagan's 1980 presidential victory, and they remained influential throughout the early 1980s [38, p. 188]. Meanwhile, FCC broadcast regulations continued to restrict indecent language, especially during daytime and prime-time hours [17]. As television became more influential, writers needed ways to express strong emotions without violating content rules. Minced oaths became essential tools, allowing for expressive yet acceptable language that aligned with the moral expectations of the time.

In the 1990s, minced oaths continued to be widely used, though some older terms across all categories began to decline. While religious affiliation overall remained high, younger generations, especially Generation X, increasingly moved away from regular church attendance and formal religious practice [31]. As a result, minced oaths that reflected traditional reverence toward God began to seem outdated to a more ironic, informal youth culture. At the same time, cable TV and the early Internet exposed people to more relaxed speech styles.

In the 2000s, in the general divinity group, many terms continued to peak, but some, like *Good Heavens* and *Great Scott*, declined sharply. In the Christ/Jesus group, *Gee*, long the dominant term, began to decline, while *Jeez* took its place. One key reason for this shift might have been the rise of the religiously unaffiliated, commonly referred to as the “nones.” According to Pew Research Center, the percentage of Americans who identified as religiously unaffiliated rose from 16.1% in 2007 to 22.8% in 2014. This increase, especially among younger people, reduced the cultural pressure to avoid blasphemy, likely contributing to the decline of old-fashioned religious euphemisms [32]. At the same time, the rise of texting, early social media, and informal digital communication encouraged the use of shorter and more modern expressions [6].

The 2010s represented a culmination of these trends. Most minced oaths across all three categories reached their peak frequencies during this decade, although certain older terms declined. The decade saw a further shift in communication styles driven by mobile texting and social media. Sociolinguistic research showed sharp increases in informal exclamations and abbreviated speech across digital platforms [35]. As a result, short, emotionally expressive minced oaths like *heck*, *jeez*, and *dang* thrived, aligning with the fast-paced, casual style of communication that dominated the 2010s.

The evolution of religious-themed minced oaths in American English reflects broader cultural changes in how people relate to religion, emotion, and public expression. In the 1960s, high church membership and the rapid growth of television helped popularize minced oaths as polite alternatives to blasphemy. The 1970s brought a shift in religious influence - from broad, mainline Protestantism to more vocal Evangelical Christianity - which may explain the decline of general divinity expressions and the rise of Christ-centered oaths. The 1980s reinforced minced oaths through conservative social movements and broadcast language restrictions, while the 1990s and 2000s saw changing generational values, expanding media, and a growing number of Americans - especially the “nones” - disengaging from traditional religion. By the 2010s, short, emotionally expressive minced oaths had become the norm in a culture shaped by digital speech, informal communication, and increasing secularism.

These expressions remain an active part of modern speech, showing how language continues to adapt to shifting social and cultural values.

### 2.5.2 Taboo Bodily Functions Minced Oaths

The following analysis explores the frequency of minced oaths related to taboo bodily functions across the decades (see Table 2.5) and considers how their patterns of use compare to those of religious-themed minced oaths.

**Table 2.5**

*Frequency of Taboo Bodily Functions Minced Oaths Across Decades*

<b>Sexual Acts</b>	<b>1950s</b>	<b>1960s</b>	<b>1970s</b>	<b>1980s</b>	<b>1990s</b>	<b>2000s</b>	<b>2010s</b>
<i>Freaking</i>	0	0	1	15	266	2071	4942
<i>Frigging</i>	0	0	1	4	60	248	355
<i>Fricking</i>	0	0	0	0	3	86	292
<i>Frick</i>	0	2	7	3	6	91	153
<i>Fracking</i>	0	0	0	1	0	12	201
<i>Eff</i>	1	1	0	0	14	70	124
<i>Feck</i>	0	0	0	0	70	29	69
<i>Effing</i>	0	0	1	1	10	51	96
<i>Frig</i>	0	0	0	0	2	45	90
<i>Frack</i>	0	2	19	2	3	31	77
<b>Bowel Functions</b>	<b>1950s</b>	<b>1960s</b>	<b>1970s</b>	<b>1980s</b>	<b>1990s</b>	<b>2000s</b>	<b>2010s</b>
<i>Pooh</i>	4	7	13	23	86	85	143
<i>A-hole</i>	0	0	0	0	2	34	116
<b>Sexual-result Epithets</b>	<b>1950s</b>	<b>1960s</b>	<b>1970s</b>	<b>1980s</b>	<b>1990s</b>	<b>2000s</b>	<b>2010s</b>
<i>Son of a gun</i>	4	61	59	44	49	67	117
<i>Love child</i>	0	2	0	2	17	86	182

In the 1950s and 1960s, minced oaths related to sexual acts were almost entirely absent, with only *Eff* recorded once per decade. *Pooh*, a mild bowel-related term, saw limited but steady use, while *Son of a gun* appeared only occasionally. This scarcity

reflects the conservative media climate of the time, where even euphemistic references to sex or bodily functions were largely avoided. The Hays Code, enforced until 1968, strictly regulated film content, banning profanity, nudity, and sexual references [2]. Similarly, the FCC maintained strong content restrictions on television and radio, prohibiting obscene, indecent, or profane language [14]. These regulations left little space for even softened expressions of taboo topics.

Compared to religious-themed minced oaths, minced oaths relating to taboo bodily functions were significantly less frequent in early decades and may not have been widely in use during the 1950s. Given the strong social and media taboos of the time, it is plausible that many euphemistic substitutes for sexuality and bodily functions had not yet emerged or entered common usage. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, euphemisms for sexual or excretory terms tend to have later attestations, mostly from the 20th century onward, reflecting a more recent linguistic development likely influenced by changing social norms and media regulations.

The 1970s brought slight increases in bodily-function euphemisms. Words like *Freaking*, *Frigging*, *Effing*, and *Frack* appeared in small numbers. *Pooh* continued to rise modestly, and *Love child* emerged sporadically. This decade also saw legal shifts in how obscenity was defined. The Supreme Court's *Miller v. California* (1973) decision introduced the Miller Test, allowing local communities to set their own standards for what counts as obscene. It defined obscene material as something that is meant to cause sexual excitement, shows sexual acts in a clearly offensive way, and has no serious value in terms of art, literature, politics, or science [30]. This ruling created more flexibility in what could be broadcast, possibly encouraging the cautious use of euphemisms to avoid triggering obscenity rules while still allowing some expression.

In the 1980s, taboo bodily-function minced oaths began to gain modest traction. *Freaking* and *Frigging* showed slight increases, *Frack* reappeared, and *Pooh* continued to grow steadily. *Son of a gun* remained stable, while *Love child* was still rarely used. However, religious-themed minced oaths still dominated overall usage. One important factor limiting the spread of sexual and bodily-function euphemisms was the *FCC v.*

