

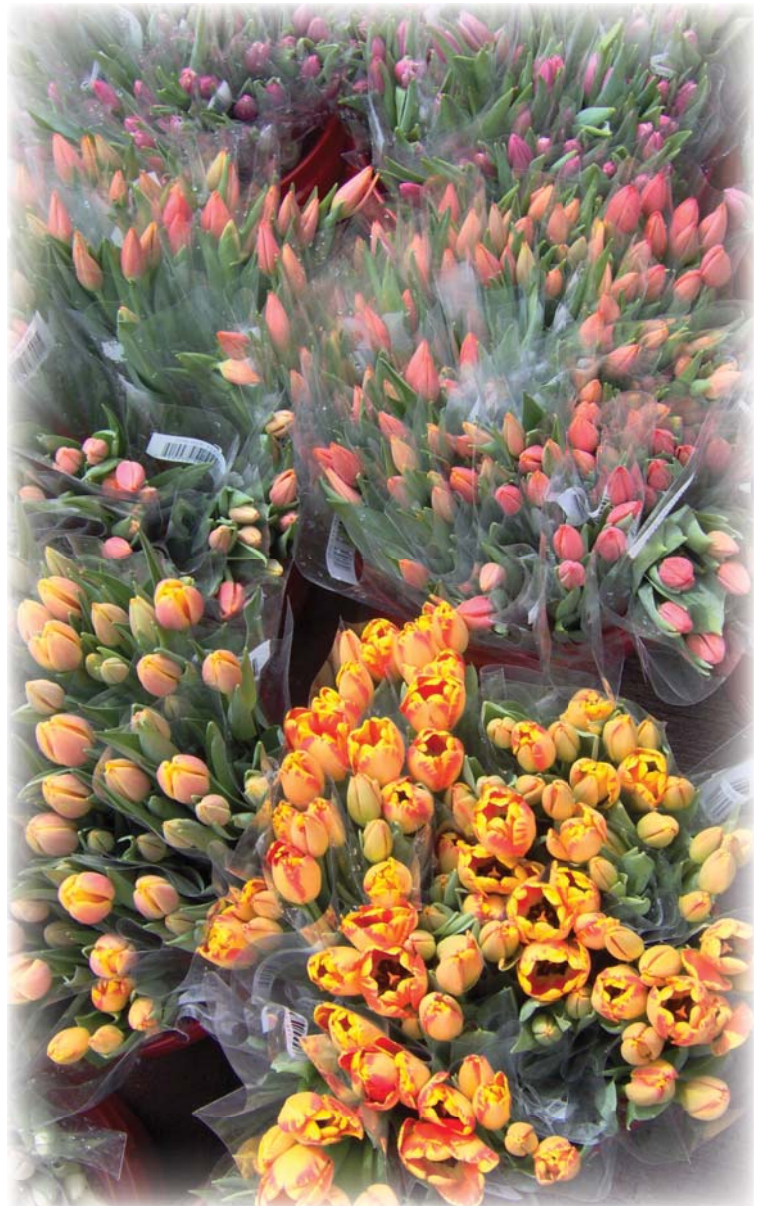
# Edition

The journal of the Editors' Association of Canada, Toronto branch

APRIL 2009

## EAC 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Issues: Part I

- ■ ■ The Toronto branch: An encyclopedic essay
- ■ ■ Freya Godard's Grammar food for thought: A miscellany of faulty usage and syntax
- ■ ■ Coming to terms with our unruly language: A review of *Righting the Mother Tongue: From Olde English to E-mail, the Tangled Story of English Spelling* by David Wolman
- ■ ■ Members' Corner: What does EAC mean to you?



