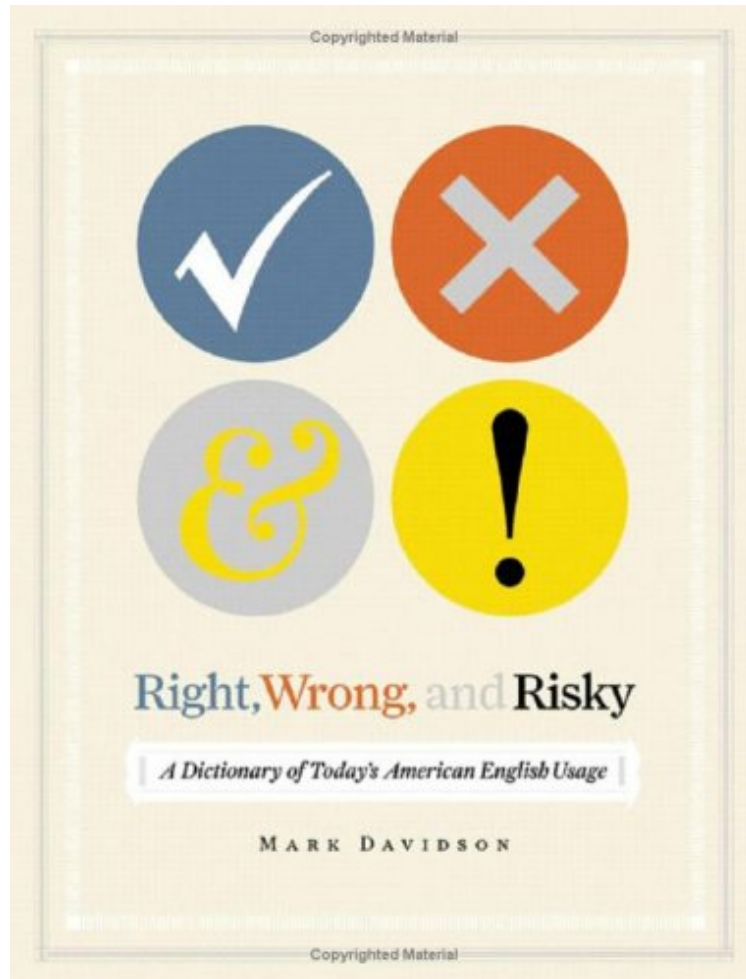


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Right, Wrong, and Risky: A Dictionary of Today's American English Usage

Mark Davidson

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For anyone challenged by the changes and controversies in the world's most widely used language: Standard American English. Right, Wrong, and Risky provides simple, direct answers to questions about word choice, spelling, grammar, and punctuation; in straightforward alphabetical order. The answers are supported by thousands of up-to-date published usage examples. And the reader is told not just that particular usages are right or wrong, but why. In addition, Right, Wrong, and Risky warns the reader about risky words like cleave and suspicious, and the many risky situations in which usage authorities disagree about what is and is not acceptable in Standard American English. For every such quandary, this book provides a risk-free solution. Browsers will learn why we tell stage performers to break a leg, why it's not really an insult to call someone a philistine or even a Neanderthal, and why it's wise never to use the word fortuitous or say the word forte aloud.

From Booklist
Full-time writer and former professor of communications Davidson offers a dictionary that "views the real world of today's American English, identifying usage questions that are debatable, citing conflicting answers, and offering risk-free solutions for each conflict." Presented in straight alphabetical order, all of the standard usage questions are covered, including a or an; comprise or constitute; and data is or data are. What makes this dictionary so useful for a general audience (and readable for browsers) is the vast array of contemporary examples of usage, ranging from New Yorker cartoons to storefront signs. In addition, Davidson addresses many common punctuation pitfalls, including the current ubiquitous abuse of the apostrophe. Browsers will enjoy the colorful, interesting backstories on the origins of terms such as ground zero, on the sudden warming to the phrase girl talk, and on the widely misunderstood use of the word Neanderthal. And students struggling with language issues will especially appreciate Davidson's up-to-date, exceptionally clear explanations of common trouble spots.
Joanne Wilkinson
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Belongs on the desk of every writer, every editor, every teacher, every speaker and everybody else who cares about. -- Marvin Petal, former European Manager, McGraw-Hill World News
Wonderful. -- Ray Bradbury
About the Author
Mark Davidson was a writer, author, and journalist, and a former professor at UCLA, USC, and Cal State.