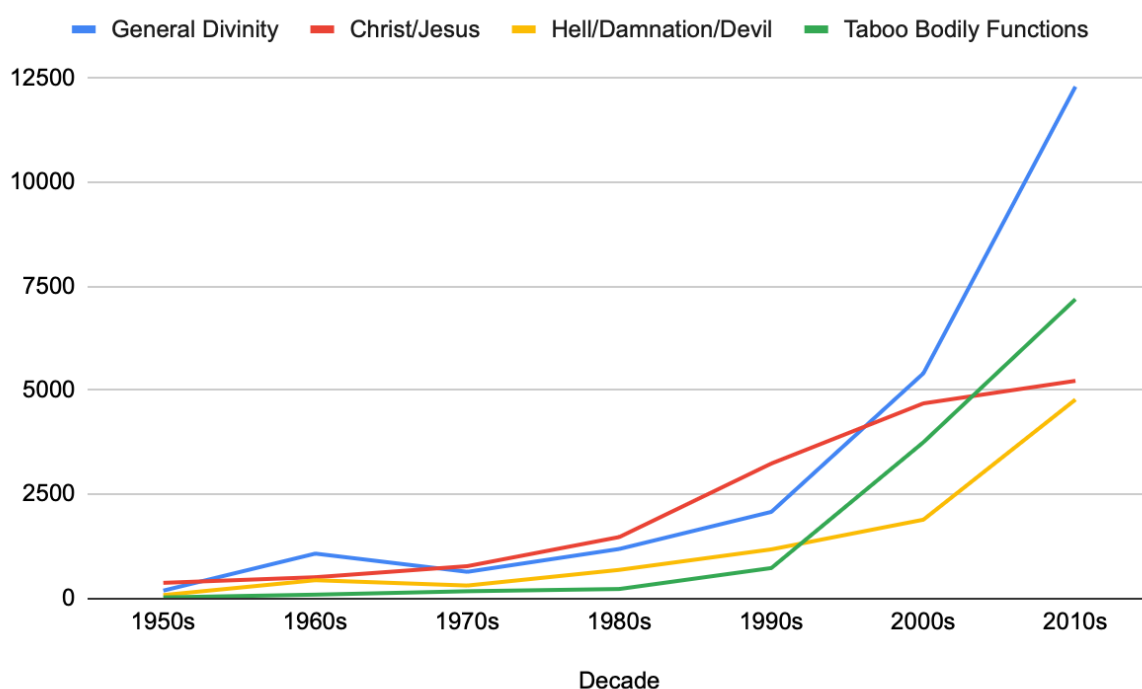
*Pacifica Foundation* (1978) ruling [17]. This case upheld the government's right to regulate indecent content on public broadcasts, especially during hours when children might be watching. It specifically centered around George Carlin's "seven dirty words" - *fuck, piss, shit, cocksucker, cunt, motherfucker, and tits* - which were deemed inappropriate for broadcast. Notably, *fuck* was among these prohibited words, and the subcategory of minced oaths analyzed here (*Freaking, Frigging, Fricking, etc.*) derives from attempts to soften or avoid this term while still expressing strong emotions.

The 1990s marked a significant change with a noticeable rise in euphemisms for sexual acts along with the quick growth of terms like *A-hole* and increased use of *Love child*. This increase reflects wider changes in culture and media during that time. The growth of cable and satellite television brought many new channels that were less strictly regulated than traditional broadcast networks, which allowed for more freedom in language use [27]. At the same time, social attitudes toward sexuality and language became more relaxed, influenced by Generation X's ironic and rebellious style that favored sharper and more casual expressions [41]. Additionally, legal challenges to FCC rules weakened the strict control over indecent language, creating a more open setting for using euphemisms [27, p.100].

The 2000s and 2010s saw explosive growth in these minced oaths. *Freaking* became the most frequent minced oath across all categories. Other terms like *Fricking, Frack, Frig, and Effing* also surged. *A-hole* and *Love child* continued to expand, and *Pooh* remained in steady use. This period coincided with the rise of new media platforms such as cable television, satellite radio, and the early stages of internet streaming, which provided more outlets with fewer restrictions compared to traditional broadcast television. Additionally, legal challenges such as *FCC v. Fox Television Stations* (2009, 2012) questioned the FCC's authority to penalize broadcasters for "fleeting expletives," ultimately weakening enforcement over isolated instances of indecent language. Together, these cultural and legal changes created a media environment more tolerant of strong language, allowing minced oaths related to sexuality and bodily functions to flourish while traditional religious euphemisms plateaued or declined.

The analysis shows that minced oaths related to taboo bodily functions were almost absent from early television, unlike religious-themed expressions which were already widespread. Strict media regulations and strong cultural taboos around sexuality and bodily functions kept these euphemisms rare until the late 20th century. Legal decisions like *Miller v. California* and *FCC v. Pacifica Foundation* influenced the slow rise of these expressions by defining and restricting what was considered offensive or indecent. Beginning in the 1990s, minced oaths referring to sexual acts, bowel functions, and sexual-result epithets grew sharply in both frequency and acceptance, reflecting broader cultural shifts toward more open language and less conservative broadcast standards. By the 2000s and 2010s, these taboo-related minced oaths not only became common but in many cases surpassed traditional religious-themed euphemisms, showing a significant change in public attitudes toward language use in media over time. The chart below summarizes the total frequency of minced oaths by group across each decade (see Figure 1). It shows how usage patterns changed for each category of expressions - from general religious references to euphemisms for the devil and bodily functions.

**Figure 2.1** *Frequency Trends of Minced Oath Categories Across Decades*



As the chart shows, minced oaths referencing taboo bodily functions remained nearly nonexistent until the 1980s but grew rapidly afterward, peaking in the 2010s. This group eventually became the most commonly used overall. Hell/Damnation/Devil expressions grew more steadily over time, especially due to the popularity of terms like *heck* and *dang*. The Christ/Jesus group peaked in the 2000s with words like *jeez* and *geez*, while General Divinity expressions showed early dominance but began to decline after the 1970s.

Within each group, some expressions gained popularity while others faded or disappeared. In the General Divinity group, *Gosh* and *Good Heavens* were common in early decades but declined later. *Holy Moly* and *For Goodness' Sake* grew slowly and remained active. In the *Christ/Jesus* group, *Gee* dominated early on but was replaced by *Jeez* and *Geez* in the 2000s. *Jeepers* and *Jiminy* were used only occasionally. In the *Hell/Damnation/Devil* group, *Heck* rose steadily and became one of the most frequently used minced oaths overall. Others like *Drat* and *Confounded* appeared briefly but lost relevance. In the Taboo Bodily Functions group, newer terms like *freaking*, *fricking*, and *a-hole* gained popularity in recent decades, while older euphemisms like *pooh* stayed rare and stable.

The evolution of minced oaths on television illustrates the shifting boundaries of cultural and linguistic norms over the decades. Religious-themed minced oaths were once dominant but have steadily declined as society became more secular, while expressions related to taboo bodily functions grew in popularity, reflecting more liberal attitudes and relaxed media restrictions. This change shows how language adapts to broader social trends, media regulations, and changing public attitudes toward politeness, morality, and the expression of strong emotions. The rise of euphemisms for sexual acts, bodily functions, and the devil further highlights a transformation in how people express themselves in everyday communication, especially as media platforms became less constrained by traditional taboos.

## Conclusion to Chapter 2

The categorization of minced oaths in this study reveals how language adapts to cultural sensitivities, particularly regarding religion and bodily functions. The first major category, religious references, includes three subcategories: general divinity, Christ/Jesus, and hell/damnation/devil. These terms primarily substitute direct references to God, Christ, or concepts of damnation. As noted in the theory, religious-themed minced oaths reflect both a cultural sensitivity toward avoiding direct religious references and the historical pressures of blasphemy laws. The use of minced oaths for religious references showcases society's attempt to comply with these cultural taboos while maintaining the ability to express strong emotions.

The analysis of General Divinity minced oaths reveals significant shifts in their usage, highlighting a process of semantic bleaching. Terms like *Gosh* and *My Goodness* experienced dramatic increases from the 1980s, evolving from their religious origins into general exclamations. This shift illustrates how euphemisms can lose their original taboo-deflecting function and become more neutral expressions of surprise or frustration. Similarly, *Blimey*, a term from British English, became more global due to the rise of streaming platforms, which helped spread this term beyond its original regional use. *Holy Moly* and *Golly*, both prominent in children's programming, saw notable increases in frequency during the 2000s and 2010s, reflecting the increasing focus on child-oriented content during that time. Furthermore, the inclusion of terms like *Great Scott* and *Egad* points to the intersection of minced oaths and slang, as these expressions, which were once more common in the 1980s and 1990s, have begun to fade from everyday use, indicating their transition into more niche or archaic terms.

