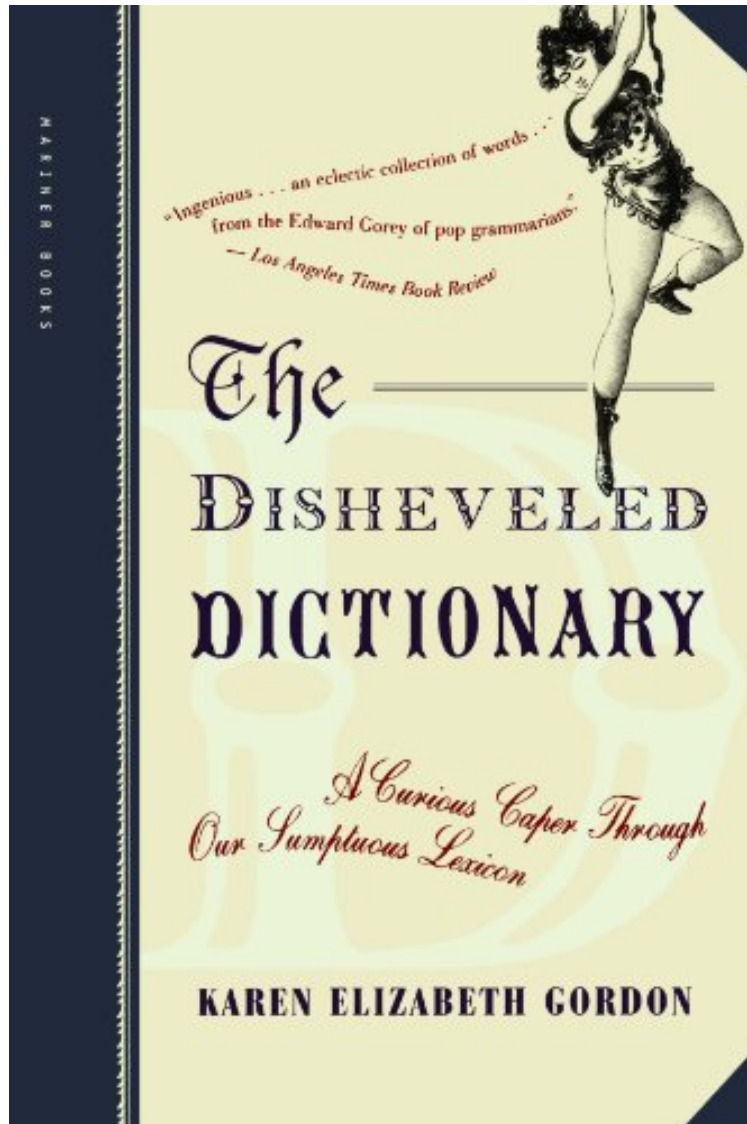


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The Disheveled Dictionary: A Curious Caper Through Our Sumptuous Lexicon

Karen Elizabeth Gordon

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Karen Elizabeth Gordon : The Disheveled Dictionary: A Curious Caper Through Our Sumptuous Lexicon before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Disheveled Dictionary: A Curious Caper Through Our Sumptuous Lexicon:

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With her signature cache of illustrations and flamboyantly gothic examples, Karen Elizabeth Gordon, "who has achieved cult status with her whimsical references, defines an array of daffy, delicious words" (Library Journal). In *The Disheveled Dictionary* Gordon conjures a world of words, their definitions and myriad uses, and along the way invokes favorite characters from earlier books. Gordon's eccentric wit and unique insights take readers on a delightful romp through the dictionary that will expand their vocabularies and exhilarate their minds. Along the way she celebrates not only the obscure but also our most beloved and basic words. *The Disheveled Dictionary* is a treat for anyone who loves language -- its sound, its sensuality, its ability to surprise and delight.

.com Pretty little novelty vocabulary books often provide unimaginative, unpoetic definitions for strange and beautiful words that one could never imagine actually using in a sentence. Karen Elizabeth Gordon's *Disheveled Dictionary* is quite the opposite. Gordon offers up usable if somewhat underused words (such as "amplitude," "crepuscular," "maudlin," and "recidivistic"), many of which we're not quite sure we know the exact meaning, illustrating them in the wildly creative fashion that she has perfected in her grammar texts (*The Deluxe Transitive Vampire*, *The New Well-Tempered Sentence*, and *Torn Wings and Faux Pas*). "The more ample one's lexicon," writes Gordon (as her alter ego "Yolanta") in the book's preface, "the more supple one's thought, the more daring, charged, engaged." "Jonquil Mapp," another of Gordon's stable of crafty characters, adds that "What's most exciting ... is not where a word has been but where it's going, what you will make of it." This book is best described by example, so here is Gordon's illustrative use of that excessive pride or self-confidence we call "hubris": "Adipose Rex, a modern drama with ancient Greek overtones, is about a king whose hubris vis-a-vis his heart and his tragic proclivity for tiropitas, pastitsio, and baklava bring on his comeuppance coronary." --Jane SteinbergFrom *Library Journal*Gordon, who has achieved cult status with whimsical references like *The Well-Tempered Sentence* (1983), defines an array of daffy, delicious words. Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc. "Entertaining ... ingenious ... An eclectic collection of words ... from the Edward Gorey of pop grammarians."