

WordWatch: A Writer's Guide to Linguistic Distinctions

Compiled by Lawrence Fellows

If you think it's better to be fashionable than stylish; if you're not sure if the Capulets and Montagues were factious or fractious; or if you've been told you don't know your aphorisms from your epigrams, WordWatch is for you.

In short, witty takes on word usage, WordWatch will clue you in on some of the English language's most misused and confused words. There are words that sound alike and have subtle differences (fervid and fervent), words that sound alike and have nothing to do with each other (noisy and noisome), and words that most of us misuse on a continual (or is it continuous?) basis.

"The more you think you learn about the English language," writes author Larry Fellows, "the more you discover its pitfalls." With the whimsical accompaniment of Howard Munce's cartoon drawings, Fellows entertains his readers while he steers them away from hundreds of those pitfalls. WordWatch readers will know devilry from devilry. They'll know when to deduce and when to deduct, they'll know when not to be reckless or feckless. They'll even discover why George Balanchine once said "You want to have a symposium. You must have wine."

Larry Fellows, a former New York Times correspondent who introduced the Connecticut Weekly as a supplement to the New York Times, wrote these word columns after leaving the Times in the late 1970s. Fellows, who died in 2000, was a long-time member of the Connecticut Press Club and received its Mark Twain Distinguished Journalist Award posthumously in 2002.

-Gwen North Reiss