The Christ/Jesus minced oaths, such as *Gee*, *Jeez*, and *Geez*, show significant semantic bleaching. Originally religious, these terms have evolved into emotional intensifiers, losing their religious context and now serving primarily as interjections. This shift highlights how these minced oaths, once used to avoid blasphemy, are increasingly used for emphasis without any awareness of their origins. As *Gee* declined, *Jeez* and *Geez* took its place, further illustrating the interchangeable nature of these expressions. The rise of *Crikey*, a Britishism, is another example of how

regional terms gain broader use in global media, especially with the spread of streaming services. It grew in frequency throughout the 2000s and 2010s, signaling its integration into more mainstream language. Other minced oaths like *Gee Whiz*, *Jeepers*, *Cripes*, and *Judas Priest* show a modest increase, particularly in the 1990s and 2000s, but they remain less common in contemporary language. This suggests they are becoming obsolete or fading from regular use, with their resurgence likely tied to the television boom during that period.

The minced oaths related to Hell/Damnation/Devil, such as *Heck* and *Dang*, show significant changes in their usage over time. *Heck* initially served as a euphemism for *hell* but seems to have lost its original euphemistic function, now functioning more as a general exclamation. Similarly, *Dang*, closely resembling *damn*, has become a more neutral expression, losing its taboo connotation. Terms like *Darned* and *Doggone*, which were once common, now appear less frequently, suggesting they have become outdated or replaced by more contemporary expressions. *Confounded*, *Sam Hill*, and *Tarnation* are still used occasionally but remain less prominent.

The trends in Sexual Acts minced oaths reveal a significant shift in television language. Prior to the 1980s, euphemisms for sexual acts were rare or heavily tabooed. From the 1980s onwards, terms like *Freaking*, *Frigging*, *Fricking*, *Frick*, *Fracking*, and *Eff* became more common, reflecting both societal liberalization and the need to balance edgy content with broadcast standards. These terms, used mainly in family-oriented programming, softened the impact of stronger language. However, older euphemisms like *Pooh* and *A-hole* appear less frequently, suggesting a decrease in their taboo status. The category of Sexual-result Epithets, including *Son of a gun* and *Love child*, has also remained less common than Sexual Acts minced oaths, indicating that, while social taboos around sex have weakened, there is still some resistance in mainstream media.

## CONCLUSION

This study has examined the usage of minced oaths in American television, analyzing their frequency, distribution, and categorization across several decades. The findings indicate significant shifts in the prevalence of these expressions over time, reflecting changes in societal norms, media regulations, and language use. Through the exploration of the frequency and thematic categorization of minced oaths, it has been demonstrated that they are both linguistic tools and cultural markers, shaped by the socio-legal environment of American television.

The analysis has successfully met the research objectives, specifically focusing on defining key concepts such as expletives, euphemisms, and minced oaths. In doing so, the study clarified that minced oaths are a specific type of euphemism, derived from taboo words but altered in form to mitigate offense. These expressions serve to communicate strong emotions while maintaining adherence to social norms and legal restrictions, particularly in media. Expletives, in this context, are broader, including any strong language used to express emotion, while euphemisms serve as socially acceptable substitutes for these terms, with minced oaths being a subcategory that retains emotional intensity but avoids direct offense.

The second objective was to investigate the communicative roles that minced oaths play in language. Through analysis, the study found that minced oaths serve multiple functions: they express emotional intensity, mitigate offense, and comply with legal and cultural constraints. Minced oaths have evolved to function not only as exclamations but also as markers of social identity and politeness, allowing speakers to navigate sensitive topics like religion and bodily functions without violating societal taboos.

In reviewing the legal and cultural framework regulating language on American TV, this research addressed the third objective. The analysis demonstrated how the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulations have influenced the use of minced oaths in television. These regulations, which prevent the broadcast of obscene or indecent language, have led to the creative use of euphemisms like minced oaths as substitutes for more profane expressions. The study highlighted the historical impact

of censorship on language use and how it shaped the prevalence and form of minced oaths, especially in family-friendly and prime-time television content.

The fourth objective, to compile and categorize minced oaths from authoritative linguistic sources, was achieved by first compiling a list of 165 minced oaths from various linguistic resources. This list is highly relevant for linguistics as it presents a comprehensive collection of minced oaths, but for further analysis, it was refined. 45 minced oaths were retained for detailed examination based on their frequency and relevance in American television. These terms were then categorized into thematic groups, reflecting the main sources of taboo language: Religious References (subcategorized into General Divinity, Christ/Jesus, and Hell/Damnation/Devil), and Taboo Bodily Functions (subcategorized into Sexual Acts, Bowel Functions, and Sexual-result Epithets).

The fifth and sixth objectives focused on analyzing the frequency and distribution of minced oaths in television transcripts and interpreting their thematic patterns and social meanings. The TV Corpus was essential for analyzing the frequency and distribution of minced oaths in American television from 1950 to 2018. Qualitative and quantitative methods were applied to identify patterns of increased usage, particularly in the 1980s and 1990s, reflecting a shift towards more informal, less censored content. This rise coincided with the loosening of content restrictions, fueled by the growth of cable television and niche networks. While some religious euphemisms declined after the 1970s, minced oaths related to sexual and bodily functions increased significantly from the 1980s, reflecting societal changes, including the influence of pop culture and a more liberal climate. The use of corpus linguistics tools enabled precise tracking of these linguistic shifts, revealing how minced oaths evolved with changing broadcast standards and social norms.

The categorization of minced oaths revealed their thematic functions within television discourse, divided into two main categories: Religious References and Taboo Bodily Functions, each with subcategories. Religious-themed minced oaths, such as *Gosh*, *Good Grief*, and *Heck*, were prevalent in the 1950s and 1960s, serving as polite substitutes for direct references to God, Christ, or hell, reflecting the cultural

sensitivity of the time. These expressions allowed speakers to navigate societal taboos around blasphemy, rooted in early American Puritanical moral standards. Over time, many of these terms experienced semantic bleaching, losing their religious connotations and becoming general interjections used for emotional emphasis. Terms like *Gosh* and *My Goodness* are now commonly used to express surprise, devoid of their original meaning. This shift, especially from the 1980s onward, saw minced oaths evolve into broader, culturally neutral expressions of frustration or surprise, with terms like *Golly* and *Holy Moly* becoming more prevalent in children's programming, highlighting the influence of market forces.

Similarly, minced oaths such as *Gee*, *Jeez*, and *Geez*, initially religious substitutes, became interjections conveying emotional intensity rather than avoiding blasphemy. The rise of expressions like *Crikey* further demonstrates the transatlantic influence of streaming services, where regional terms gained global popularity due to increased demand for diverse content. In contrast, minced oaths related to Taboo Bodily Functions and Sexual Acts, such as *Freaking*, *Fricking*, and *A-hole*, gained prominence from the 1980s onward, particularly in family-friendly media. This shift reflects the growing cultural acceptance of discussing bodily functions and sexuality in public and media discourse. The emergence of these expressions came later in television history, as legal restrictions on broadcast content loosened, providing a middle ground to introduce stronger language without violating broadcasting standards. These minced oaths, used to convey anger or frustration in a less offensive way, show how euphemistic language in television maintains a balance between emotional intensity and social decorum.

## SUMMARY

Евфемістичне маскування вульгаризмів та профанної лексики - це лінгвістичне явище, при якому значення грубих або табуйованих слів пом'якшується або змінюється через використання заміників, що мають менш образливий характер. Такі мовні заміни дозволяють мовцям висловлювати сильні емоції, водночас дотримуючись соціальних норм і уникати порушення заборон, зокрема в публічних чи регульованих мовних контекстах. Евфемістичне маскування виступає важливим інструментом балансування між емоційною виразністю і соціальною прийнятністю.

Дипломна робота досліджує різні аспекти застосування евфемістичного маскування вульгаризмів та профанної лексики у американському телебаченні, зосереджуючись на його функціях, поширеності та динаміці змін. Актуальність теми обумовлена високим рівнем регулювання мовлення у ЗМІ США, де Федеральна комісія зі зв'язку (FCC) встановлює чіткі обмеження щодо використання нецензурної лексики. Аналіз евфемістичного маскування дає змогу краще зрозуміти, як творці телевізійних програм адаптують мову для збереження її виразності в межах чинних обмежень.

