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the west has sometimes been concerned to record the first-hand experiences of migrants; on other occasions, it has related imaginary tales of what and who they met in their travels as they lived out their lives as gunfighters, cowboys or homemakers. Therefore, among the themes that the book deals with are the topography and relationships with the environment of the American west, with its existing communities and with competing migrant groups. The literature deals with the physical world of discovery, of oil, gold and the evolution of settlements into towns but also with a conceptual world relating to concerns like authenticity, democracy, expansionism, family structures, politics or the stewardship of the land, ecological conservation and environmental justice. The cover illustration of the book brings the physical and the ideational together in an image called *The Destroyer* by Arthur Wesley Dow, a painting of the Colorado River within the Grand Canyon.

The collection comprises the Editor's introduction and 16 chapters, the product of scholars in higher education institutions based in the USA and Europe. Chapters deal with the writings of early Spanish explorers, the role of women in the moving frontier, the city as the "New Wild West", California as symbolic of both the pull of the West and the closure of the frontier and Native American writings about reservation life and relationships with the land. Other ethnic communities represented include the Chicana/o, African American and Asian American and their experiences of aspects of the west. Particular writers dealt with in more detail include Mark Twain, Elinor Pruitt Stewart, Helena María Viramontes, Gloria Anzaldúr, Raymond Chandler, John Steinbeck, Leslie Silko, Wallace Stegner and Cormac McCarthy, the latter being an interest of several of the contributors. The chapter on The Western and Film discusses the work of John Ford and Clint Eastwood, among others. Each chapter is reasonably well endowed with footnotes and works cited, some published as recently as 2015. There is a bibliography of further reading covering general texts, ethnic community writings and environmentalist literature.

An interesting element of the book is the 13-page chronology dating from 500 CE to 2012 and listing relevant publications with their dates and a selection of West- and US-related historical events. Inclusion in the list does not ensure any further discussion in the text. The book's index is of names and publication titles only and does not include the chronology. It might have been more useful if it had also included at least some of the subjects covered.

The book is well designed and edited as one would expect from this publisher. The chapters progress broadly from the historical and general to the contemporary and specific. The paperback price is not excessive. The contributions to this collection will be of value to university students of American literature and the literature of the West in particular. The popularity of the fiction of the American west has been in decline in recent years and the emphasis here is on literature as high culture, so although there is some discussion of early journalism, little will be found on the contribution of dime novels, the pulps, comics, the myriad TV westerns of the 50s and 60s or even writers like Louis L'Amour, Charles Portis or Annie Proulx. However, this companion guide does seek to guide us into new lines of inquiry and is none the worse for that.

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Fowler's Concise Dictionary of Modern English Usage (3rd edition)

Edited by Jeremy Butterfield
Oxford University Press
Oxford
2016
[vi] + 646 pp.
ISBN 978 0 19 966631 7
£11.99 $18.95
Oxford Quick Reference
Also available online as part of *Oxford Reference*
Keywords Dictionaries, English language
Review DOI 10.1108/RR-04-2017-0095

Val Hamilton recently reviewed the 4th edition of the full Monty – oops, Fowler – in these columns (*RR* 2016/050), and this is the, well, concise version. It is an update of the work by Robert Allen published in 2008 as the *Pocket Fowler's Modern English Usage*, itself a cut-down of the biggie. You would, however, need a big pocket for this edition.

Kingsley Amis once said that works of this kind consist not of description, but prescription: not English as she is spoke, but as she should be spoke – or, rather, written – and that those most in need of them aren't listening – implying, rightly in my view, that some people don't need them. He had a point.

The main difference between this edition and the full one, it seems, is that Butterfield's witty personal comments have been largely eliminated. The vast majority of entries are sensible and unremarkable and require no further comment. In this review, I shall therefore concentrate on some specific points, working through the entries sequentially.

