



Word Drops: A Sprinkling of Linguistic Curiosities

Paul Anthony Jones

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From *aardvark* to *zenzizenzizenic*, *Word Drops* collects a thousand obscure words and language facts in one fascinating chain of word associations. Did you know, for example, that *scandal* derives from the Latin for "stumbling block" and originally described a trap for a wild animal? In nineteenth-century slang a *wolf trap* was a corrupt casino. *Casino* means "little house" in Italian. *Roulette* means "little wheel" in French. A *wheeler* is someone who attends auctions to bid on items merely to increase their sale price. Such links take readers on an unexpected journey through linguistic oddities. Inspired by the popular @HaggardHawks Twitter account, *Word Drops* also uses an intriguing series of annotations to add background and historical context on everything from Anglo-Saxon cures for insanity to Samuel Pepys's cure for a hangover. This unique book will delight anyone who loves language, etymology, and word games.

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