

Loose lips sink ships

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Loose lips sink ships is an American English idiom meaning "beware of unguarded talk".

The phrase originated on propaganda posters during World War II.^[1] The phrase was created by the War Advertising Council^[2] and used on posters by the United States Office of War Information.^[1]

The posters were part of the general campaign of American propaganda during World War II and were part of a campaign to advise servicemen and other citizens to avoid careless talk concerning secure information that might be of use to the enemy.^[3] The British equivalent used variations on the phrase "Keep mum".^[4]

The gist of this particular slogan was that one should avoid speaking of ship movements, as this talk (if directed at or overheard by covert enemy agents) might allow the enemy to intercept and destroy the ships.^[5]

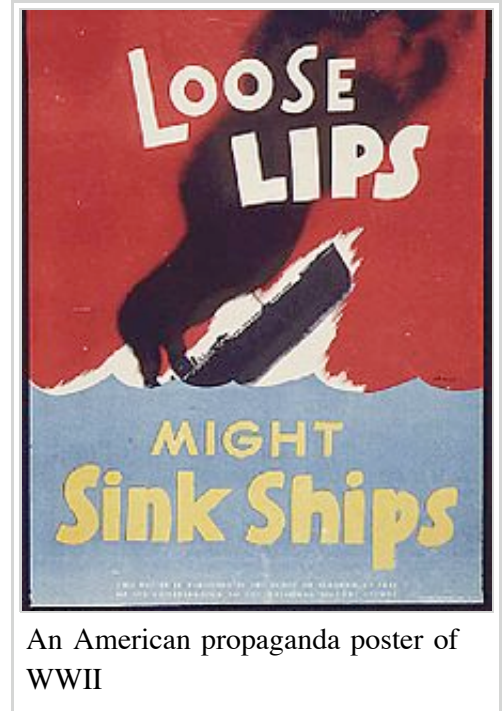
There were many similar such slogans, but "Loose lips sink ships" remained in the American idiom for the remainder of the century and into the next, usually as an admonition to avoid careless talk in general.^{[6][5]}

Some examples of use the phrase outside the World War II propaganda context are:

- *Loose Lips Sink Ships* is the name of a pop band,^[7] a pop album (by Des Ark), and pop songs by various artists, including Camper Van Beethoven, A Change of Pace, Hit the Lights, and others.^[8]
- *Loose Lips Sink Ships* is a musical play produced by the American Folklore Theatre.
- *Loose Lips Sink Ships* is the title an episode of the American television program *Survivor: Heroes vs. Villains*, and a variation, *Loose Lips Sink Relationships*, is the title of an episode of the American television program *Will & Grace*.
- "Loose Lips" is the title of a song written by Kimya Dawson heard in the soundtrack of the feature film, *Juno*.
- "Loose lips sink ships" occurs multiple times throughout the song *Cherry Tree* by The National.^[9]

References

1. [^] *a b* "Loose lips sink ships" (<http://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/237250.html>) . *The Phrase Finder*. <http://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/237250.html>. Retrieved November 11, 2010.
2. [^] "Security of War Information - Loose Lips Sink Ships (1942-1945)" (<http://www.adcouncil.org/default.aspx?id=127>) . *Ad Council*. <http://www.adcouncil.org/default.aspx?id=127>. Retrieved November 11, 2010.
3. [^] "'Loose Lips Sink Ships'" (<http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/lslips.htm>) . *Eyewitness to History*. 1997. <http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/lslips.htm>. Retrieved November 11, 2010.



An American propaganda poster of WWII

4. ^ ""Keep mum – she's not so dumb" - Charcoal, gouache, ink & pastel on board" (http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/theartofwar/prop/home_front/INF3_0229.htm) . *British National Archives*. http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/theartofwar/prop/home_front/INF3_0229.htm. Retrieved November 11, 2010.
5. ^ *a b* "Idiom: Loose lips sink ships" (<http://www.usingenglish.com/reference/idioms/loose+lips+sink+ships.html>) . *Using English*. <http://www.usingenglish.com/reference/idioms/loose+lips+sink+ships.html>. Retrieved November 11, 2010.
6. ^ "Loose lips sink ships" (<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/Loose+lips+sink+ships>) . *The Free Dictionary*. <http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/Loose+lips+sink+ships>. Retrieved November 11, 2010.
7. ^ "LOOSE LIPS SINK SHIPS" (<http://www.progarchives.com/artist.asp?id=3708>) . *progarchives.com*. <http://www.progarchives.com/artist.asp?id=3708>. Retrieved November 11, 2010.
8. ^ "Albums containing a track with the title:Loose Lips Sink Ships" (<http://www.allmusic.com/search/track/Loose+Lips+Sink+Ships/order:default-asc>) . *allmusic.com*. <http://www.allmusic.com/search/track/Loose+Lips+Sink+Ships/order:default-asc>. Retrieved November 11, 2010.
9. ^ Template:Cherry Tree Lyrics

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