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On addresses, the post town should be in capitals, not in normal type as in the example; what Butterfield calls a postal code has long been called a postcode; a postcode should always be given; and it should always be on a line by itself and should not be on the same line as the book says it can be. AIDS is preferable to Aids; the capital A on the latter is illogical, it not being a proper name, but aids would not look right, so I think AIDS it should be. The entry A.M. says 12.00 a.m. is midnight and 12 p.m. is midday (why the dot and "*00*" are missing from the second example is a mystery). This is, frankly, nonsense: logically it should be the other way round, since midnight is the last moment of p.m. and midday the last moment of a.m.; in any case, 12 o'clock is neither a.m. nor p.m., but noon (a term I prefer to midday) or midnight.

The section on American English says that brooch in Britain is pin in America, though Americans also call what the British would call a badge a pin; that lavatory in Britain is washroom in America, with no mention of the irritating American coyness about bodily functions which results in private facilities being called bathrooms and public ones (far worse!) restrooms (though these terms are mentioned under bathroom and toilet); and that a roundabout in Britain is a rotary in America, though I thought the American term was traffic circle. I might also have expected to see jaywalking, either here or with an individual entry. This is a term almost unknown in Britain because in the UK there have never had any laws against crossing the road whenever and wherever one likes. The discussion of idiom, too, does not mention the American practice of saying a half-mile, a half-million, etc., where British usage would be half a mile and half a million. Butterfield is quite right that the American meaning of billion (a thousand million) has superseded the British one (a million million), and this is, I think, to be welcomed, since there is now frequent need for a single word for a thousand million, but still little for a million million. (Similarly, as the book says, trillion has come to mean a million million, there being little call for its previous meaning, a million million million).

Under Britain, Great Britain, the British Isles, England, etc., Butterfield is simply wrong when he says the United Kingdom does "not usually" include the Isle of Man or the Channel Islands; it never includes those places, which are Crown dependencies, not part of the UK. Butterfield is far too reluctant to condemn usages which are just wrong, like careen (turn or tilt a boat or ship) for hurtle or rush, an example of a word acquiring a wrong meaning due to its accidental resemblance to another word, in this case career. Other examples discussed are scarify, which means scratch or incise, but which is wrongly used to mean frighten from its resemblance to scare, and enormity, meaning great wickedness, not bigness or largeness.

Celibate means abstaining from marriage, not abstaining from sex. A place does not need a cathedral to be called a city! Colleague has an entry, but with no mention of the recent trend to use it to mean member of staff rather than fellow worker. Notices in shops tell one to ask a colleague for information, and I have even seen one saying a firm was recruiting colleagues; by its original meaning, it would already have them! Again, Butterfield simply says that court martials is used for the plural of court martial, without saying flatly that this is simply wrong and the only correct form is the one he recommends, courts martial.

I was, however, glad to see the clear statement that dates should be in the logical sequence day-month-year, not the baffling American practice of putting the month first, engraved in the public mind by 9/11 for the events of 11 September 2001. It is surely unnecessary now to coyly say "the F-word", as Butterfield does in his entry on frac, fracking (as a euphemism for the dread word, not the technology), especially as it appears in all its glory in the entry on naff. The entry on French words and phrases has no mention of the baffling way in which bureau de change came to be used, rather than change bureau, which is one word shorter!

The old joke about Grecian is "What's a Grecian urn?", not "How much does a Grecian urn?" Another example of failure to condemn wrong usage is the statement that HIV virus is "now established usage", though it translates as the nonsensical "human immunodeficiency virus virus". A similar point applies to LCD display ("liquid crystal display display"), also wrongly defended. These are examples of a baffling phenomenon which I have seen called RAS syndrome (Redundant Acronym Syndrome syndrome), where an abbreviation is followed by the full form of the last letter; the one I am most familiar with is the use of "ISBN number" by people apparently blissfully unaware that what they are saying is "International Standard Book Number number".

The original meaning of jejune as "meagre, scanty, dull" was famously defended by Kingsley Amis against those who use it to mean puerile, childish (due, he thought, to its resemblance to the French *jeune*, "young", not, as said here, association with juvenile), but that usage has (sadly) become common and is found in George Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man* (dated to 1989, which should be 1894!).