# Edition

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## Editor's Note

AFTER A CHILLY WINTER, SPRING HAS BEEN A BIT SLOW IN its arrival, but the weather has done little to damper our spirits, and Toronto branch members have continued to concentrate their efforts on organizing the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary festivities. This issue of *Edition* is the first of three issues (April, May, and June) in which we join in on the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations. *Edition's* 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary committee (Mary Allen, Dimitra Chronopoulous, and Elizabeth Trew) are working hard to bring you a taste of things past, present, and future at the branch and the association. This month, in addition to our regular columns (Freya Godard's Grammar food for thought and this month's book review by Jen Govier) and executive reports, Deirdre Swain provides a brief outline of the Toronto branch. Did you realize we were conceived at a pub on Bloor Street? As well, members reflect on what the association means to them (more to come in the months ahead). I encourage you to send your reflections, anecdotes, and/or photos to be included in the upcoming celebratory issues.

*Sara Promislow*

Newsletter chair

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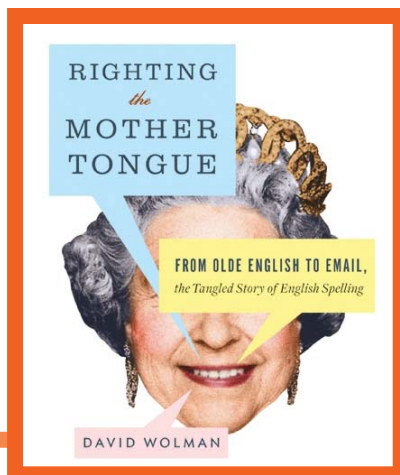
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# Travel made greener.... Planetair

**T**HE EDITORS'  
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When you purchase a carbon offset, Planetair gives a financial contribution to projects that help sequester or prevent the release of carbon dioxide into the environment. Projects include investing in “green” or alternative energy sources, such as wind, solar and biomass energy, and technology- and community-based projects.

Investing in initiatives like carbon offsets represents a

step in the right direction and contributes to raising awareness about pollution and climate change.

We encourage you to help offset your environmental impact when travelling to and from “Celebrating the Past, Charting the Future: The 30th Anniversary Conference.” Visit [www.planetair.ca](http://www.planetair.ca) to offset your air or vehicle travel, and [www.editors.ca/conference](http://www.editors.ca/conference) to register for Conference 2009. ■■■

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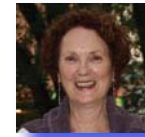
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 Hours: 9 AM to 1 PM Monday to Thursday

## ■ For your diary pages

### **Executive meeting**

Monday, April 13, 2009, 6:30 PM  
EAC National office, 27 Carlton Street,  
Suite 505  
All members are welcome.  
RSVP: [toronto\\_br\\_secretary@editors.ca](mailto:toronto_br_secretary@editors.ca)

### **General meeting**

Monday, April 27, 2009  
7:00 PM New members Q & A  
7:30 PM Program: Special conference preview,  
featuring speakers from EAC's conference  
committee; MagNet's curriculum coordinator,  
Gwen Dunant; and Mary Newberry from the  
Indexing Society of Canada.

The Women's Art Association of Canada  
23 Prince Arthur Avenue  
Members free/non-members \$10

## ■ Welcome new members!

As of March 1, 2008, the Toronto branch has 658 members: 336 voting (including 2 honorary life members), 275 qualifying, 34 student members, and 11 emeritus members. Five members identified themselves as Francophone. A total of 19 people have joined since November. The new members are:

Jane Auster  
Shauna Cade  
Sarah Church  
Barbara Feldman  
Wade Guyitt  
Melissa Henry  
Betsy Matthews  
Valerie Potter  
Bruce Price  
Ryan Quinn

Michael Schwartz  
Christopher Sickinger  
Sheila Sproule  
Victoria Ridley  
Malle Vallik  
Joell Ann Vanderwagen  
Kent Walker  
Donna Marie Webb  
Albert Westenberg

Hotline Report	March 2009
Members registered	12
Hotline opportunities	0

## Hotline Registration

Clients call to be matched with branch members who have registered with the Hotline for work.

When you register, please note these guidelines:

- If you are listed in the EAC Directory of Editors (print or online), note any changes to your listing.
- If you are not listed in the Directory and have not previously registered with the Hotline, send your resumé in Directory or Hotline style. You can find guidelines to the Directory format at [www.editors.ca/hire/ode/search\\_tips.html](http://www.editors.ca/hire/ode/search_tips.html). Hotline style follows the Directory format. However, you may include as many interests as you wish and write your profile in point form.
- Please limit your resumé to one page.
- If you have registered before, send your resumé only if it has changed.
- Hotline registration begins on the first of each month. Please contact the branch every month to be listed again.

