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Garner on Language and Writing

By Bryan A. Garner

CHICAGO, Dec. 16, 2008 – Since the 1987 appearance of *A Dictionary of Modern Legal Usage*, Bryan A. Garner has proved to be a versatile and prolific writer on legal linguistic subjects. *Garner on Language and Writing*, a new compilation of his essays published by the American Bar Association, shows the great breadth of his scholarship, covering subjects as wide-ranging as learning to write, style, persuasion, contractual and legislative drafting, grammar, lexicography, writing in law school and law practice, judicial writing, and all the literature relating to these diverse subjects.

Garner leavens his essays with the light humor and wry wit that his readers have come to expect. Some have called Garner a controversialist, and he doesn't shrink from controversy here: he takes aim at legal academia, at word-bungling law reviews, at writers who intersperse citations within the main body of their writing, at judges who use extremely arcane words, and at the many conventions that tend to mire legal writing in perpetual mediocrity.

In one of the most entertaining chapters, “Bizarreries,” Garner takes on judges who pun on litigants' names, legal writers who mangle Latin, and, in one of the most extended yet entertaining exchanges imaginable on such a subject, people who argue that the term “Sincerely” is an erroneous complimentary close.

Garner also collects recommended sources on language and writing that will guide readers to seminal texts in virtually every language-related field including brief-writing, playwriting, poetry, linguistics and general semantics.

In the preface to *Garner on Language and Writing*, Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg declares the book “a ‘must read’ primer for my law clerks,” adding that the book offers “cues to effective expression in doses both delectable and easily digestible.”

For more about *Garner on language and Writing*, including excerpts, visit <http://www.abanet.org/abapubs/Garner/>.

Garner is editor in chief of all current editions of *Black's Law Dictionary* and the author of many books and articles on legal writing, including *The Elements of Legal Style*, *Legal Writing in Plain English*, *The Redbook: A Manual on Legal Style* and *The Winning Brief*. His 879-page usage guide, *Garner's Modern American Usage*, is widely considered the leading authority on general English usage today.

With more than 400,000 members, the American Bar Association is the largest voluntary professional membership organization in the world. As the national voice of the legal profession, the ABA works to improve the administration of justice, promotes programs that assist lawyers and judges in their work, accredits law schools, provides continuing legal education, and works to build public understanding around the world of the importance of the rule of law.

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