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There is no reason to avoid niggardly because of it resemblance to nigger; the words are not connected and we should not surrender to the ignorance of those who think they are. I was glad to see the statement that a sentence containing a parenthesis (however marked – by brackets, commas or dashes) is grammatically complete without it, though I wish it had also been clearly said that in such a sentence the parts outside the parenthesis should be written and punctuated as if the parenthesis were not there. Far too many people put a comma before an opening bracket, which should almost never be done (there are rare instances where it is correct).

Penny is discussed without mention of the infuriating practice of saying "one pence". Pence is plural! Under Poet Laureate we are told that the plural is Poets Laureate (quite right), although Poet Laureates is often used. Not by people who care about correct English it is not! Woman police constable is now, rightly, not used; "man police constable" was never used. I was pleased to see a distinction drawn between popular music (of all ages) and pop music (a particular commercialised kind dating only from the mid-twentieth century). The list of proper terms (pride of lions, etc.) does not include one I have seen, a streak of tigers. The entry on pun repeats the myth that Sir Charles Napier reported his conquest of Sind with the one word "Peccavi" ("I have sinned"); it was a schoolgirl, Catherine Winkworth (later a noted translator of German hymns), who said he should have so reported.

Semi-colon should be so written, not semicolon. Sister for a senior nurse is now, of course, obsolete, and there is no entry for matron which is also redundant. The list of sobriquets (nicknames) mysteriously includes Union Flag (or Union Jack) for the British flag. Neither is a nickname: the first is the correct term, the second wrong. Also, we are told that Old Nick means the devil, which should be Devil: a term for Satan should always be capitalised. Sound bite is usually one word.

Butterfield says the wrong use of toothcomb, from a misreading of fine-tooth comb (a comb with fine teeth) is acceptable. Not by me it is not! Under transport, transportation Butterfield mentions the use of the latter to mean the sending of prisoners to overseas penal colonies, but not that this is why America prefers the longer term: it is not because of their liking for longer words, but because in Britain transportation had a bound-for-Botany-Bay air about it. The entry on the fascinating topic of U and non-U is interesting, but fails to mention the most significant point: that many people, especially foreigners, misunderstood it, assuming that the upper classes would use genteel, euphemistic terms, the lower orders blunt, crude ones, when it was, in fact, usually the other way round, as some of the terms listed show (U first): false teeth/dentures; rich/wealthy; sick/ill; and, most famous of all lavatory/toilet (though there is no discussion of the perennial mystery of why lavatory is thought blunter than toilet when both are euphemisms, both meaning a place to wash!).

Vet has an entry saying that in Britain it means a veterinary surgeon, while in America it can also mean a veteran, but there is no entry on veteran itself and its different meanings in America (an ex-service person of any age) and Britain (where it implies advanced age), though the American meaning seems to be creeping in here. Viscount is simply defined, with no mention of the pronunciation (when American airlines bought the Vickers Viscount, they thought it necessary to issue advertisements telling people it was "pronounced vi-count")! Early uses of wimmin were simply examples of deliberate misspelling for comical effect, and had nothing to do with the later practice by feminists of using the spelling to avoid the -men part of women. To say that some people regard the pronunciation of Xmas as "ex-mass" as tasteless is putting it very mildly; the word is a ghastly and appalling piece of ignorance (the X is not the roman letter, but the Greek "chi" (=ch), from "Christ"); it should never be used, and if encountered when reading aloud should be pronounced "Christmas".