Об'єктом дослідження є явище евфемістичного маскування вульгаризмів та профанної лексики як лінгвістичний і соціокультурний феномен. Предметом - конкретні мовні форми та способи їх застосування у телевізійних діалогах американських серіалів, що відображають еволюцію мовної поведінки під впливом медіарегулювання і культурних змін.

Основна мета роботи полягає у виявленні закономірностей використання евфемістичного маскування вульгаризмів та профанної лексики у телесценаріях, визначенні його функцій у комунікативних актах та аналізі діахронних змін у його вживанні. Для досягнення цієї мети застосовано методи корпусної лінгвістики, зокрема аналіз корпусу TV Corpus, що включає близько 325 мільйонів слів із транскриптів телевізійних шоу США від 1950-х до 2018 року.

У теоретичній частині роботи досліджено поняття евфемізмів, табуйованої лексики, а також виділено роль евфемістичного маскування як особливого

способу адаптації вульгаризмів для уникнення соціальних санкцій. Розглянуто юридичні аспекти регулювання мовлення у США, зокрема вплив рішень FCC і Верховного Суду на мовну практику телевізійних програм. Підкреслено, що потреба в пом'якшенні вульгарної лексики зумовлена як культурними нормами, так і правовими обмеженнями, що впливають на мовленнєву поведінку творців контенту.

Емпіричний аналіз показав, що евфемістичне маскування є поширеним явищем у американському телебаченні, особливо в жанрах ситкомів, драм і ток-шоу. Зібрано і класифіковано понад 160 одиниць евфемізмів, з яких 45 найбільш вживаних досліджено детально. Ці форми умовно поділено на дві основні категорії: замітники релігійної лексики (згадки про Бога, Ісуса, пекло) та замітники, пов'язані з тілесними функціями і сексуальністю.

Аналіз діахронних тенденцій свідчить про зростання вживання евфемістичного маскування впродовж останніх семи десятиліть, що відображає культурні зміни та трансформацію соціальних норм щодо вульгарної лексики. Особливо помітний поступовий спад релігійних евфемізмів із одночасним зростанням евфемістичних заміників, пов'язаних із сексуальністю і тілесними процесами. Це свідчить про більш ліберальне ставлення сучасного суспільства до тем, які раніше вважалися табуйованими.

Евфемістичне маскування виконує не лише роль мовного пом'якшення, а й слугує інструментом емоційного підсилення, соціального маркування та підтримання мовленнєвого етикету. Вживання таких форм допомагає мовцям зберігати позитивний соціальний імідж та уникати конфліктів, зберігаючи при цьому необхідний рівень експресивності. Евфемізми, як виявлено, часто виконують функції посередників між суворими соціальними правилами і потребою в емоційному вираженні, підтримуючи баланс між свободою висловлювання і соціальною відповідальністю.

Окрему увагу приділено аналізу взаємозв'язку між мовою, культурою та законом, демонструючи, як зміни у суспільних цінностях відображаються на мовній практиці в медіа. Дослідження підтвердило, що евфемістичне маскування

вульгаризмів та профанної лексики не лише пом'якшує грубу лексику, а й стає соціокультурним маркером, що відображає зміни у ставленні до мови, моралі і цензури.

Отже, результати дослідження підтверджують, що евфемістичне маскування вульгаризмів та профанної лексики є ключовим мовним механізмом у американському телебаченні, який дозволяє поєднати потребу у вираженні емоцій з вимогами соціальної й правової прийнятності. Це дослідження розширює розуміння процесів мовної адаптації в медіасфері, розкриває взаємозв'язок між мовою, культурою та законом.

## REFERENCES

1. Allan, K., & Burrige, K. *Forbidden words: Taboo and the censoring of language*. Cambridge University Press, 2006.
2. Backstage. What was the Hays Code? The film industry's first attempt at self-censorship. 13 October 2022. <https://www.backstage.com/magazine/article/hays-code-rules-history-77748/>
3. Brinton, L. J. *Pragmatic particles in English: Grammaticalization and discourse functions*. Mouton de Gruyter, 1996.
4. Carter, R., & McCarthy, M. *Cambridge grammar of English*. Cambridge University Press, 2006.
5. Crystal, D. *The Cambridge encyclopedia of language* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press, 1997.
6. Crystal, D. *Language and the Internet*. Cambridge University Press, 2001.
7. Davies, M. *The TV and movie corpora*. [https://www.english-corpora.org/files/tv\\_movie\\_corpora.pdf](https://www.english-corpora.org/files/tv_movie_corpora.pdf)
8. Dictionary.com. *Mild oath - Crossword Solver*. <https://www.dictionary.com/e/crosswordsolver/mild-oath/>
9. Duolingo. What the fudge is a minced oath? 10 January 2023. <https://blog.duolingo.com/minced-oaths/>
10. Eble, C. Minced oaths: A window on the relationship between language and society. *Journal of Communication*, 53(2), 294–310, 2003. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2003.tb02589.x>
11. Echols, E. C. The art of classical swearing. *American Speech*, 26(1), 3–13, 1951. <https://doi.org/10.2307/453924>
12. Ecker, D. Zounds! What the fork are minced oaths – and why are we still fecking using them today? *The Conversation*, 6 May 2020. <https://theconversation.com/zounds-what-the-fork-are-minced-oaths-and-why-are-we-still-fecking-using-them-today-141423>
13. Eskridge, L. *God's forever family: The Jesus People Movement in America*. Oxford University Press, 2013.

14. Federal Communications Commission. Policy statement on indecency. 1990. <https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/FCC-90-264A1.pdf>
15. Federal Communications Commission. What we do. <https://www.fcc.gov/about-fcc/what-we-do>
16. Federal Communications Commission v. Fox Television Stations, Inc., 556 U.S. 502 (2009). Oyez. <https://www.oyez.org/cases/2008/07-582>
17. Federal Communications Commission v. Pacifica Foundation, 438 U.S. 726 (1978). <https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/438/726/>
18. Gehweiler, E. From proper name to primary interjection. *Journal of Historical Pragmatics*, 9(1), 69–93, 2008. <https://doi.org/10.1075/jhp.9.1.05geh>
19. Huddleston, R., & Pullum, G. K. *The Cambridge grammar of the English language*. Cambridge University Press, 2002.
20. Hughes, G. *An Encyclopedia of Swearing: The social history of oaths, profanity, foul language, and ethnic slurs in the English-speaking world*. M.E. Sharpe, 2006.
21. Jakobson, R. Language and poetics. In T. Sebeok (Ed.), *Style in language* (pp. 350–377). MIT Press, 1960.
22. Jones, J. M. U.S. church membership falls below majority for first time. *Gallup*, 29 March 2021. <https://news.gallup.com/poll/341963/church-membership-falls-below-majority-first-time.aspx>
23. Kennedy, G. *An introduction to corpus linguistics*. Longman, 1998.
24. Levshina, N. Online film subtitles as a corpus: An n-gram approach. *Corpora*, 12(3), 311–338, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.3366/cor.2017.0123>
25. Library of Congress. Television: Women in the moving image. American Women: Resources at the Library of Congress. <https://guides.loc.gov/american-women-moving-image/television>
26. Ljung, M. *Swearing: A cross-cultural linguistic study*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.
27. Lotz, A. D. *The Television Will Be Revolutionized*. NYU Press, 2007.

