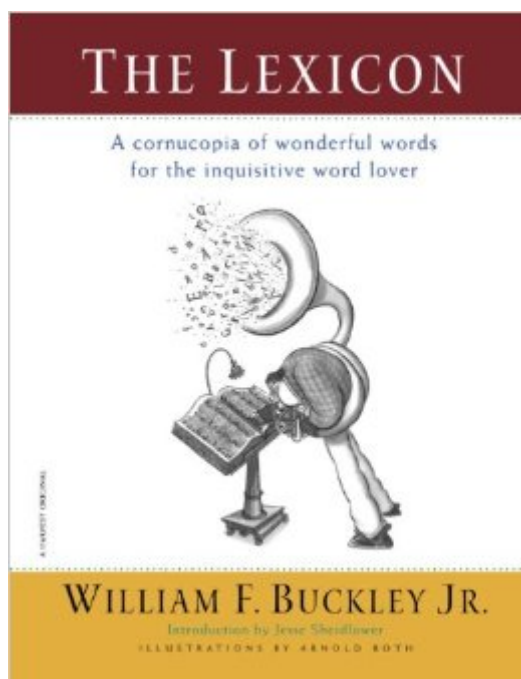


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The Lexicon: A Cornucopia Of Wonderful Words For The Inquisitive Word Lover



Synopsis

This boon to logophiles, culled from Buckley: The Right Word, presents the author's most erudite, out-of-the-ordinary, and interesting words - from prehensile and sciolist to rubric and histrionic - complete with definitions, examples, and usage notes. Introduction by Jesse Sheidlower; illustrations by Arnold Roth.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

William F. Buckley Jr. was well renowned for his vocabulary, but I am not sure that is a so much complement to him or a reflection of our society's educational inadequacies. Certainly his vocabulary was inferior to that of Shakespeare. You respond 'but that was Shakespeare'. To which I must observe that Shakespeare's audience of rough and bawdy tradesmen, housewives and shop owners standing about the stage of the Globe understood and enjoyed every word that flowed from the Bard's pen. Today, many find that word wizard of 400 years past almost unreadable because they must so often have recourse to a dictionary and Buckley was frequently criticized for his use of words that transcended an 8th grade reading level. This book is an amusing tonic for such deplorable ignorance. But do not think this book a comprehensive compilation of all the language's big words; for that, get the American Heritage Dictionary. That is what Mr. Buckley used. No, this is a specific collection of words that he owned and used daily in his writing and that is what makes the book fun. Each word listed is followed by a brief straightforward definition. Then this definition is followed by a sentence or a paragraph from somewhere among Buckley's voluminous verbal outpourings that illustrates how he actually used the word. Mr. Buckley chose these writing samples

to be humorous or provocative and to remind us all of the times and circumstances under which he wrote. All the examples make a point and those points demonstrate just what a difference Mr. Buckley's writing made in American politics and polemic.

I write this the day after President Obama finally acknowledged the babbling, screaming yokels and produced his birth form. Are the jackels happy now? Not really. They are tearing the document apart and calling Obama a liar. It's a sad day for America when a president feels the need to bow down to that level. But that is how stupid this country has become. The conservative movement is now in the hands of the Tea Party crackpots and mental giants like Sarah Palin and Michelle Bachmann (hey, how about that for a 2012 ticket!?!). WFB must be spinning in his grave, seeing the witless mouth breathers and hateful 'nabobs of negativity' who've hijacked his party. You may have guessed that I am a liberal to the core but I've always loved to watch, listen to and read WFB. Anything he had to say was pretty interesting to me, purely because of what he said, and, almost as important, the way he said it. I am a long-time "word junkie", but I only recently came across this book, I'm sorry to say. What makes this particular volume truly unique is that the list of words, the definitions of the words, and the all-important citations of the words are all from WFB himself. The wonderful contextual examples all come from the WFB's own writings, and it is obvious that he was comfortable with these difficult words and knew them well enough to use them properly. It's amazing how many of the "hard" words you hear and see and read are actually in this book. When I pick up one of these, I always look for a group of particular words, which, to me, are mandatory for inclusion. These words are: epistemology, inchoate, jejune, orotund, and quotidian. Not surprisingly, all are included here.

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