

= Fuck ( film ) =

Fuck is a 2005 American documentary film by director Steve Anderson about the word " fuck ". The film argues that the word is an integral part of societal discussions about freedom of speech and censorship . It examines the term from perspectives which include art , linguistics , society and comedy , and begins with a segment from the 1965 propaganda film Perversion for Profit . Scholars and celebrities analyze perceptions of the word from differing perspectives . Journalist Sam Donaldson talks about the versatility of the word , and comedian Billy Connolly states it can be understood despite one 's language or location . Musician Alanis Morissette comments that the word contains power because of its taboo nature . The film features the last recorded interview of author Hunter S. Thompson before his suicide . Scholars , including linguist Reinhold Aman , journalism analyst David Shaw and Oxford English Dictionary editor Jesse Sheidlower , explain the history and evolution of the word . Language professor Geoffrey Nunberg observes that the word 's treatment by society reflects changes in our culture during the 20th century .

Anderson was exposed to public conceptions surrounding the word " fuck " by comedian George Carlin 's monologue " Seven Words You Can Never Say on Television " . He named the film Fuck despite anticipating problems with marketing . Animator Bill Plympton provided sequences illustrating key concepts in the film . The documentary was first shown at the AFI Film Festival on November 7 , 2005 , at ArcLight Hollywood in Hollywood .

Fuck 's reviews were mixed . Film critic A. O. Scott called the documentary a battle between advocates of morality and supporters of freedom of expression . The Washington Post and the New York Daily News criticized its length and other reviewers disliked its repetitiveness ? the word " fuck " is used 857 times in the film . In his 2009 book Fuck : Word Taboo and Protecting Our First Amendment Liberties , law professor Christopher M. Fairman called the movie " the most important film using ' fuck ' " . The American Film Institute said , " Ultimately , Fuck is a movie about free speech ... Freedom of expression must extend to words that offend . Love it or hate it , fuck is here to stay . "

= = Content summary = =

Fuck begins with a segment from the 1965 propaganda film Perversion for Profit , followed by a clip from SpongeBob SquarePants which states that the word can be used as a " sentence enhancer " . The documentary includes commentary from film and television writers Kevin Smith and Steven Bochco ; comedians Janeane Garofalo , Bill Maher , Drew Carey and Billy Connolly ; musicians Chuck D , Alanis Morissette and Ice T ; political commentators Alan Keyes and Pat Boone ; and journalists Michael Medved and Judith Martin . The word " fuck " is used 857 times during the film .

Scholarly analysis is provided by Maledicta publisher Reinhold Aman , journalism analyst David Shaw and Oxford English Dictionary editor Jesse Sheidlower . Language professor Geoffrey Nunberg says , " You could think of that [ word ] as standing in for most of the changes that happened in the 20th century , at least many of the important ones " .

The film next features author Hunter S. Thompson in his final documented interview . Fuck later includes archival footage of comedians Lenny Bruce and George Carlin , and analysis of the word 's use in popular culture , from MASH ( 1970 ) to Scarface ( 1983 ) and Clerks ( 1994 ) . Carlin 's 1972 monologue " Seven Words You Can Never Say on Television " is excerpted in the film . Journalist Sam Donaldson comments on the versatility of " fuck " : " It 's one of those all @-@ purpose words . " Bill Maher comments , " It 's the ultimate bad word " , observing that thanks to Lenny Bruce , comedy clubs have become " the freest free @-@ speech zone " in the United States .

Connolly states that " fuck " " sounds exactly like what it is " , noting that the emotional impact of saying " fuck off " cannot be translated . He says that if you are in Lhasa airport and someone is fiddling with your luggage , yelling " fuck off " will effectively communicate that they should stop and leave . Morissette says , " The f @-@ word is special . Everybody uses the word ' breakfast ' , but not everyone feels comfortable using the word ' fuck ' so there 's an extra power behind it . " Boone argues for less use of the word , saying that he uses his surname instead . Radio talk show host

Dennis Prager says that it is acceptable for youths to hear the word on television and film , but not from their family members . In the film , opponents of the word " fuck " use an argument commonly known as " Think of the children " .