Telephone: 416 975-5528 Fax: 416 975-5596  
[toronto@editors.ca](mailto:toronto@editors.ca) (.rtf attachment; subject: Hotline)

## Seminar chair report

**A**PRIL MIGHT BRING SHOWERS, BUT IT ALSO brings a deluge of seminars from the EAC Toronto branch. How better to spend those rainy early-spring afternoons than networking with fellow editors and learning some new skills? **Saturday, April 18**, join Kathryn Dean for *Stylistic Editing*, an introduction to that elusive but necessary step between substantive and copy editing. The following **Saturday, April 25**, marks the introduction of our brand-new seminar, *Developmental Editing for the K-12 Market*, led by Sara Goodchild and Jennie Worden. The season continues into early May with Heather Ebbs' *Indexing A to Z* (**Saturday, May 2**), Greg Ioannou's *Estimating Is Not a Science* (**Wednesday, May 6**), and the Toronto offering of Jennie Worden's *Proofreading* (**Saturday, May 9**).

Don't miss your opportunity to add new skills, as well as new contacts to your editing repertoire. Go to [www.editors.ca/branches/toronto/seminars/](http://www.editors.ca/branches/toronto/seminars/) for more information and to register. ■■■

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Emily Dockrill, Seminar chair  
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[www.editors.ca/branches/toronto/seminars/](http://www.editors.ca/branches/toronto/seminars/)



## THE TORONTO BRANCH:

# AN ENCYCLOPEDIA ESSAY

By Deirdre Swain

LOOKING BACK, IT'S ALMOST HARD TO BELIEVE that the Toronto branch of the Editors' Association of Canada (EAC)—and really, the association itself—began with a few people grousing over pints. That this national organization, which, besides being the first of its kind in the world, provides professional development and networking opportunities for editors from coast to coast, should have got its start in a pub is incredible. That an organization of more than 1700 people—more than 600 of them from the Toronto area—should have grown from a handful of freelancers, is miraculous. But that's how it happened.

### **An association—and branch—is born**

In 1979, five Toronto-based freelance editors happened to meet at The Mug on Bloor Street West in downtown Toronto. The editors all worked for the same publisher, a large, well-



## editor's association

known Canadian publishing house whose demands were as exacting as its payments were meagre. After grumbling for a while, they realized that they were not only being paid different rates, they were being asked to perform widely different tasks, all under the rubric of “editing.”

It was at this point that the group decided there was a need to form an editors’ association. They called their friends and at the first informal meeting, those present went around the room, sharing information about rates. According to Greg Ioannou, a founding member of EAC, the rates ran the gamut from \$5 to \$35 an hour. Any doubt that contracts and editing standards were necessary was swept away, and the Freelance Editors’ Association of Canada (FEAC) was born.

The first few meetings were informal affairs, with the group often meeting in people’s dining rooms, according to Lee d’Anjou, another founding member. But the association got organized pretty quickly. This was in part due to the fact that while editors tend to be solitary people—“not joiners” as d’Anjou put it—they also, as a group, are extremely organized. Within the first year of FEAC, the members had decided on an executive, various committees, and a constitution, with Maggie

One of the first goals of the founding members—aside from augmenting their income—was to create standards and definitions for the work they did.

MacDonald as the first president. Getting set up, FEAC received a lot of help from the Professional Writers Association of Canada (PWAC), which had formed three years earlier. FEAC adopted some of its structure and procedures from PWAC.

It probably helped, too, that for the first time, Toronto-based editors felt as though they had a home. D’Anjou recalls an early meeting, with 35 people scrunched into someone’s rec room, where one editor vented about being given more than 200 pages of work on a Friday that needed “only about 20 hours of light copy editing”





## editors in Canada

and being told that the deadline was Monday morning. At that point, d'Anjou realized she was among her own people.