28. McEnery, T., & Hardie, A. *Corpus linguistics: Method, theory and practice*. Cambridge University Press, 2012.
29. Noll, M. A. *The rise of evangelicalism: The age of Edwards, Whitefield and the Wesleys*. InterVarsity Press, 2003.
30. Oyez. Federal Communications Commission v. Pacifica Foundation. <https://www.oyez.org/cases/1971/70-73>
31. Pew Research Center. “Nones” on the rise: One-in-five adults have no religious affiliation. 9 October 2012. <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2012/10/09/nones-on-the-rise/>
32. Pew Research Center. America’s changing religious landscape. 12 May 2015. <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2015/05/12/americas-changing-religious-landscape/>
33. Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP. FCC indecency policy: Constitutionally sound or unconstitutionally vague? <https://www.pillsburylaw.com/a/web/1885/F275CABCD23A1A1A03E315E37722CE01.pdf>
34. Quirk, R., Greenbaum, S., Leech, G., & Svartvik, J. *A comprehensive grammar of the English language*. Longman, 1985.
35. Tagliamonte, S., & Denis, D. Linguistic ruin? LOL! Instant messaging and teen language. *American Speech*, 83(1), 3–34, 2008. <https://doi.org/10.1215/00031283-2008-001>
36. U.S. Congress. 47 U.S.C. § 503 - Forfeitures. In *United States Code*, 2023. <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/USCODE-2023-title47/pdf/USCODE-2023-title47-chap5-subchapV-sec503.pdf>
37. Wiktionary. Category: English minced oaths. [https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Category:English\\_minced\\_oaths](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Category:English_minced_oaths)
38. Williams, D. K. *God’s own party: The making of the Christian Right*. Oxford University Press, 2010.
39. Wray, A. Formulaic language. *Language Teaching*, 33(4), 213–231, 2000. <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/language->

[teaching/article/abs/formulaic-language/BBB14FAEC07F104039986A1B5733B049](https://www.etai.org.il/documents/ETAI-Forum-Vol.-XXV-No.-1-Spring-2014.pdf#page=30)

40. Young, D. L. [Title unknown]. In *ETAI Forum*, Vol. XXV, No. 1, Spring 2014, p. 30. Electronic Torah Archive Initiative. <https://www.etai.org.il/documents/ETAI-Forum-Vol.-XXV-No.-1-Spring-2014.pdf#page=30>
41. Sratanjee, V. The generation you forgot - Gen X as catalysts for future growth. *Forbes*, 1 February 2025. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/vibhasratanjee/2025/02/01/the-generation-you-forgotgen-x-as-catalysts-for-future-growth/>








### DATA SOURCES

1. Davies, M. TV Corpus. English-Corpora.org. <https://www.english-corpora.org/tv/>
2. Dictionary.com. <https://www.dictionary.com/>
3. Merriam-Webster. Merriam-Webster.com dictionary. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/>
4. Oxford English Dictionary. OED online. <https://www.oed.com/?tl=true>




























## APPENDIX 1

*Minced oaths, their original profane equivalents, frequency of appearance in the TV corpus, and primary source of documentation.*




<b>Minced Oath</b>	<b>Intended Meaning</b>	<b>Corpus Frequency</b>	<b>Lexical Source</b>
<b>Gosh</b>	God	12689	Merriam-Webster
1967 US/CA Batman    n't even know where to look for her. - Her? - Batgirl. <b>Gosh</b> , yes, she'd be great. On our side and all. And			
<b>Freaking</b>	Fucking	7295	Duolingo
1999 US/CA 3rd Rock from the Sun    Cause then we have to find a ride to your funeral because you broke our <b>freaking</b> car! I'm gon na talk to the mechanic. I			
<b>Gee</b>	Jesus	6986	Encyclopedia of Swearing
1959 US/CA Have Gun - Will Travel    a rat's nest. Pack rat nest, to be exact. Oh, <b>gee</b> , new money. It used to be. The rat's destroyed almost \$15,000			
<b>Heck</b>	Hell	5877	Dictionary.com
1969 US/CA Hogan's Heroes    no noise at all, and I'll tell her I'm an officer. <b>Heck</b> , who'd believe that, even in wartime? Newkirk, you're a			
<b>Jeez</b>	Jesus	5239	Merriam-Webster
1989 US/CA Alien Nation    're telling me about trajectory angles? Well, they're really very different. <b>Jeez</b> , it's hot. You must remember the ozone			
<b>My Goodness</b>	My God	4187	Wiktionary
1969 US/CA Bewitched    I'll just pop in and see how Dustbin is doing. Oh, <b>my goodness</b> . Daddy, you're setting the father-in-law business back a hundred years. .			
<b>Geez</b>	Jesus	3976	Merriam-Webster
1989 US/CA Cheers    gossiping like a couple of old ladies, plus everyone thinks we're dufuses. <b>Geez</b> , you know, I was just going to say we could probably use a			
<b>Dang</b>	Damn	2048	Encyclopedia of Swearing
1986 US/CA Miami Vice    you to remember that I don't hold you accountable. Now, that's <b>dang</b> nice of you, Frank. I'll keep that in mind. I did			

<b>Blimey</b>	God blind me	1106	Encyclopedia of Swearing
2003 US/CA The Simpsons    JUDI DENCH: I'll " mum " you! (CRYINGOUTINPAIN) TEEN: <b>Blimey!</b> Well, Marge. You got ta admit, I've been on my			
<b>Good Heavens</b>	Good God	1031	Duolingo
1969 US/CA NBC Experiment in Te...    . Say, How many hours a day you spend in here anyhow? <b>Good heavens!</b> He can't spend the rest of his...! Well, I mean			
<b>Golly</b>	God	814	Encyclopedia of Swearing
1969 US/CA Bewitched    thanks you. - Come on, kids. - Bye-bye. Have fun. <b>Golly.</b> I wish we had a real witch to go trick-or-treating with us every Halloween			
<b>For crying out loud</b>	For Christ's sake	767	Duolingo
1997 US/CA Stargate SG-1    right, Captain, take a position 50 yards... Oh, <b>for crying out loud!</b> Hi. The man has not changed. Uh, w- w- we just			
<b>Frigging</b>	Fucking	668	Encyclopedia of Swearing
2005 US/CA ER    custom? - Yeah, Spanish Revival. Ancef's on board. - This <b>frigging</b> thing is attached. - I think he missed the femur. Looks like he			
<b>Holy Cow</b>	Holy Shit	619	Duolingo
1998 US/CA The New Batman Adven...    , chick. Here, chick, chick, chick. Okey-dokey. - <b>Holy cow!</b> - You had to say it. I'm getting a report of a			
<b>Good grief</b>	God	459	Encyclopedia of Swearing
1999 US/CA Everybody Loves Raymond    the matter with you guys? Come on. How old are you? <b>Good grief.</b> What's the big friggin' deal? She touched' em. -			
<b>Son of a gun</b>	Son of a bitch	401	Wiktionary
1979 US/CA Buck Rogers in the 2...    ' - I told you you could knock him out. - <b>Son of a gun.</b> Come on, let's go find your president. Koren to Zale.			
<b>Gar</b>	God	395	Merriam-Webster
1998 US/CA The New Batman Adven...    front row. I remember when you used to dress like that for me. <b>Gar,</b> we have a show to put on.			
<b>Fricking</b>	Fucking	381	OED












2012 US/CA Burn Notice    That means our rednecks are either opening up a dry cleaners in the middle of <b>fricking</b> nowhere or they're			
<b>Pooh</b>	Shit	361	Wiktionary
2005 US/CA Duck Dodgers    was probably a 350-pound oaf living in his mother's storm cellar. Oh, <b>pooh</b> . And just when I was about to			
<b>Drat</b>	(o)d rot God rot	298	Dictionary.com
1969 US/CA Bewitched    . Permanently, I hope? - He's in Chicago on business. - <b>Drat!</b> And if I'm lucky, he'll be home day after tomorrow.			
<b>For Goodness' Sake</b>	For God's Sake	295	Wiktionary
2017 US/CA Emerald City    . - Morning, Dr. Chapman. Will you call me Karen, <b>for goodness sake?</b> You've busted your butt all these years			
<b>Darned</b>	Damned	291	Encyclopedia of Swearing
1989 US/CA Columbo    . We can begin when we both have time. Well, I'll be <b>darned</b> . You wan na paint me? Wait till I tell Mrs. Columbo.			
<b>Love child</b>	Bastard	289	Encyclopedia of Swearing
2010 US/CA Archer    have nothing left to remind me of Conway. - Except his little mocha <b>love child</b> . - His what? Yeah. - You had			
<b>Doggone</b>	Goddamn(ed)	289	Encyclopedia of Swearing
1987 US/CA Dynasty    the telecast is about to start. Thank you, Gerard. I hate this <b>doggone</b> makeup. No point in getting upset. It has to			
<b>Holy Moly</b>	Holy Mary	275	Duolingo
2010 US/CA CSI: Miami    with him.: I can not believe this. Oh, my... <b>Holy moly</b> . Horatio, it's tom. The blood boiled out of sam gardner's			
<b>Frick</b>	Fuck	268	Wiktionary
2009 US/CA Scrubs    him on his new office? - You know what, frick them. - <b>Frick</b> them? I'm one of them. Yeah, but they're acting like			
<b>By George</b>	God	262	Encyclopedia of Swearing
1997 US/CA Buffy the Vampire Sl...    back to full health. - A vampire like Drusilla? - Exactly. <b>By George</b> , I think he's got it! The key to your cure, ducks			






























