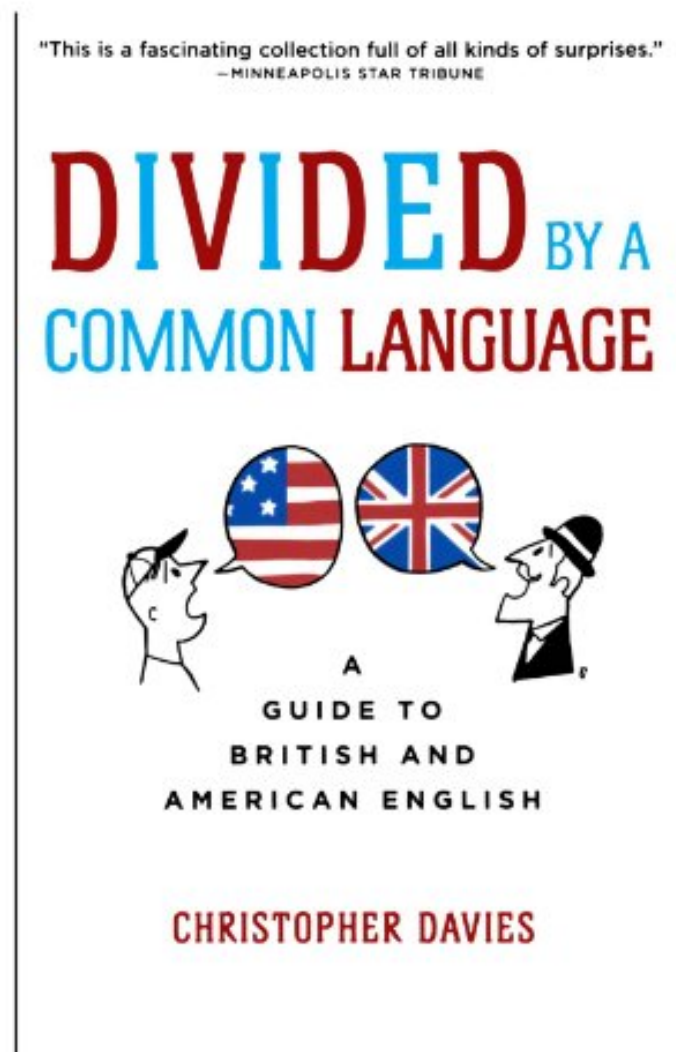


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# Divided by a Common Language: A Guide to British and American English

*Christopher Davies*

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**Christopher Davies : Divided by a Common Language: A Guide to British and American English** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Divided by a Common Language: A Guide to British and American English:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Divided OpinionBy Rabid ReaderThis review is for the KINDLE edition in particular. While I found the content of the book itself a lot of fun to read and very interesting. . . It was absolutely horrible on the Kindle due to the many pages that contained lists of words comparing British English to American English. The print on these lists could not be magnified in any way, thus a lot of the information simply was impossible to read! If you're going to buy this, buy the print edition. 6 of 8 people found the following review helpful. EssentialBy TundraBee"England and America are two countries divided by a common language." -George Bernard Shaw, quoted on the Table of Contents Christopher Davies has written a dictionary to bridge the divide. He begins by explaining: "... Most English speaking people are unaware of the vast differences between British and American English. This book is designed to enlighten the reader about these differences, and briefly explain how these differences came about. ... An estimated 4,000 words in everyday use in Britain, have a different meaning or are used differently in the U.S."(p.1) This reader is not a linguist nor lexicographer, but I do read a lot. I have noticed, when reading British books, that my mid-western USA mind is sometimes totally befuddled. This handy-dandy British English-American English Dictionary is a great companion and fun to read! Written with wit and humor (or is that humour?) it also illuminates how the differences came to be: "The early settlers in the U.S. had no verbal contact with the folk they left behind in England, and the division of the language began. Over the years many Europeans settled in the U.S., bringing their languages with them. English remained the dominant language in America, though German was widely spoken in the 1800's. There were numerous French colonies, and New York was originally a Dutch settlement, called New Amsterdam. Each language left its mark on spoken English [this reviewer would here note that Native languages also enhance American English] ... Noah Webster, the well known American lexicographer, forecast in 1789 that eventually American English would be as different from British English as Dutch, Danish and Swedish are from German, or from each other." p. 1-2 But with improved transportation and communication, British and American English have remained close enough to cause confusion. In addition to essential cross lexicons, "Rules of the Road," and cartoons with Uncle Sam speak vs. John Bull speak, Mr. Davies provides useful sections on words and phrases with different connotations that can get one in big trouble on the other side of the "pond." And, finally, God Bless the Canadians, who have their own section in the book and an absolutely charming way of pronouncing the "out" sound. Eh? Listen to Peter Jennings. 5 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Entertaining reading, but a bit out of date. By Michael T. Rognlien I bought this book after many trips to the UK as kind of a joke between myself and British friend. Since we're always laughing at the other's interpretation of the English language, I thought it would be funny. And indeed, parts of it were. But for the most part, the phrases and words that were "translated" were of little importance. If you're looking for a strict, current translation of words as they are used in the UK and the US, you should probably dig a little deeper. If you want to read a book that has a few useful phrases and interpretations of various sayings, along with some humorous snafus the author has experienced over the years, this would do fine.

Puzzled by signs warning you to mind the gap in the London Underground? Wondering what will be on your plate if you order toad in the hole in a London caf? In *Divided by a Common Language*, Christopher Davies explains these expressions and discusses the many differences in pronunciation, spelling, and vocabulary between British and American English. He compares the customs, manners, and practical details of daily life in the United Kingdom and the United States, and American readers will enjoy his account of American culture as seen through an Englishman's eyes. Davies tops it off with an amusing list of expressions that sound innocent enough in one country but make quite the opposite impression in the other. Two large glossaries help travelers translate from one variety of English to the other, and additional lists explain the distinctive words of Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. *Divided by a Common Language* is the ideal travel companion for both British visitors to the U.S. and American visitors to the U.K. It is also the perfect book for Britons interested in American culture and Americans enjoying British novels, movies, and television at home.

"This is a fascinating collection full of all kinds of surprises." (Minneapolis Star Tribune) From the Author Serious reference or humorous, yours to decide... Having grown up in England, I ventured forth at the aged 20 to visit relatives in New Zealand. How could I possibly know at that time that England was never going to be home again.... After seven years down under, I settled in the United States in 1980. Twenty years later I am still fascinated by American culture. The linguistic differences are enormous. The words "tailback" and "dustman", mean nothing to the average American and probably never will in the foreseeable future. Brits coming over on "holiday" still use the terms, "bathing costume", and "flannel", much to the amusement of Americans within earshot. In this book, I have tried to cover every aspect of the differences between British and American English, from spelling differences to pronunciation differences; even comparing different idioms and expressions used on the other side of the pond. I hope you enjoy the book with all its intrinsic humor, but I think having read the book, you'll be just as fascinated as I am by the vast linguistic gulf that separates the two countries. By the way, did you know that Americans have not always driven on the right? The details are in the book. Christopher Davies (CDavies324@aol.com) About the Author CHRISTOPHER DAVIES was born and raised in England and spent several years living in Australia and New

Zealand. In 1980 he settled in Florida. The many unfamiliar expressions and pronunciations that he encountered in American English led him to write *Divided by a Common Language*.