### Editing standards

One of the first goals of the founding members—aside from augmenting their income—was to create standards and definitions for the work they did. The founding members had found that publishing houses expected everything from substantive editing to line-by-line proofing to be done under the guise of copy editing.

The definitions of the various tasks an editor may be required to perform can be found on EAC's Web site at *www.editors.ca*. In 1984 the Standard Freelance Editorial Agreement—a contract between the editor and the employer—was adopted. Schedule A, which outlined definitions of editing terms, was added to it at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) on March 18, 1985.

FEAC's constitution was amended in 1994, but the main provisions have remained unchanged. Among its objectives are:

- Representing Canadian editors (or editors working in Canada)
- Promoting and maintaining high editorial standards

- Promoting high quality Canadian publishing, and cooperating with other professional associations as needed
- Assisting members in receiving adequate and fair compensation and in establishing good working relationships with employers
- Sharing news and market data among members

EAC has helped its members achieve these goals through professional development seminars, as well as accreditation exams that are among the most stringent in the world.

### The Toronto branch: Becoming a branch among others

Although FEAC began in Toronto and was Toronto-based, it wasn't long before membership applications began to roll in from other parts of the country. And this, bear in mind, was before you could type "editors in Canada" into Google and come up with the association's Web site. Within five years committees were meeting regularly in Ottawa, Montreal, and Vancouver. The association was national in scope from the beginning, according to Ioannou. By 1982, in fact, FEAC had adopted the French name Association canadienne des pigistes



de l’edition, and become an officially bilingual organization.

During the 1980s, national membership meetings were held monthly in Toronto, but it eventually became apparent that the structure needed to change. Ruth Chernia, the first chair of the Toronto branch, recalls in the April 1999 edition of *Active Voice* (EAC’s newsletter):

**For the first 10 years of FEAC’s existence, the national executive and the Toronto executive were intertwined (initially synonymous).... However, this meant that 17 people were involved, which was very expensive, and then a third to a half of the business discussed was specific to Toronto and did not concern people from other regions.**

At the AGM held in April 1990, FEAC reorganized itself, with Toronto becoming a branch among branches and a new national executive in place which formed an umbrella over all the regional committees (now branches). Chernia found herself the chair of a branch with 404 members.

It took about two years, according to d’Anjou, to separate the Toronto branch

from the national executive; the question of what money belonged to who was, naturally, a major question. (The executive of the national association and those of the regional branches are all volunteers, but EAC employs a few paid administrative staff to do the day-to-day work. This became necessary because, according to d’Anjou, between their own work and running the association, the editors were too burned out to do everything that needed to be done.) Eventually, however, it was all sorted out, and the Toronto monthly meetings went on much as they had before, since, as d’Anjou pointed out, editors in Toronto have basically the same concerns as editors in Vancouver.

## **Dropping the “F”: FEAC becomes EAC**

In 1998, four years after FEAC’s restructuring, the association dropped the “F” from its name and changed it to the Editors’ Association of Canada/Association canadienne des réviseurs. The founding members had largely been freelance editors and the association had naturally dealt with many issues of concern to freelancers. But EAC realized that to increase its membership—and thereby its influence on





## Ryerson Publishing Program

the Canadian publishing scene—it needed to attract in-house editors as members as well and broaden its scope to include wider audiences among Canadian editors.

With the change in its name and the broadening of its focus, the composition of its membership changed as well, although not, perhaps, in the direction initially expected. Some in-house editors from publishing companies did become members, but EAC saw more growth in its membership from editors in the government and corporate sectors. Membership from magazine publishing, and especially newspapers, continues to be marginal.

### Success stories

The Toronto branch of EAC has had great success in providing its members with opportunities for professional networking and development. At the monthly branch meetings members share stories, knowledge, and employment opportunities and new members can learn about the association through Q&As with senior members.

Each monthly meeting also includes a lecture or talk on an issue of interest to editors. Past topics include a tax lesson for the self-employed, help for Web editing,

marketing tips for freelancers, and one doubtlessly entertaining session called *Romancing the Word—True Stories about Editing Sex*.

