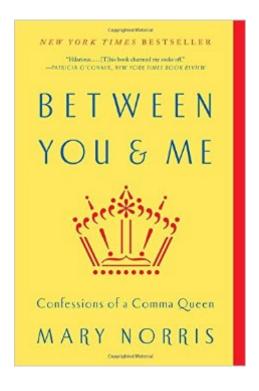
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Between You & Me: Confessions Of A Comma Queen





Synopsis

â œHilarious. . . . This book charmed my socks off.â • â •Patricia Oâ ™Conner, New York Times Book ReviewMary Norris has spent more than three decades in The New Yorker's copy department, maintaining its celebrated high standards. Now she brings her vast experience, good cheer, and finely sharpened pencils to help the rest of us in a boisterous language book as full of life as it is of practical advice. Between You & Me features Norris's laugh-out-loud descriptions of some of the most common and vexing problems in spelling, punctuation, and usagea •comma faults, danglers, "who" vs. "whom," "that" vs. "which," compound words, gender-neutral languageâ •and her clear explanations of how to handle them. Down-to-earth and always open-minded, she draws on examples from Charles Dickens, Emily Dickinson, Henry James, and the Lord's Prayer, as well as from The Honeymooners, The Simpsons, David Foster Wallace, and Gillian Flynn. She takes us to see a copy of Noah Webster's groundbreaking Blue-Back Speller, on a quest to find out who put the hyphen in Moby-Dick, on a pilgrimage to the world's only pencil-sharpener museum, and inside the hallowed halls of The New Yorker and her work with such celebrated writers as Pauline Kael, Philip Roth, and George Saunders. Readersâ •and writersâ •will find in Norris neither a scold nor a softie but a wise and witty new friend in love with language and alive to the glories of its use in America, even in the age of autocorrect and spell-check. As Norris writes, "The dictionary is a wonderful thing, but you can't let it push you around."

Book Information

Paperback: 240 pages Publisher: W. W. Norton & Company; 1 edition (April 4, 2016) Language: English ISBN-10: 0393352145 ISBN-13: 978-0393352146 Product Dimensions: 5.6 x 0.7 x 8.3 inches Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies) Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars Â See all reviews (411 customer reviews) Best Sellers Rank: #17,923 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #24 in Books > Reference > Words, Language & Grammar > Etymology #47 in Books > Reference > Words, Language & Grammar > Grammar #53 in Books > Textbooks > Reference > Writing Skills

Customer Reviews

lâ ™ve got a bad habit of buying books about the history and proper usage of the English language

and not reading them. Iâ [™]ve got a shelf in my home library thatâ [™]s attractively stacked with books like Bill Brysonâ [™]s Mother Tongue: English and How It Got That Way and Sister Bernadetteâ [™]s Barking Dog by Kitty Burns Florey. I tend to read the first few pages, enjoy them as much as I expect to, then get distracted by some work of fiction or other. lâ ™m terrible about nonfiction, even if itâ [™]s on a topic lâ [™]m very interested in. But Between You & Me was a Goodreads win, and lâ ™m more likely to win other titles if I read and review this one, so I had a bit more motivation than usual. Alsoâ |well, it didnâ ™t hurt that Mary Norris is so funny. Witness the following examples and tell me you donâ [™]t want to read this book, too:â œWhomâ • may indeed be on the way out, but so is Venice, and we still like to go there and Chances are that if you use the Oxford comma you brush the crumbs off your shirtfront before going out. Between You & Me covers such topics as spelling, punctuation, and profanity in a direct and easily-understood manner. Norris makes frequent mention of the ways that style and usage vary between major publications such as The New Yorker (where sheâ [™]s worked since 1978) and The New York Times. Thereâ [™]s even an entire chapter dedicated to pencils and pencil sharpeners! (This might sound boring to you, but if it doesnâ [™]t, we should probably be friends.)I learned from this book, and I enjoyed myself immensely while reading it. Itâ TMs made me want to pick up my next work of nonfiction sooner than the usual schedule (which would be maybe in six months or so?). It made me want to buy, read, and annotate/highlight a style guide to learn even more.

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