



American Expression E1718 A bunny boiler

IOTS Publishing Team  
International Online Teachers Society  
Since 2011

"A bunny boiler" is a colloquial expression that originates from a scene in the 1987 psychological thriller film "Fatal Attraction," starring Glenn Close and Michael Douglas. In the movie, Close's character, Alex Forrest, becomes infatuated with Douglas' character, Dan Gallagher, after a brief affair. When Dan ends the relationship, Alex's infatuation turns into an obsession, and she resorts to increasingly dangerous and erratic behavior to try to win him back, including killing his pet rabbit.

The term "bunny boiler" has since entered popular culture as a slang term used to describe a person, typically a woman, who exhibits extreme and often irrational behavior in response to a failed romantic relationship or unreciprocated love. This behavior can range from persistent stalking and harassment to threats, manipulation, and even acts of violence.

A "bunny boiler" is essentially someone who cannot accept the end of a relationship and becomes fixated on their former partner, often to the point of obsession. They may engage in intrusive and disturbing actions, such as constantly calling or texting, showing up uninvited at the person's home or workplace, spreading false rumors, or attempting to sabotage their ex-partner's new relationships.

The term "bunny boiler" is typically used pejoratively and implies that the individual's behavior is not only emotionally distressing but also potentially dangerous. It suggests that the person's actions are not only obsessive but also indicative of a deeply troubled and unstable mindset.

It's important to note that using the term "bunny boiler" in real-life situations can be hurtful and dismissive of individuals who may be struggling with mental health issues or emotional distress. While it is essential to acknowledge that obsessive and harmful behavior is unacceptable, it is equally important to approach such situations with empathy and, if necessary, seek help for both parties involved.

In summary, a "bunny boiler" refers to a person, often a woman, who exhibits extreme and irrational behavior in response to a failed romantic relationship. The term is derived from a famous movie scene and is used pejoratively to describe someone who becomes fixated on their ex-partner to the point of obsession, engaging in intrusive and potentially harmful actions. It underscores the importance of recognizing the seriousness of such behavior while also acknowledging the need for empathy and support in dealing with these situations.

#### Questions for Discussion

1. How can we differentiate between normal post-breakup emotions and behavior that might be considered "bunny boiler" behavior, and what are the key warning signs to look out for?
2. What are the potential psychological factors or experiences that might lead someone to exhibit extreme and obsessive behavior after a breakup, and how can these underlying issues be addressed?
3. In what ways can society's portrayal of "bunny boilers" in popular culture impact our understanding of real-life relationship difficulties and the need for empathy and support?
4. Have you ever experienced or witnessed behavior that could be categorized as "bunny boiler" in a personal relationship, and how did you or others handle the situation?
5. What resources and strategies can be employed to help individuals who may be struggling with post-breakup distress or obsessive behaviors, and how can we promote healthier coping mechanisms in such situations?