The branch also provides professional development seminars, which are intended to help its members increase their saleability or work towards accreditation. Seminar topics include the basics, such as proofreading and fact-checking, but also include such subjects as indexing, editing illustrative material, and developing style sheets.

When FEAC began, there were no editing or publishing courses at Canadian universities; now they exist across the country. Rosemary Shipton, one of the editors who set up the Publishing Program at Ryerson University, said:

**One of my goals in setting up the Ryerson Publishing Program was to make editing (indeed, all publishing) more professional.... [E]diting is a challenging task that requires specific training as well as a good general education and natural talent, and the only way to get it accepted as a “real” profession was to introduce a solid training**



program and to establish standards of excellence. I hoped, by these means, to get more respect for the profession of editing and, yes, higher remuneration.

Ryerson's Publishing Program has enabled EAC members in Toronto to get excellent training in copy editing and substantive editing skills, to get employment either in-house or freelance, to get greater recognition and higher remuneration, and to prepare for EAC certification.

Most of the instructors in copy editing and substantive editing in the Ryerson Publishing Program have been members of the Toronto branch of EAC—and, often, instructors for EAC seminars too. So, for all these EAC members, Ryerson has provided a good, steady, and rewarding source of employment.

Another success story is the award-winning newsletter of the Toronto branch, *Edition*. Published first in 1993, *Edition* contains recaps of the monthly branch meetings, interviews with professional editors, book reviews, advice for aspiring editors, and personal features from members. In 2005, the December 2004 volume won an Award of Excellence from APEX, an award-giving body for professional publications. From a small group of editors grew a national association and its largest local branch. EAC celebrates its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2009. The Toronto branch, while as an entity celebrating its 19<sup>th</sup> anniversary, is so closely entwined with the national association that it may be said to be 30 years old as well. ■■■

*another success story* 



# Grammar food for thought

An editor's observations on grammar and usage

## A miscellany of faulty usage and syntax

By Freya Godard

When Theodore Bernstein was editor of the *New York Times*, he published a regular newsletter (called *Winners and Sinners*) in which he commented on the successes and failures of his reporters and editors in recent issues of the paper. One of his frequent heads was “Alas, the poor idiom.” I often think of that phrase when I see a distorted or mangled idiom. Two that are becoming more common are *by foot* and *that's my two cents*. Unfortunately, the accepted idiom in the first case is *on foot*. I say unfortunately because it would be convenient to be able to write, for example, *by car, bicycle or foot*. But it isn't possible: you have to say *by car, by bicycle or on foot*. In the second case, the idiom is *that's my two cents' worth*, which after all makes more sense since the contribution being made by the speaker is invariably a comment and not a sum of money.

Mistakes in idiom can be seen everywhere; here are a few more that I've noticed recently.

- *convicted for*. A television news report told of a woman who had been *convicted for murdering her son*. That's the wrong preposition. A person is *convicted of* a crime and then *sentenced to* a number of years in jail *for* the crime or for having committed the crime.
- *identify that*. The bureaucratic love affair with this word began some time ago when *identify* started to be used instead of *find, state, list, or name*. But now *identify* is starting to be used with *that* in a way that allows it to replace such verbs as *note, find, observe, and determine*. Thus a



spokesman for the rescuers in the recent crash of a helicopter off the coast of Newfoundland used it like this: *Once we identified that the life rafts had been found . . .* Several verbs could have been used here—such as *heard* or *determined*—but *identify that* is impossible.

- *shambles*. Today the most common meaning of this word is a chaotic or very messy place; you can say that the house *was a shambles* after a wild party, but not that it was *in a shambles*. The dictionary, by the way, calls this meaning “informal”. The more formal meaning is “a butcher’s slaughterhouse”. That meaning was apparently still current in 1911, at least in England, when Robert Scott was setting out for the South Pole. The name that his expedition gave to the place where they shot their ponies, which had served their purpose as draught animals and were going to be used for meat, was “Shambles Camp”.
- *damages*. No matter how many houses are destroyed or trees uprooted, the effects of a tornado are properly called *damage*, not *damages*. The word does exist in the plural, but with quite a different meaning. *Damages* is a legal term referring to the money that a person may sue for or be awarded as compensation for a loss or injury.