<b>Crikey</b>	Christ	261	Duolingo
2016 US/CA Man Seeking Woman    something. Yeah. You're giving me my freedom? - Yeah. - <b>Crikey!</b> Yeah. There you go. - Thank you! - Yeah. -			
<b>Jiminy</b>	Jesus	219	Encyclopedia of Swearing
2008 US/CA Pushing Daisies    Why did I make you tell me? I told you to stop digging. <b>Jiminy</b> crispies. Are you paying final respects? '			
<b>Fracking</b>	Fucking	214	Duolingo
2014 US/CA Dallas    to be allies. You brought this on yourself. You shut down my entire <b>fracking</b> operation to teach me a lesson about infidelity?			
<b>Eff</b>	Fuck	210	Encyclopedia of Swearing
2017 US/CA Iron Fist    . - Just... just using me! - Danny... Danny. Calm the <b>eff</b> down. What just happened? You went nuclear. It's nothing, okay			
<b>Gee Whiz</b>	Jesus	175	Duolingo
2004 US/CA South Park    ! Ni-I can' - I can't! Huff. Oh man. <b>Gee whiz</b> , Timmy. It looks like we have some pppprety stiff competition this year.			
<b>Feck</b>	Fuck	168	Wiktionary
2017 US/CA Snatch    ... Poetic little bugger, weren't he? " I'm sorry, but <b>feck</b> it, I love her. " That doesn't help. And it does			
<b>Confounded</b>	Goddamn(ed)	163	Encyclopedia of Swearing
1992 US/CA The Fresh Prince of ...    . Yo, man, are you ready for some dope cuts? No! <b>Confounded!</b> Everywhere I go, I hear the same damn music. - that'll be			
<b>Effing</b>	Fucking	159	Encyclopedia of Swearing
2016 US/CA Divorce    're not funny. - Your dad would disagree. He thinks I'm an <b>effing</b> card. Well, the hardest I've ever seen him laugh is at the			
<b>A-hole</b>	Asshole	152	Wiktionary
2013 US/CA The Killing    bitches, stay out of our park! Twitch: Ain't your park, <b>A-hole</b> . Punk-ass queers! Yo, who you calling a queer, bitch? Yo			
<b>Jeepers</b>	Jesus	151	Merriam-Webster

2012 US/CA The Big Bang Theory    (laughter) Oh, Internet, this is so going all over you. <b>Jeepers</b> , I'm drunk. (both_laugh) Thank you for picking us up.			
<b>Frig</b>	Fuck	137	Duolingo
2015 US/CA Trailer Park Boys    it needs a bath. Do you think sasquatches smell like balls? What the <b>frig</b> ? Oh, Randy! Goddammit! Oh, he's a			
<b>Frack</b>	Fuck	134	Duolingo
2014 US/CA Dallas    John Ross. To get to that shale, you're gon na have to <b>frack</b> . Our whole cattle operation's in this section.			
<b>Great Scott</b>	God	129	Encyclopedia of Swearing
2017 US/CA Archer    !Jesus! Okay. Jesus. On one, two... Ohhhh... <b>Great Scott!</b> Wha... don't you move, you sick bugger! No...			
<b>Egad</b>	Oh God	125	Merriam-Webster
1999 US/CA The Simpsons    . Leave it to the Democrats to let the Spaniards back in the pantry. <b>Egad!</b> A maniac cutting a swath of destruction!			
<b>Sam Hill</b>	Hell	110	Dictionary.com
2015 US/CA Big Time in Hollywoo...    's my money, man? Oh, my god! What in the <b>Sam Hill</b> is going on? You gon na give me my money? I'll get			
<b>Tarnation</b>	Damnation	110	Encyclopedia of Swearing
2015 US/CA Unbreakable Kimmy Sc...    'm not. Prove it. Prove I'm not a cop? How in <b>tarnation</b> am I gon na do that? Do heroin in front of us. Now			
<b>Cripes</b>	Christ	105	Dictionary.com
2016 US/CA Aftermath    Older. - Tatted. - Criminal. I get it. Thank you. <b>Cripes</b> . I like him. So what? You like him like what, a			
<b>Judas Priest</b>	Jesus	100	Encyclopedia of Swearing
2016 US/CA Togetherness    , uh, are you sure about this thing? I... I look like <b>Judas Priest</b> . Yeah, it's gothic. It looks amazing on you.			
<b>Gog</b>	God	99	Encyclopedia of Swearing
2015 US/CA Impastor    . (Buddy) Oh, so sweet. God bless you, Stephanie. <b>Gog</b> bess ooo. Gog bess us all. - Bye. - Bye. Okay			































<b>Bish</b>	<b>Bitch</b>	90	Wiktionary
2016 US/CA Insecure    . " He did not sad face you. I will slap you right... bish... whaat? That's my life. Can we eat? I'm hungry			
<b>What the hey</b>	<b>What the hell</b>	84	Wiktionary
2016 US/CA Insecure    . " He did not sad face you. I will slap you right... bish... whaat? That's my life. Can we eat? I'm hungry			
<b>Gad</b>	<b>God</b>	83	Merriam-Webster
2011 US/CA Mad    was amazing. Still, pretty amazing, Junior, what are you doing? Gad, it's my mother. Nothing. Mom. Just playing with my chemistry			
<b>Jove</b>	<b>God</b>	82	Encyclopedia of Swearing
2016 US/CA Murdoch Mysteries    Emptying your mind. Emptying your mind. - Ooh! - Yes! By Jove, dear lady, I do believe you've saved me. I'm glad			
<b>Ye gods!</b>	<b>God</b>	81	Encyclopedia of Swearing
2013 US/CA Futurama    , " Worst play in history " - - there's some ambiguity there. Ye gods! What manner of beef-witted I			
<b>Criminy</b>	<b>Jesus Lord</b>	77	Merriam-Webster
2017 US/CA Code Black    it is your heart, Bill. You're in organ failure. Oh, criminy. I'll start a central line. I got this, Dr. Rorish			
<b>Jesus wept</b>	<b>Jesus</b>	75	Encyclopedia of Swearing
2017 US/CA Baskets    this time, two minutes. Okay? I'm gon na say " Jesus wept. " We gon na be right out of here. - He knows how			
<b>Bejesus</b>	<b>By Jesus</b>	70	Merriam-Webster
2017 US/CA Shrink    up behind me and just yell, " Shark! " Used to scare the bejesus out of me. Happened every time. Hmm.			
<b>Shut The Front Door</b>	<b>Shut The Fuck Up</b>	70	Wiktionary
2016 US/CA Life in Pieces    . I broke up with him. - What's that? - Shut the front door. You just said you missed him. I do. \			
<b>Gadzooks</b>	<b>God's hooks</b>	63	Merriam-Webster










