



The Right Word in the Right Place at the Right Time: Wit and Wisdom from the Popular "On Language" Column in The New York Times Magazine

William Safire

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For the past twenty-five years Americans have relied on Pulitzer Prize-winning wordsmith William Safire for their weekly dose of linguistic illumination in *The New York Times Magazine's* column "On Language" -- one of the most popular features of the magazine and a Sunday-morning staple for innumerable fans. He is the most widely read writer on the English language today.


Safire is the guru of contemporary vocabulary, speech, language, usage and writing. Dedicated and disputatious readers itch to pick up each column and respond to the week's linguistic wisdom with a gotcha letter to the *Times*. *The Right Word in the Right Place at the Right Time* marks the publication of Safire's sixteenth book on language. This collection is a classic to be read, re-read, enjoyed and fought over. Fans, critics and fellow linguists wait with bated (from the French *abattre* "to beat down") breath for each new anthology -- and, like its predecessors, this one is bound to satisfy and delight.

Safire finds fodder for his columns in politics and current events, as well as in science, technology, entertainment and daily life. The self-proclaimed card-carrying language maven and pop grammarian is not above tackling his own linguistic blunders as he detects language trends and tracks words, phrases and clichés to their source. Scholarly, entertaining and thoughtful, Safire's critical observations about language and slanguage are at once provocative and enlightening.

Safire is America's go-to guy when it comes to language, and he has included sharp and passionately opinionated letters from readers across the English-speaking world who have been unable to resist picking up a pen to put the maven himself in his place or to offer alternate interpretations, additional examples, amusing anecdotes or just props.

The Right Word in the Right Place at the Right Time is a fascinating, learned and piquant look at the oddities and foibles that find their way into the English language. Exposing linguistic hooey and rigamarole and filled with Safire's trademark wisdom, this book has a place on the desk or bedside table of all who share his profound love of the English language -- as well as his penchant for asking "What does that mean?" Or, "Wassat?"

This new collection is sure to delight readers, writers and word lovers everywhere and spark the interest of anyone who has ever wondered, "Where *did* the phrase 'brazen hussy' come from?"

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