- *harms*. Like *damages*, this is an unnecessary and unidiomatic plural, which caught my eye for the first (and as yet only) time in an editorial: *Judge Brownstone is eloquent on the subject of the harms parents do their children in their mindless courtroom battles.*

Some problems in wording have a fairly straightforward explanation:

- *act strange* The fault here is to treat *act* as if it were a copula verb, which would therefore be completed by an adjective, as in *seem strange*. But since it’s an intransitive verb, the phrase should read *act strangely*. A recent example with a different adverb comes from a news report that quoted a policeman as saying an alleged murderer *pulled into a driveway at a private residence, and was acting suspicious*. That should be *was acting suspiciously*.
- *manse*. A recent article about Jarvis Street in *Now* magazine referred to all the *manses* on that street. It was clear from the context that the writer thought *manse* was a short form for mansion, but it isn’t. A *manse* is the house provided by a congregation, especially Presbyterian or United Church, for its minister. (Other denominations use other words, such as vicarage or rectory if the congregation is Anglican.)



Some words are not so much misused as overused; H. W. Fowler (*A Dictionary of Modern English Usage*) called them “vogue words”, that is, words which become fashionable and are therefore used too much. It’s in the nature of vogue words to come and go; the following are a few that have definitely arrived.

- *vehicle*. Obviously this isn’t a new word, and of course it’s useful as a general term that can be applied to any means of conveyance. There’s nothing unreasonable about a sign in a parking lot that says *Please be sure to lock your vehicle*, since the people concerned may be driving cars, trucks, vans or SUVs. And yet I would argue that *car* has become an all-purpose word that can be



used in a general way to mean *vehicle*. So it has long been common to say, “The cars were backed up for miles” even though some of the traffic undoubtedly consisted of trucks and vans. And if we want to know if someone needs transportation to some event, the most common question would be: “Have you got a car?” On the other hand, when a specific vehicle is referred to and the writer or reporter has actually seen it, there is no excuse for using the three-syllable *vehicle* instead of *car* or *truck* or whatever he or she actually saw.

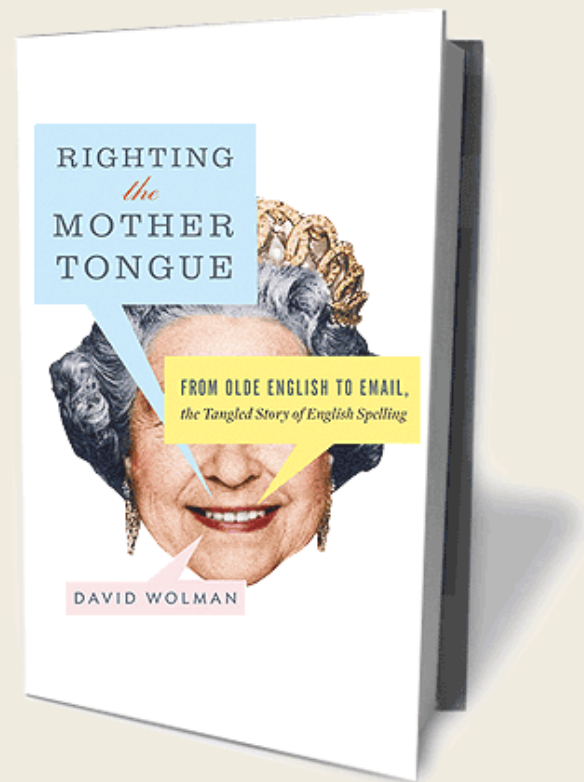
- *item*. I have always felt that the meaning of *item* was limited to those given in both the *Shorter Oxford* and *Oxford Canadian Dictionary*: “any number of a enumerated or listed things; an entry in an account; an article, especially one for sale; a separate or distinct piece of news, information, etc.” But *item* has been spreading farther and entirely replacing *article* in almost every context. It even inserts itself where no word is needed, as in the subject line of a message on a community e-group: *Lost item*. Surely the wording that would spring to mind would have been simply *Lost*. But the most improbable use I’ve encountered was on a sign in some public building: *Please do not leave items on these tables*. It’s hard to fathom how the writer could have rejected the most obvious word—*anything*—in favour of *items*. ■■■

