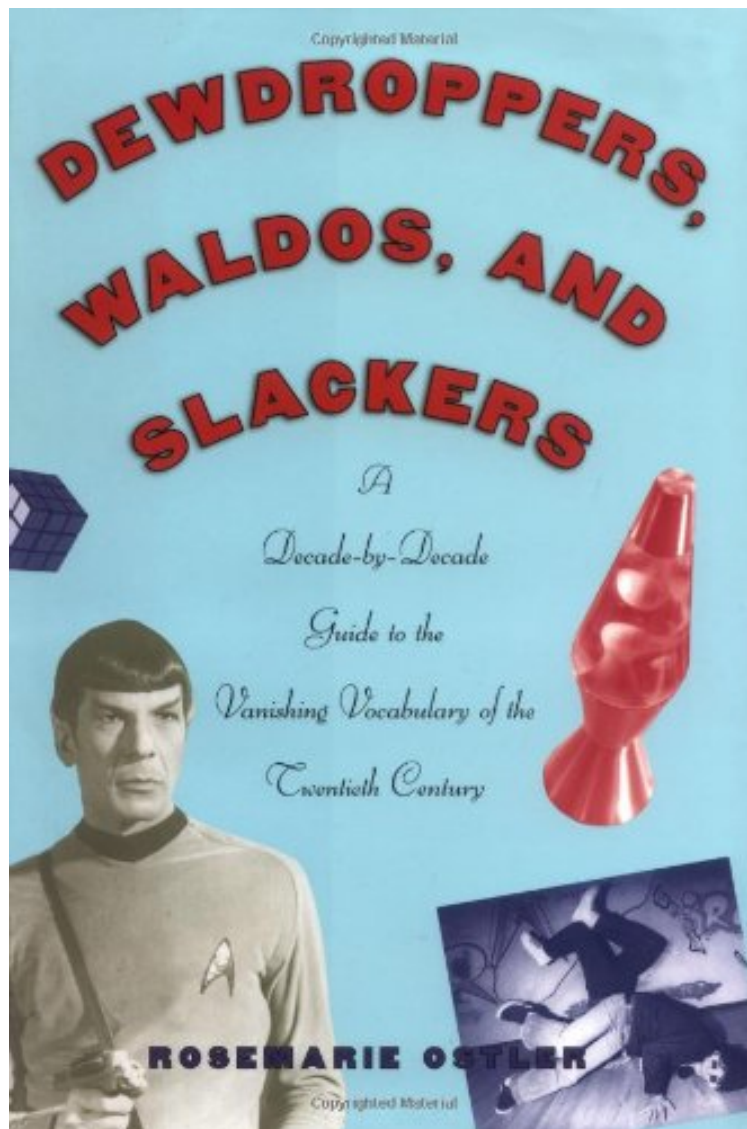


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Dewdroppers, Waldos, and Slackers: A Decade-by-Decade Guide to the Vanishing Vocabulary of the 20th Century

Rosemarie Ostler

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Rosemarie Ostler : Dewdroppers, Waldos, and Slackers: A Decade-by-Decade Guide to the Vanishing Vocabulary of the 20th Century before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Dewdroppers, Waldos, and Slackers: A Decade-by-Decade Guide to the Vanishing Vocabulary of the 20th Century:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Excellent resource for writers
By Michelle Fabio, Bleeding Espresso
I got this book as a writing reference, and it hasn't disappointed. I really enjoyed reading it through the first time (so much great history!), and now it remains a handy resource. A must for any fiction writer.
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Really Good
By DKI
I was looking for a book like this. At first I was turned off by the front cover but when I got it it was what I was expecting. I wanted something that was a cross between a dictionary and an encyclopedia. It breaks things out in time periods and describes what was going on in the day which could have been a driving factor for such lingo.
2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. The Vocabulary of The Past -- or Where that Strange Phrase Comes From
By F. Chloupek
Oddly enough I also bought this book as a gift. I must be cheap though because I picked it up as a remaindered book for \$1.00 (In all fairness it wasn't my only gift) I picked it up for my mother, who is now into her early 70s and has been reading more and more about events from the 30s and 40s. However, I started reading the book first, and I must say I was impressed by the detail that was present -- especially the sections on the earlier decades, the turn of the century, the 20s and the 30s. Some of those words still reside with us still, either in period literature, or as somewhat dated catchphrases -- and bits like the origin of "23 skidoo" were quite interesting. The book does falter in the slang of the 80s and 90s, since it's a bit too close in time for that to be "nostalgia". A good book for anyone wishing to relive a time period, get a quick life snapshot of a certain decade, creating appropriate period dialog or scenarios, or even looking up an obscure catchphrase.