Fuck observes that the original use of the word is unknown to scholars , noting that its earliest written appearance was in the 1475 poem " Flen flyys " . It was not , as is often claimed , originally an acronym for " For Unlawful Carnal Knowledge " or " Fornication Under Consent of the King " . The word has been used by authors including Robert Burns , D. H. Lawrence ( in his 1928 Lady Chatterley 's Lover ) and James Joyce . The film explains that " fuck " established its current usage during the First and Second World Wars , and was used by General George S. Patton in a speech to his forces who were about to enter France .

Fuck states that the first use of the word in a large @-@ studio film was in M \* A \* S \* H ( 1970 ) , and it entered the Oxford English Dictionary in 1972 . That year , the word was also recorded during the Apollo 16 United States mission to land on the Moon . The film includes a segment from the 1987 film Planes , Trains and Automobiles with actor Steve Martin , in which " fuck " is repeated for comedic effect . Fuck states that the most financially successful live action comedy film to date had the suggestive title of Meet the Fockers ( 2004 ) . The director analyzes the uses and connotations of " fuck " and the feelings it evokes on several levels . Bruce is quoted as saying , " If you can 't say ' fuck ' , you can 't say ' fuck the government ' " . Steve Anderson argues that " fuck " is an integral part of societal discussions about freedom of speech and censorship .

= = Soundtrack = =

Fuck includes songs with similarly themed titles , including " Shut Up and Fuck " by American hard rock band Betty Blowtorch , " Fucking Fucking Fuck " by Splatpattern and " I Love to Say Fuck " by American horror punk supergroup Murderdolls . Journalist Sam Peczek of Culture Wars compared the film 's music to that in softcore pornography , and observed that the soundtrack was broad in scope and helped accentuate the film 's content .

= = = Track listing = = =

= = Production = =

= = = Inspiration = = =

Anderson made his directorial debut in 2003 with the film The Big Empty , starring actors Daryl Hannah and Jon Favreau , and became fascinated by the usage of the word " fuck " . In an interview with the Democrat and Chronicle , Anderson suggested he cursed a lot more than he used to after the film 's production . He decided to research the film 's topic due to the word 's versatility and his interest in language as a writer . Early exposure by Anderson to public perception of the word " fuck " came from Class Clown by comedian George Carlin , which included his monologue " Seven Words You Can Never Say on Television " .

The director explained in an interview that he was fascinated with the word " fuck " because of its different uses . He originally proposed the idea of a film about the word in jest , later realizing that the topic could fuel a documentary . The Observer quoted him as saying that he was entertained by the word " fuck " , and intrigued with the idea of examining how the word had been incorporated into popular culture . He wanted to analyze why some people were offended by its use and others enjoyed it , noting that the word sharpened debate about taboo language in society .

Anderson explained to the Los Angeles Times the confusing , forbidden nature of the word " fuck " in the face of the increased pervasiveness of euphemisms for it . He commented on its taboo nature and demonstrated how it can be indirectly referred to , so youth understand the reference without using the word itself . In an interview with the South China Morning Post , Anderson said that film

directors should fight against censorship , because it can block their true message .

The director told CanWest News Service that he hoped the documentary would provoke a wider discussion about freedom of speech , sexual slang and its media use . Anderson questioned whether the word should be used on NYPD Blue , and how parents should discuss its use with their children . He emphasized that artists and filmmakers should be free to express their views without censorship , deferring to public opinion on the appropriateness of his documentary 's title .

Anderson stated in an interview with IndieWire that freedom of speech was not guaranteed , but a concept requiring discussion and monitoring so it is not lost . He classified the word " fuck " as being at the core of discussion about freedom of speech . He acknowledged that there are terms considered by society more vulgar than " fuck " , but said that this particular word creates controversy and dialogue . Anderson said that its title alone distinguished his documentary from others , in terms of promotional difficulty . During production , Fuck was known as The Untitled F @-@ Word Film .