## Coming to terms with our unruly language:

# A review of *Righting the Mother Tongue: From Olde English to E-mail, the Tangled Story of English Spelling* by David Wolman

By Jen Govier

**A**S EDITORS, MANY OF US CONSIDER ourselves guardians of the English language, fierce protectors of the sanctity of its spelling and usage, and defenders of the proper punctuation and grammar that must accompany its use. Anyone who would



argue that spelling doesn't count and that text messaging shorthand is perfectly acceptable to use in school essays is a philistine, obviously. A philistine who could count the likes of Theodore Roosevelt, Melvil Dewey, and Andrew Carnegie among his or her numbers, it turns out. Well, maybe not for the text messaging argument, of course, but certainly for the argument that English spelling is far from sacred and could use a healthy dose of common sense.

This was one of the most humbling lessons I learned from David Wolman's book *Righting the Mother Tongue: From Olde English to E-mail, the Tangled Story of English Spelling*: there is no such thing as "pure" English. The spelling of



our language is constantly in flux, and has been for centuries. The fact is that the English language is a mutt. Over hundreds of years of conquests and trade, it has picked up words from dozens of other languages. So many people have influenced it or attempted to bring logic to it that it's become "more like an organism, evolving through a gradual process of accumulated accidents and narrow escapes." Wolman tries to trace these influences from the Old English of Britannia, which was subsequently influenced by Germanic languages and then a heavy dose of French in 1066, to the Americanizations Noah Webster introduced when he decided to write a dictionary, to the origins of spell-check and the influence of Google's seemingly innocuous "Did you mean, *rhubarb*" function. All along the way, he takes a look at those people who, consciously or not, influenced or attempted to change the language's spelling. The stories of the many spelling reform movements that have cropped up along the way, often well funded and championed by

**David Wolman is a writer who has struggled with spelling ever since he was subjected to painful dinner table spelling bees as a child.**

some pretty heavy hitters, make up a fascinating part of this journey.

David Wolman is a writer who has struggled with spelling ever since he was subjected to painful dinner table spelling bees as a child. Troubled by the improbability of a person who

can't spell making his living from words, he decides to find out why proper spelling is deemed important, and why there are so many traps in English spelling. To trace the history of the language and the influences that have made its spelling rules so bloody inconsistent, he travels with noted English linguist David Crystal, and draws on numerous historical sources for his research.

As much as I enjoyed this book, I found that the timeline flipped back and forth through history within each chapter with the rapidity of a Twitter. Although this helped keep the story moving and drew connections between the past and the present, it often wasn't necessary and was a bit confusing at times. And of course, no mention is made of the unique status of

Did you mean: [rhubarb](#)

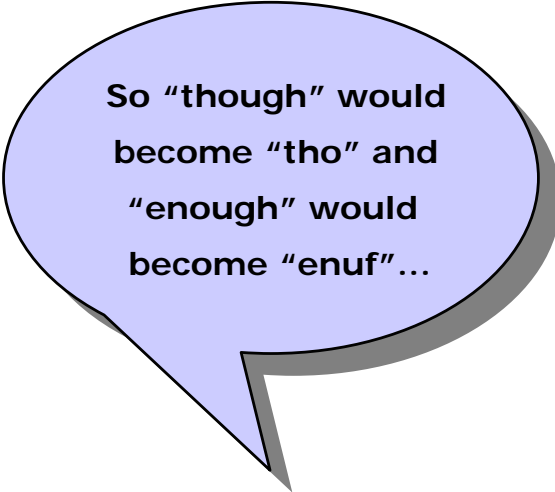


Canadian English, but we should be used to that by now. However, it's easy to see how Canadian English has come to be a hybrid of its British roots and its American cousin, and how in the history of English that's really not such a unique thing after all.