2015 US/CA The Odd Couple    other day. Turns out he used to date Brooke. - Uh-oh. - <b>Gadzooks</b> . Talk about a tough act to follow. No, what's the big			
<b>Jingo</b>	Jesus	55	Encyclopedia of Swearing
2012 US/CA Louie    from the Baby Jesus. Hi Mommy, this is Baby Jesus. Jingo, <b>jingo</b> ... " Maria, will you stop leaving me those messages? "			
<b>Crapola</b>	Shit	53	Duolingo
2009 US/CA Army Wives    . - What? It's not official, not with lawyers and all that <b>crapola</b> . We just didn't feel it was fair to you to tell you just			
<b>A four-letter word</b>	Fuck	51	Encyclopedia of Swearing
2014 US/CA Nashville    tell you what... I love that man, but that right there is a <b>four-letter word</b> . Dude, this is ridiculous. This is Juliette Barnes			
<b>The f-word</b>	Fuck	50	Encyclopedia of Swearing
2015 US/CA The Royals    horny, FML ". For God's sake, what is FML? <b>The f-word</b> my life, Your Majesty. " This club :			
<b>By Jupiter</b>	By God	45	Wiktionary
2015 US/CA Hulk and the Agents ...    a big party-poopier, huh? We got one of those, too. <b>By Jupiter!</b> This jade vixen would turn Venus herself green '			
<b>Zounds</b>	God's wounds	43	Merriam-Webster
2016 US/CA Sleepy Hollow    , Crane? We need the sheet music for the summoning tune. Oh, <b>zounds</b> .' T is in the Archives. I shall have it in a shaking			
<b>Good Gravy</b>	Good God	40	Duolingo
2016 US/CA Scorpion    Okay, how was the world's most awkward plane ride? Oh, <b>good gravy</b> , you didn't tell her. Refuse to engage. Oh, please.			
<b>Teed off</b>	Piss off	39	Encyclopedia of Swearing
1987 US/CA Sledge Hammer!    tee-off time in half an hour. - Yeah? Well, I'm already <b>teed off</b> . Hey! What are you doing? I'll take the penalty.			
<b>Geez Louise</b>	Jesus Christ	36	Duolingo
2017 US/CA Love    . Stop. Hey, buddy, want a little popcorn with that butter? <b>Geez Louise</b> . He's putting on a lot of butter. You can't.			

<b>Begorra</b>	God	35	Encyclopedia of Swearing
2009 US/CA Breaking Bad    . - Mayhew. Is that Irish or English? - Irish. Faith and <b>begorra</b> . A fellow potato-eater. My real name is McGill. The Jew thing I			
<b>Dadgum</b>	Goddamned	35	Wiktionary
2013 US/CA The Secret Life of t...    , too? I told you, you can't make him get help. <b>Dadgum</b> it! I can make him get help! I wish. I wish you			
<b>Drated</b>	Damned	32	Dictionary.com
2006 US/CA Gilmore Girls    have some things. - Sure. Sure. Yeah. Drat you, you <b>drated</b> spaghetti, you slippery, slithery, uncooperative --			
<b>Bullsh</b>	Bullshit	26	Encyclopedia of Swearing
2017 US/CA People of Earth    married. Well, I knew it. Why do I keep falling for this <b>bullsh</b> ... I thought you were different. No, I'm bad. I'm			
<b>Dagnabbit</b>	Goddamnit	24	Duolingo
2016 US/CA Brooklyn Nine-Nine    deal. Sounds good. No, I just told them to surround you. <b>Dagnabbit</b> . Oof! Look, Sarge, I'm sorry that we're			
<b>Cheese And Rice</b>	Jesus Christ	22	Wiktionary
2016 US/CA Grace and Frankie    will reach in and stop yours with my bare hands. Oh, <b>cheese and rice!</b> - Kids, brace yourselves. - Frankie, I really c			
<b>Jeepers Creepers</b>	Jesus	17	Encyclopedia of Swearing
2016 US/CA Broad City    right up at hacky sack, man, I'm good, man. <b>Jeepers creepers</b> , man. I need that gas money, m... (laughing)?			
<b>Lawks</b>	Lord	17	Wiktionary
Mapp & Lucia    and the time quite flew away with me. Let's have a gander. <b>Lawks</b> , Mapp! Welcome to the 20th century. I love it!			
<b>Footling</b>	Bugger	14	Encyclopedia of Swearing
2015 US/CA Outlander    should be down here, but it's still up here. He's a <b>footling</b> , then? Yes, I suppose. We're going to have to turn			
<b>Struth</b>	God's truth	12	Merriam-Webster

<p>gallipoli    What are you doing, Tolly? - Come on. - Bugger me. <b>Struth</b>, it's the Light Horse. - Hey, where are your gee-gees,</p>			
<b>Oh snap</b>	Oh, shit	11	Duolingo
<p>2015 US/CA Teenage Mutant Ninja...    's not over yet! (Mondo) Go, Mikey, go! <b>Oh snap!</b> Yeow! Ooh! Hot! Aah! No one... beats... Xever</p>			
<b>Dadgummit</b>	Goddamnit	11	Wiktionary
<p>2013 US/CA NTSF:SD:SUV    It's jammed. I don't think I could jimmy it. Well, <b>dadgummit</b>. Thanks for trying. Hey, my pleasure.</p>			
<b>By guess</b>	By God	10	Wiktionary
<p>2010 US/CA Top Shot    relying a little more on kentucky windage, And he was a little more <b>by guess</b> and by golly. Pleasure.</p>			
<b>Dad-burn</b>	Goddamn(ed)	9	Encyclopedia of Swearing
<p>1985 US/CA The Transformers    it closes. COWBOY: Whoa there! Come on! Let's whoop these <b>dad-burn</b> tenderfeet. - Ok. Let's straighten c</p>			
<b>Motherlover</b>	Motherfucker	9	Encyclopedia of Swearing
<p>2014 US/CA Lost Girl    ! Ready for round three? First thing's first. Let's kill this <b>motherlover</b>. When in doubt, go with the classics.</p>			
<b>Dagnab</b>	Damn	8	OED
<p>2001 US/CA The Oblongs    Maybe the little hobbledehoy is finally starting to calm down. Hey, Dad. <b>Dagnab</b> it, I'm still riddled v</p>			
<b>Jiminy Crickets</b>	Jesus	7	Encyclopedia of Swearing
<p>2012 US/CA The Great Escape    , honey? I get it now. Got one. Awesome. Davee: <b>Jiminy crickets</b>. Geez. I can't even see. My eyes. I got</p>			
<b>Peed off</b>	Piss off	6	Encyclopedia of Swearing
<p>1993 US/CA Homicide: Life on th...    guitar. You are a member of a police department. That means you just <b>peed off</b> a guy with a gun. Wait!</p>			
<b>Kissed off</b>	Pissed off	6	Encyclopedia of Swearing
<p>2008 US/CA One Tree Hill    've sort of been there, okay? I'm gon na be kind of <b>kissed off</b> if you don't come talk to me about it. Anyway, thank</p>			

<b>By Godfrey</b>	God	6	Encyclopedia of Swearing
2009 US/CA The National Parks: ... they're coming down this cliff. " So, Roosevelt said, " <b>By Godfrey</b> , I have to see that, " and he jumps up with half of			
<b>Durned</b>	Damned	5	Encyclopedia of Swearing
2013 US/CA My Little Pony: Frie... your everyday ordinary fruit bats. They're vampire fruit bats. I'll be <b>durned</b> if they think they're gon na sink their fangs into			
<b>Lady dog</b>	Bitch	5	Encyclopedia of Swearing
<b>Lumme</b>	Lord love me	5	Encyclopedia of Swearing
Lovejoy a very funny day. I suppose a doctor wouldn't rule out insanity. <b>Lumme</b> . I have been talking to you like you understand			
<b>Sblood</b>	God's blood	4	Encyclopedia of Swearing
Doctor Who already free! Mine! Mine. Mine. Engine capacity at 75%. <b>Sblood!</b> Who will rid me of this turbulent Doctor?! Come. Everyone,			
<b>Goldang</b>	Goddamned	4	Wiktionary
2017 US/CA The Last Man on Earth ! (CPAPmachinewhirring) (whispering): Carol. - (screams) My <b>goldang</b> gol! - Care Bear, it's just me, it's just me			
<b>Bejabbers</b>	By Jesus	3	Dictionary.com
1973 US/CA Kung Fu He's waiting for you to come. What is it we have here? <b>Bejabbers!</b> A Chinaman! Come through the center of the earth, have you?			
<b>Gorblimey</b>	God blind me	3	Encyclopedia of Swearing
1968 US/CA Hogan's Heroes here! Watch that, Carter. Okay. Here we go, Okay? <b>Gorblimey</b> . I use anesthesia all the time. Ready? Come on. Spread it			
<b>Shut the fridge</b>	Shut the fuck up	3	Wiktionary
2009 US/CA 10 Things I Hate Abo... drinks? Yeah. No big D, guys, but could you <b>shut the fridge</b> when you're done?			
<b>Sonova</b>	Son of a bitch	3	Wiktionary

