

How Not To Say What You Mean

A Dictionary of Euphemisms

By R. W. Holder

How Not To Say What You Mean, is packed full of the old favourites, such as 'early bath' or 'push up the daisies', as well as euphemisms from modern times, like 'human sacrifice', 'coffee-housing', and 'tuft-hunter'. Definitions include examples from real authors, along with historical explanations of origins, and now obsolete euphemisms like 'leaping house', and 'nightingale' are signposted as such. To prove that the use of euphemisms is not just a British speciality, there is widespread coverage of American euphemisms too, including 'English' (pertaining to sexual deviance), and 'watermelon' (an indication of pregnancy). This hugely entertaining collection highlights our tendency to use mild, vague, or roundabout expressions in preference to words that are precise, blunt, and often uncomfortably accurate.

How Not To Say What You Mean: A Dictionary of Euphemisms will be published on 24 October 2002 priced £9.99 (Hardback).

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