



The Language Wars: A History of Proper English

Henry Hitchings

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The English language is a battlefield. Since the age of Shakespeare, arguments over correct usage have been bitter, and have always really been about contesting values-morality, politics, and class. *The Language Wars* examines the present state of the conflict, its history, and its future. Above all, it uses the past as a way of illuminating the present. Moving chronologically, the book explores the most persistent issues to do with English and unpacks the history of "proper" usage. Where did these ideas spring from? Who has been on the front lines in the language wars?

The Language Wars examines grammar rules, regional accents, swearing, spelling, dictionaries, political correctness, and the role of electronic media in reshaping language. It also takes a look at such details as the split infinitive, elocution, and text messaging. Peopled with intriguing characters such as Jonathan Swift, Lewis Carroll, and Lenny Bruce, *The Language Wars* is an essential volume for anyone interested in the state of the English language today or its future.

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