2015 US/CA Dark Matter    long enough to help the injured. We're leavin right now. You selfish <b>sonova</b> ... Six: He's right. It's a long hike back			
<b>Goldarned</b>	Goddamned	2	OED
1976 US/CA M*A*S*H    . Christopher gets all the breaks. What's the matter, [Frank]? This <b>goldarned</b> radio was working a minute ago.			
<b>Begad</b>	By God	2	Merriam-Webster
Little Dorrit    , here. She's erm... she's a damn fine girl with no <b>begad</b> nonsense about her. I thank you, sir. You are very kind.			
<b>Begod</b>	By God	2	Merriam-Webster
Little Dorrit    , Miss Dorrit. Yes? You're a jolly fine girl, with no <b>begod</b> nonsense about you. Do you think I, er... might have			
<b>Consarned</b>	Goddamn(ed)	2	Encyclopedia of Swearing
2011 US/CA The Looney Tunes Show    an actual monster. The stunts you have pulled in this neighborhood -- Ooh! <b>Consarned</b> you! Goldarned ruined...			
<b>Odrabbit it</b>	God	2	Encyclopedia of Swearing
The History of Tom J...    of these headstrong measures? What am I to say to Lady Bellaston now? <b>Odrabbit it</b> . I expected you to compliment me for			
<b>A-double-s</b>	Ass	2	Wiktionary
2017 US/CA Imaginary Mary    love you. With my help, you're gon na kick life in the <b>A-double-S!</b> That's a swear word. I'll teach you a bunch. See			
<b>Doggonit</b>	Goddamnit	2	Wiktionary
2007 US/CA Pushing Daisies    Heather Hundin, a renowned pet psychologist and host of the weekly radio show " <b>doggonit</b> ". Simone Hundin was Harold's			
<b>For Cripes' Sake</b>	For Christ's Sake	2	Wiktionary
2009 US/CA Parks and Recreation    to shake hands With leslie knope, the alleged sex toy. Oh, <b>for cripes sake</b> . - Look at the way she's smiling at him.			
<b>Mothereffer</b>	Motherfucker	2	Wiktionary
2014 US/CA Face Off    - is there anything here? This is where we succeed or fail. - <b>mothereffer</b> . Yeah, this is Face Off. - it's the first day of			

<b>She dog</b>	Bitch	1	Encyclopedia of Swearing
2009 US/CA Reaper    I happen to know she wants that more than anything else. See? <b>She dog</b> eared the page in the catalogue.			
<b>Forkhead</b>	Fuckhead	1	Wiktionary
<b>Fudgebag</b>	Fuckbag	1	Wiktionary
2008 US/CA iCarly    his computer, he really meant " in his computer. " That crazy old <b>fudgebag</b> . Oh, look. Here's his recipe for coconut cream pie.			
<b>Lawks a-mercy</b>	Lord Have Mercy	1	Wiktionary
2008 US/CA iCarly    his computer, he really meant " in his computer. " That crazy old <b>fudgebag</b> . Oh, look. Here's his recipe for coconut cream pie.			
<b>Golddarn</b>	Goddamn	0	OED
<b>Motherferyer</b>	Motherfucker	0	OED
<b>Odzooks</b>	God's hooks	0	Merriam-Webster
<b>Gadsbodikins</b>	God's bodykins	0	Merriam-Webster
<b>Snails</b>	God's nails!	0	Encyclopedia of Swearing
<b>Dogges</b>	Bitch	0	Encyclopedia of Swearing
<b>Puppy's mother</b>	Bitch	0	Encyclopedia of Swearing
<b>Goles</b>	God	0	Encyclopedia of Swearing
<b>Ecod</b>	God	0	Encyclopedia of Swearing
<b>Agad</b>	God	0	Encyclopedia of Swearing
<b>Odso</b>	God	0	Encyclopedia of Swearing
<b>Godsookers</b>	God	0	Encyclopedia of Swearing
<b>Odsbobs</b>	God	0	Encyclopedia of Swearing

<b>Sfoot</b>	God's foot	0	Encyclopedia of Swearing
<b>Sbody</b>	God's body	0	Encyclopedia of Swearing
<b>Cokk</b>	God	0	Encyclopedia of Swearing
<b>Godblimey</b>	God blind me	0	Encyclopedia of Swearing
<b>Blimming</b>	Bloody	0	Wiktionary
<b>Doofbag</b>	Douchebag	0	Wiktionary
<b>For Pete's Sake</b>	For God's Sake	0	Wiktionary
<b>For Pity's Sake</b>	For God's Sake	0	Wiktionary
<b>Fuddle-duddle</b>	Fuck Off	0	Wiktionary
<b>Fugghead</b>	Fuckhead	0	Wiktionary
<b>Gall Dang</b>	Goddamn	0	Wiktionary
<b>Goldarnit</b>	Goddamnit	0	Wiktionary
<b>Mollyfogging</b>	Motherfucking	0	Wiktionary
<b>Mothereffing</b>	Motherfucking	0	Wiktionary
<b>Motherflipper</b>	Motherfucker	0	Wiktionary
<b>Motherflipping</b>	Motherfucking	0	Wiktionary
<b>'Nation</b>	Damnation	0	Wiktionary
<b>'Sheart</b>	God's heart	0	Wiktionary
<b>Son of a bachelor</b>	Son of a bitch	0	Wiktionary
<b>W-anchor</b>	Wanker	0	Wiktionary
<b>Dog</b>	Damn		OED

<b>Dickens</b>	Devil		Merriam-Webster
<b>Gum</b>	God		Dictionary.com
<b>Deuce</b>	Devil		Dictionary.com
<b>Blooming</b>	Bloody		Encyclopedia of Swearing
<b>Ruddy</b>	Bloody		Encyclopedia of Swearing
<b>Blasted</b>	Damned		Encyclopedia of Swearing
<b>Darn</b>	Damn		Encyclopedia of Swearing
<b>Hang it</b>	Damn it		Encyclopedia of Swearing
<b>Bang</b>	Damn		Encyclopedia of Swearing
<b>Blast</b>	Damn		Encyclopedia of Swearing
<b>Ding</b>	Damn		Encyclopedia of Swearing
<b>Fug</b>	Fuck		Encyclopedia of Swearing
<b>Bug</b>	Bugger		Encyclopedia of Swearing
<b>Bull</b>	Bullshit		Encyclopedia of Swearing
<b>Blessed</b>	Cursed		Encyclopedia of Swearing
<b>Shoot</b>	Shit		Duolingo
<b>Sugar</b>	Shit		Duolingo
<b>Crap</b>	Shit		Duolingo
<b>Foo</b>	Fool		Wiktionary
<b>Berk</b>	Cunt		Wiktionary
<b>Bleeding</b>	Bloody		Wiktionary

<b>Blinking</b>	Bloody		Wiktionary
<b>Dash</b>	Damn / Devil		Wiktionary
<b>Ish</b>	Shit		Wiktionary