= = = Title and marketing = = =

In an interview about the film on his website , Anderson discussed problems he encountered in naming his film Fuck instead of a censored version of the word . Anderson always wanted to call it Fuck , because it succinctly described the film 's contents . There were inherent problems with this approach , including an inability to advertise the true title in mainstream media such as The New York Times and Los Angeles Times ( they used four asterisks instead ) , although the real title might be permitted in alternative newspapers such as LA Weekly . Anderson also anticipated problems displaying the film 's title during film festivals on theatre marquees .

Anderson explained that although the title of his documentary was Fuck , he allowed alternate designations using an asterisk . The film and content he controlled would refer to the title as Fuck , including theatrical and DVD editions . He concluded that his struggle reflected the debate alluded to by the documentary , and this realization motivated him to stand firm on the film 's title . Because the film is about how a taboo word can impact culture , it was important to keep Fuck as its title .

= = = Filming and distribution = = =

The film features animation by American graphic designer and cartoonist Bill Plympton . To illustrate key concepts , Fuck uses sound bites , music , video clips and archival film footage ; Anderson combined excerpts from five television series and twenty @-@ two films in the documentary . The interviews were cut so that different subjects appear to be talking to each other ; the interviewees in question generally had opposite views on the subject . The film was unrated by the Motion Picture Association of America .

Rainstorm Entertainment was confirmed in November 2003 to produce and finance the documentary , with production scheduled to begin in January 2004 . The film was completed in 2005 by Anderson 's company , Mudflap Films , and produced by Rainstorm Entertainment co @-@ founders Steven Kaplan and Gregg Daniel , and Bruce Leiserowitz , Jory Weitz and Richard Ardi . Financial assistance was provided by Bad Apple Films of Spokane , Washington .

Thirty @-@ five media commentators were interviewed for the film . Jory Weitz helped obtain interviews ; he had cast Anderson 's previous film , The Big Empty , and had industry credibility as executive producer of Napoleon Dynamite . Anderson said he intended to select interviewees with a variety of perspectives , conservative as well as liberal . He described how , as confirmations of interview subjects came in , he was surprised when Pat Boone was among the first to confirm his participation . Anderson had previously worked as a cameraman on a piece with Boone about eight years before starting work on Fuck . After confirming Boone , Bill Maher and Janeane Garofalo on Fuck , it became easier for Anderson to confirm other interviewees . The film included the final video interview with Hunter S. Thompson before his suicide , and Anderson dedicated it to Thompson for his contributions to journalism .

Distribution rights to Fuck were obtained by THINKFilm in 2006 . Movie chains did not use the film

's title in their promotion , instead using references such as The Four @-@ Letter Word Film . Mark Urman , chief of the theatrical division of THINKFilm , told The Philadelphia Inquirer that it was especially difficult ( as an independent film distributor ) to promote a film with a title media outlets did not wish to print . Urman told Variety that the intent of the production staff during promotion was a creative , original marketing campaign . THINKFilm marketed the documentary as a comprehensive , humorous look at the dichotomy between the taboo nature and cultural universality of the word " fuck " .

= = Reception = =

= = = Release = = =

Fuck was shown for the first time on November 7 , 2005 , at the American Film Institute Film Festival at the ArcLight Hollywood on Sunset Boulevard in Hollywood , California . On March 10 , 2006 , interest increased after the opening night of the 20th South by Southwest Film Festival in Austin , Texas . At the 30th Cleveland International Film Festival , it sold out two screenings ( which were standing @-@ room only events ) .

Fuck was featured on March 31 and April 2 , 2006 , at the Florida Film Festival . It was screened in April 2006 during the Philadelphia Film Festival at Prince Music Theater in Philadelphia . It had its Washington , D.C. premiere in June 2006 , and was shown on June 15 at the Nantucket Film Festival .