Ever encountered a blatherskite? How about a darb? When was the last time you got the straight skinny at a rap session or told someone to keep on truckin'? How many once-popular American words aren't you using these days? Quite a few, if you're like most people. Thousands of words and expressions entered American English between 1900 and 1999. Every era from the "Roaring Twenties" to the "Me Decade" brought its own fads and trends and the language to go with them: fresh youth slang, up-to-the-minute buzzwords, and colorful catch phrases. Most of this new vocabulary exploded into the vernacular, only to fizzle a few years later as trendier trends and more current events demanded new terminology. Giving yesterday's words another chance to sparkle before they retire to the archives for good, *Dewdroppers, Waldos, and Slackers* focuses on language that still resonates with the mood of its times. These are words that most Americans would once have recognized, if not actually used. Nothing says Sixties like groovy, even though this resilient piece of slang was heard as early as the 1940s, lingered into the 1970s, and amazingly, is making a twenty-first century comeback. A nostalgic word trip through the highs and lows of American English from the last century, this book pays special attention to words that enjoyed a brief vogue only to end up abandoned and nearly forgotten: one-reelers, bulls, jet jockeys, keypunch operators, the bugged-out and the slackers. They all have a place in this book in engaging essays--arranged by decade--that put these words in their historical and sociological context. The twentieth century is over, but we can still appreciate the words we left behind.

From Publishers Weekly
According to linguist and librarian Ostler, "thousands of slang words and expressions entered American English between 1900 and 1999." Among these, some expressions--like "groovy," "straight skinny" and "Okie"--grew dated and fell out of use. Others--such as "cakewalk" and "motor court"--metamorphosed and entered the general lexicon. Organized by decade and ingeniously presented both in lists and in short historical essays, Ostler's definitions are clear and amusing. For any lexicophile curious to know what Depression-era hobos called the local jail or how the term "go ballistic" emerged in the 1980s, this guide will be a pleasure. Bw photos. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "Well documented and entertaining, this book...will appeal to all aficionados of language."--Choice
"Ostler's work is fun for browsing; it offers a unique presentation of recent cultural history."--Library Journal
"Ostler's inspired idea was to track the popular speech of the 20th century -- slang, colloquial terms, occupational lingo and notable buzzwords -- by the decade in which it was popular. Much more than just a glossary, this book is a fascinating peek into some long-forgotten corners of American culture."--Columbus Dispatch
"For Gram, Pops, Mom, Dad or any other loved one with a vintage vocab. There are tons of words in this book we all used to say, and thought we were pretty cool while doing it. So, to prevent the embarrassment of improper slang usage, fo-shizzle, buy this and gift it like crazy."--Boston Herald
"Worthwhile.... Engaging. A nice light accurate skimming of the vocabulary of particular eras of the twentieth century." --Allan Metcalf, secretary of the American Dialect Society and author of *America in So Many Words*
About the Author
Rosemarie Ostler, a linguist and librarian, has written on this topic for *The Saturday Evening Post*, and her work has also appeared in *The Futurist*, *Oregon Quarterly*, *Whole Earth*, and *Writers' Journal*.