Despite these minor failings, I found *Righting the Mother Tongue* both entertaining and educational. As much as Wolman fears spelling, he's fascinated by the thousands of little accidents that brought about English's idiosyncrasies, and he pursues its history with dogged determination. I learned much about how our job—the maintenance of orthography, or a language's spelling, punctuation, and capitalization—came to be. I was amused that the first book printed in English, which was published in 1475, was copy edited by none other than the King of England's sister. There are so many wonderful anecdotes in this book, but that's not all. The battle waged by spelling reformists is a fascinating digression I wasn't aware of before. Melvil Dewey, a man I admired for his obsession with organization, now seems to me a bit of a fanatic for his unfailing dedication to the Simplified Spelling Board he founded. We don't hear very

much about spelling reform these days, unlike at the beginning of the century, but the reformists are still around. And they didn't fail completely either; Webster's Americanizations were heavily informed by the spelling reform movement—think honor, traveled, and center, for instance.

Much of spelling reform has been based on the idea that words should be written the way they sound. Phonetic spelling would not only return English to its purer form (whatever that is), it would improve literacy, and it would allow students to devote less time to memorizing confusing words and more time to learning other subjects. It would also save time and money spent on printing and—gasp—proofreading. So “though” would become “tho” and “enough” would become “enuf”—spellings that President Roosevelt actually demanded be used throughout government (until they were quickly overturned). Wolman explores why spelling reform has failed for the most part, and it's heartening to learn that one of the reasons is that our words hold in them more than just their letters and their meanings. They hold a clue to their history, and to the fascinating journey our language has taken. They also happen to keep editors in business. ■■■



So “though” would become “tho” and “enough” would become “enuf”...

## What does EAC mean to you?

### *I joined EAC in 1999.*

I was in school full-time working towards my post-grad certificate in Book and Magazine Publishing from Centennial College. One of my professors had mentioned EAC in class—in fact, I think he even brought some form we could fill out to join as students. So I did, thinking it would be a great association for a soon-to-be editor to join. It made me feel legitimized in a way, back then. Getting my association card was quite thrilling. It felt like *I had arrived*. Now, ten years later, I keep renewing my membership because I enjoy the sense of camaraderie it offers, particularly now that I am working as a full-time freelance editor. When I worked in-house for seven years, I really didn't feel I needed the association because 95 percent of the issues covered didn't apply to me, but I renewed because I enjoyed the List, where I gleaned (and still do) a lot of useful information from other members. I also used the *Online Directory of Editors (ODE)* for occasional freelance work I did on the side, which was



Freelance

a stroke of genius on my part because that experience made it easier for me to take the plunge and go freelance full-time.

As a freelance editor now with a business of my own, the association is key to my success, in great part because of the ODE, but also because I need to hear how others are faring, what they're doing, how they manage their businesses and whatnot. Being a member of an association also makes me look more professional to clients. I may never seek certification because I already did that through traditional schooling, but being a member is important for me, my business, and my clients. I even used the mediation service last year which was worth my membership fees in itself. I need the association for all of these things and am glad it exists and continues to thrive. There's something to be said about belonging to a group of like-minded individuals.

*Alethea Spiridon*



*I joined the association in the late 1990s* after hearing about it from an employer and attending a couple of interesting and useful seminars. One of the instructors suggested that if we wanted to learn a lot more and perhaps help others learn, too, we should subscribe to the E-mail forum known as “the list.” This seemed like a good way to stay connected, to develop my knowledge, and to contribute, so I subscribed right away. When the deluge of mail came in on that first night, I was dismayed that people were writing about their cats instead of discussing misplaced modifiers, difficult clients, and poor pay, and I made the mistake of saying so. The veterans so roundly throttled me that I almost decamped in embarrassment. But here it is ten years later, and here I am talking about my cat on the list. Yet how much more I continue to learn there about this language I speak and so many other things! Best of all are the wonderful EAC correspondents and friends I would not have met had it not been for the list. I’m very pleased to be turning 60 within days of EAC’s 30th-anniversary conference. I’m even more pleased that both of us made it!

*Carolyn Bishop*



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