Fuck opened in Los Angeles on August 23 , 2006 and in New York on November 10 . It made its Canadian debut at the 2006 Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival , and began regular showings at the Bloor Cinema on December 1 . The documentary began screening at the Century Centre Cinema in Chicago on November 17 , 2006 . Fuck had two screenings in April 2007 during the Hong Kong International Film Festival in Tsim Sha Tsui . According to a 2011 interview with Anderson in the Santa Barbara Independent , the documentary was shown in about 100 film festivals worldwide and was screened in about 65 cities during its theatrical release .

= = = Critical response = = =

Fuck received mixed reviews . The review aggregator website Rotten Tomatoes reported a 56 % approval rating with an average rating of 5 @. @ 8 / 10 based on 72 reviews . The website 's consensus reads , " A documentary that sets out to explore a lingual taboo but can 't escape its own naughty posturing . " At Metacritic , which assigns a weighted @-@ mean rating from 0 ? 100 based on reviews by film critics , the film has a rating score of 58 based on 23 reviews ( a mixed , or average , film ) . The American Film Institute wrote , " Ultimately , Fuck is a movie about free speech ... Freedom of expression must extend to words that offend . Love it or hate it , fuck is here to stay " .

Jack Garner of the Democrat and Chronicle gave the film a rating of 8 out of 10 , concluding that he was pleasantly surprised at the documentary 's entertainment value . He described it as educational , despite Fuck 's repetitive use of the word . In The Boston Globe Wesley Morris commented that the director 's flippant style was beneficial , enabling him to make serious educational points to the audience . Sally Foster of Film Threat said that the crux of the film was the debate about freedom of speech , and that the film was funny and thought @-@ provoking . A. O. Scott wrote in The New York Times : " Mr. Anderson 's movie is staged as a talking @-@ head culture @-@ war skirmish between embattled upholders of propriety ( or repression , if you prefer ) and proponents of free expression ( or filth ) , but its real lesson is that the two sides depend upon each other . Or rather , that the continued vitality of the word ? its unique ability to convey emphasis , relieve stress , shock grown @-@ ups and function as adverb , noun , verb , intensifier and what linguists call ' infix ' ? rests on its ability to mark an edge between the permissible and the profane " . In the Chicago Reader , Jonathan Rosenbaum wrote that the documentary was an amusing film and an educational

commentary on the word . According to Glenn Garvin of The Miami Herald , the film was an expansive merging of perspectives from politics , history and culture .

In a review for The Austin Chronicle Marjorie Baumgarten gave the film a rating of 4 @.@ 5 out of five stars , concluding that it helped unravel myths surrounding the word and describing it as captivating and educational . Steve Schneider reviewed the film for the Orlando Weekly , comparing it to an academic thesis despite its repeated use of off @-@ color humor . Noel Murray of The A.V. Club gave the film a grade of B @-@ minus , stating that Fuck succeeded where Kirby Dick 's This Film Is Not Yet Rated did not , by providing viewpoints from multiple perspectives . Karl French wrote in a review for the Financial Times that the documentary was unique and reasonably entertaining . Moira MacDonald asked , in a review for The Seattle Times , if viewers could embrace the First Amendment to the United States Constitution and still be leery of the word 's omnipresence in society . Mick LaSalle wrote in the San Francisco Chronicle that the commentators seemed monotonous and formulaic in debating freedom of speech , and criticized the film 's repetition of the word " fuck " .

