



The Superior Person's Complete Book of Words

Bowler, Peter

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In 1984, at the Frankfurt Book Fair, George Gibson and I picked up Peter Bowler's first Superior Person's Book of Words for the princely sum of \$500. With 650,000 copies sold and now in its 32nd printing, it went on to become our all-time hardcover bestseller. Over the next decade we issued two more collections, all intended, in Mr. Bowler's immortal words, to provide "the ordinary man in the street with new and better verbal weapons-words which until now have been available only to philologists, lexicographers, and art critics." All three books are gathered here in one volume with words arranged alphabetically. What Bowler manages to do in this omnium gatherum of over 1,000 words that all of us have (very) occasionally heard but have no idea how to use, is not only to provide their definitions (easy enough) but also to offer, for the first time, practical advice on how to use these words in real-life situations-to confound your friends, irritate your enemies, and impress your superiors. Thus the reader will not only learn the meaning of aprosexia, but also how best to use it when filling out their sick leave application form. Sample sentences, in comprehensible and often hilarious prose, are given for every word providing a verbal arsenal potent enough to "confuse, deter, embarrass, humiliate, puzzle, deceive, disconcert, alarm, insult (and occasionally compliment) everyone" with relative impunity. Learn only a hundred or so of these and confirm the author's ambition to give you, his readers, "a more finely tuned engine of the language they speak, so they more readily assert their linguistic superiority over their fellow travelers at the traffic stops of life." And there's still more: anecdotes of eccentric scholars, unbelievable tales of the cupidity and stupidity of the rich and famous, examples of idiot conceits and further curiosities of the so-called intellectual life. Now, all of this in one elegant softcover volume, with flaps, an unbelievable bargain at \$24.95.

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