There are some surprising omissions. One is the original meaning of Aerosol which was a suspension of particles in fluid, later coming to mean the pressurised spray-can containing such a substance. The container used to be called an aerosol bomb (perhaps because it supposedly looked like one); Ian Fleming used it in that sense in some of the James Bond stories. There could be problems at airports nowadays if that term had survived! Another omission is the irritating practice of saying autobiography when biography is meant, which would not happen if people knew what auto- means! There is also failure to address the common confusion of causal and casual and the difference between cider in Britain and America: in the latter it is apple juice, whereas in Britain it is always alcoholic (hard cider in the USA). Other examples of omissions include expatriate, often wrongly given as ex-patriot, the use of grief, a strong word for strong emotion associated with the death of a loved one, instead annoyingly used to mean simple annoyance or irritation and impertinent, literally meaning irrelevant, but which has come to mean rude, ill-mannered.

I could go on: there is nothing on light year, wrongly used as a unit of time when it is, of course, one of distance, or the difference

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between melted and molten: both mean rendered from a solid to a liquid state by heat, but the first is used of substances which melt at comparatively low temperatures (melted snow, ice, fat, butter, wax, plastic), the second of those usually thought of as hard and solid and which melt only at very high temperatures (molten metal, rock, glass). Then there is nervy, which has different, and indeed almost opposite, meanings in Britain (nervous, jumpy) and America (bold, brash, having lots of nerve) and nipple, which has only an anatomical meaning in Britain, but it America means what in Britain is called a teat. A final example of the difference between American and British usage not addressed is the American use of snicker, which in British English would be snigger (even the American spellchecker on this computer objects to that word!), perhaps because of similar racial sensitivities to those associated with niggardly.

Despite my strictures, most of this book is useful and, like Hamilton says of the full version, of general interest and even enjoyable. But Butterfield is far too reticent about condemning usages which are simply wrong, and also I fear that, like most such works, it will be least used by those who need it most.

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RR 2017/132
Wonderfully Wordless: The 500 Most Recommended Graphic Novels and Picture Books

William Patrick Martin
Rowman & Littlefield
Lanham, MD and London
2015
xvii + 315 pp.
ISBN 978 1 4422 54770 (print); ISBN 978 1 4422 5478 7 (e-book)
£24.95 $38
Keywords Fiction, Visual media, Graphic novels, Picture books, Illustration
Review DOI 10.1108/RR-04-2017-0096

This book starts with the claim in the introduction that this is "the only comprehensive guide to illustration-only books on the contemporary scene". The problem for me as a reader is that although there are definitely areas of connection between the two forms of book stated in the subtitle, I am considerably more interested in comics and graphic novels than picture books. And although there are comics for children and adults, it is much rarer to find a picture book for adults. So this volume presents an uneasy mix of graphic novels aimed at different readerships – and children's story books. It is also true to say that the vast majority of the titles considered are of the picture book variety, with some comics included. It would appear that having "graphic novels" as first in the title was a ploy to interest readers interested in that field. It leads one to speculate that the author possibly had little interest in comics as a subject in itself.

Another difficulty which comes with the mixing of the forms is that there is an all age category in comics that does not equate with other books – which are more rigidly split into junior, teen or adult books. So, various all ages comics are strictly labelled along with the picture books, such as *Mister I* from Lewis Trondheim being for three to seven year olds. The book, however, is an interesting exercise in silent graphic storytelling, an aspect which may interest adults.

The book does get more interesting in chapter 30, called Graphic Novels for Teens. In this section, we have multiple works by Jim Woodring, Peter KuPer, Thomas Ott and others. Here, they are all given a 12+ rating. This is problematic when applied to Thomas Ott, some of whose work is terrifying. The chapter also has comics such as Masashi Tanaka's Gon, a manga adventure starring a tiny dinosaur. Anyone following this volume's advice would not give that to a reader under 12, which would deprive them of a very enjoyable story for children.

There is a tradition of this kind of categorisation in libraries, where teen is often the default section that most graphic novels are placed into in their systems. Child and mature readers' graphic novels left to be ignored next to other teenage fiction and non-fiction. So, teen is often "where graphic novels go to die".

So for a reader primarily interested in graphic novels, the book has a few areas of interest. For someone needing to research children's picture books, it is probably much more suited and relevant to what they would find useful. An additional nit-pick is the omission of an alphabetised index of book titles.

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