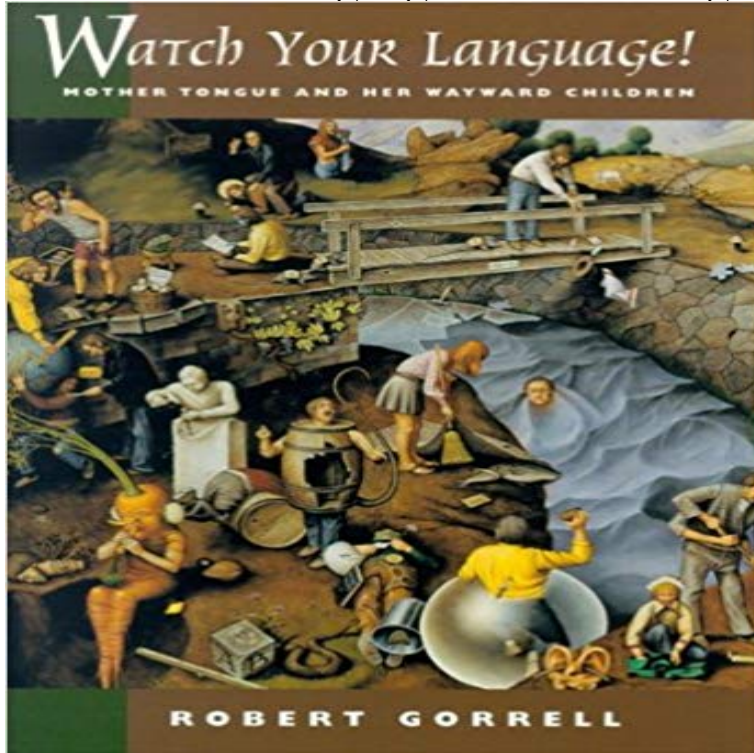


Watch Your Language: Mother Tongue And Her Wayward Children



Most language mavens seem to come not to praise English, but to bury it; they constantly warn us of the imminent demise of our mother tongue. Not to worry, says Robert Gorrell. In this lively, playful celebration of the joys and power of language, he points to all the signs that show English to be alive and well, and, like any other living thing, constantly evolving. Gorrell's goal is not so much to chastise the errant speaker or writer as it is to foster an appreciation of words and the best ways to use them. Thus, while he provides clear, concise explanations of why certain usages are inelegant or incorrect, Gorrell is also unafraid of reproaching other experts over usage debates he feels are picayune - pointing out, for example, that one writer of a popular language manual sets forth a dictum on the uses of that and which that he himself then violates a few paragraphs later. Watch Your Language! covers a wide array of topics of interest to all aficionados of English, from political doublespeak to spelling, from etymology to puns and wordgames. Throughout, Gorrell invites readers to share his love for words and his delight in the ways in which they can be used, played with, or even amusingly abused. For, he feels, it is this kind of affection and playfulness, more than any dry adherence to strict formulations, that will bring to our writing and speaking the sparkle and vivacity that are the most important elements of style.

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