Contents

List of figures

Page viii

Acknowledgements

Page ix

1 Taboos and their origins

Page 1

2 Sweet talking and offensive language

Page 29

3 Bad language? Jargon, slang, swearing and insult

Page 55

4 The language of political correctness

Page 90

5 Linguistic purism and verbal hygiene

Page 112

6 Taboo, naming and addressing

Page 125

7 Sex and bodily effluvia

Page 144

8 Food and smell

Page 175

9 Disease, death and killing

Page 203

10 Taboo, censoring and the human brain

Page 237

Notes

Page 254

References

Page 277

Index

Page 293
## Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>A woman exposing her vulva, L'église de Ste Radegonde</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Distinguishing X-phemisms</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>A visual euphemism</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Bureaucratese (from <em>Yes, Prime Minister</em>)</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Styles in English</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Darkie Toothpaste becomes Darlie Toothpaste</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>Banner headlines from <em>Broadway Brevities</em>, 1931–2</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>Squatters ‘dispersing’ Australian Aborigines; late nineteenth century</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>