Peter Keough reviewed the film for the Boston Phoenix ; giving it a rating of two out of four stars , he also said that the repeated use of " fuck " grew tiresome . In a critical review for The Observer Philip French wrote that the film had low comedic value , calling it arrogant , puerile and tedious . Peter Bradshaw of The Guardian gave the film two out of five stars , criticizing its lack of originality . In a review for Empire magazine , David Parkinson also gave the film a rating of two out of five stars and was frustrated that arguments by the director seemed guarded ; he said that the film 's scope was not comedic , amusing or provoking enough . In Time Out London David Jenkins gave the film one star out of six , writing that it lacked depth on the issues of linguistics , media , and censorship . A critical review by Noah Sanders of The Stranger concluded that the film was watchable and amusing , but poorly edited and organized . The St. Paul Pioneer Press criticized the film 's length , which was echoed by The Washington Post , the Deseret News , The Herald and the New York Daily News . In a review for the Seattle Post @-@ Intelligencer Bill White gave the film a grade C , calling it a dull compilation of childish observations and a failed attempt to spark a discussion about freedom of speech . Mike Pinsky of DVD Verdict concluded that the film 's main arguments were achieved by the beginning of the documentary , and criticized its lack of subsequent structure and light tone overall .

= = = Home media = = =

THINKFilm reached an agreement to screen the documentary on the American premium cable channel Showtime in 2007 , and it aired on the Documentary Channel on May 28 , 2011 . The DVD for Fuck was released by THINKFilm on February 13 , 2007 , and a United Kingdom DVD edition was released in 2009 . For the DVDs , THINKFilm remastered the video for Fuck ; it was optimized for home viewing with 1 @.@ 85 : 1 anamorphic widescreen transfer to a 16 : 9 anamorphic full @-@ frame presentation and Dolby Digital Stereo 2 @.@ 0 audio .

Trailers for Shortbus , Farce of the Penguins and The Aristocrats appear on the DVD before the documentary . Special features include a commentary track by Steve Anderson , interviews with Anderson and Bill Plympton , the film 's theatrical trailer , a gallery for the introductory trailers , deleted scenes and interviews with Hunter S. Thompson and Tera Patrick . The disc includes an optional on @-@ screen counter , giving viewers a running total of utterances ( and appearances ) of the word " fuck " during play .

= = = Impact = = =

Fuck has been a resource for several university courses . Christopher M. Fairman discussed the documentary in his article , " Fuck " , published in February 2007 in the Cardozo Law Review . Fairman cited Anderson 's decision to call his film Fuck and the marketing problems this entailed , saying that he and Anderson both found the title of their works helped spur debate on word taboos in society .

In an interview with the Santa Barbara Independent , Anderson said that a schoolteacher in Philadelphia had been fired for showing the documentary to his students . The teacher had researched the documentary , and wanted to teach his students the history of the word because of its frequent use in his class . Anderson said it was not the use of the word " fuck " in the film that cost the teacher his job , but a 38 @-@ second scene from a Fuck for Forest concert in Europe where a couple engaged in sexual intercourse onstage as environmental advocacy . The teacher showed the DVD to his 11th @-@ grade journalism class at William Penn High School without previewing it or sending permission slips home to parents . He told the Philadelphia Daily News that before showing the documentary , he was unaware that it contained the clip showing sexual intercourse . He was dismissed from his position by the school principal , and his termination was upheld by the regional superintendent . The teacher did not appeal the decision , instead retiring . An analysis of the incident by the Philadelphia Daily News concluded that the school district 's decision to fire the teacher was appropriate , but also agreed with the teacher 's position that showing a 90 @-@ minute DVD should not have obliterated his 19 years as an educator .

Fuck was featured in a 2012 analysis in the academic journal Communication Teacher , " Do You Talk to Your Teacher with That Mouth ? F \* ck : A Documentary and Profanity as a Teaching Tool in the Communication Classroom " , by Miriam Sobre @-@ Denton of Southern Illinois University Carbondale and Jana Simonis . Sobre @-@ Denton and Simonis discussed the documentary 's use for communication studies students studying university @-@ level intercultural relations . Their research incorporated interviews with Steve Anderson , students and data from graduate @-@ level classes in language and culture . Sobre @-@ Denton and Simonis ' conclusions correlated taboo words with social forms of power , rebelliousness , professionalism and gender roles .