What Makes a Word a Swear Word?

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Abstract
From expressing frustration to sexual acts, swear words are as versatile as they are offensive. Nevertheless, one thing is apparent, and it is this: swear words grow less vulgar with time. Back in Shakespeare's day, when one's lineage mattered a lot more, the word b*stard was so offensive it was often written "b-d." Meanwhile, s*it was once a standard Old English word for feces. Today, it remains one of the most versatile vulgarities in our language. Why is this the case? And how do swear words become swear words in the first place? After all, these days, you can be "s*it-scared" (so scared you s*it yourself), live in a "s*it hole," or have "s*it for brains" (be not very smart). And, of course, the s*it can also hit the fan. In addition to attempting to answer the above questions, I will also propose a theory explaining the manifestation of swear words.

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