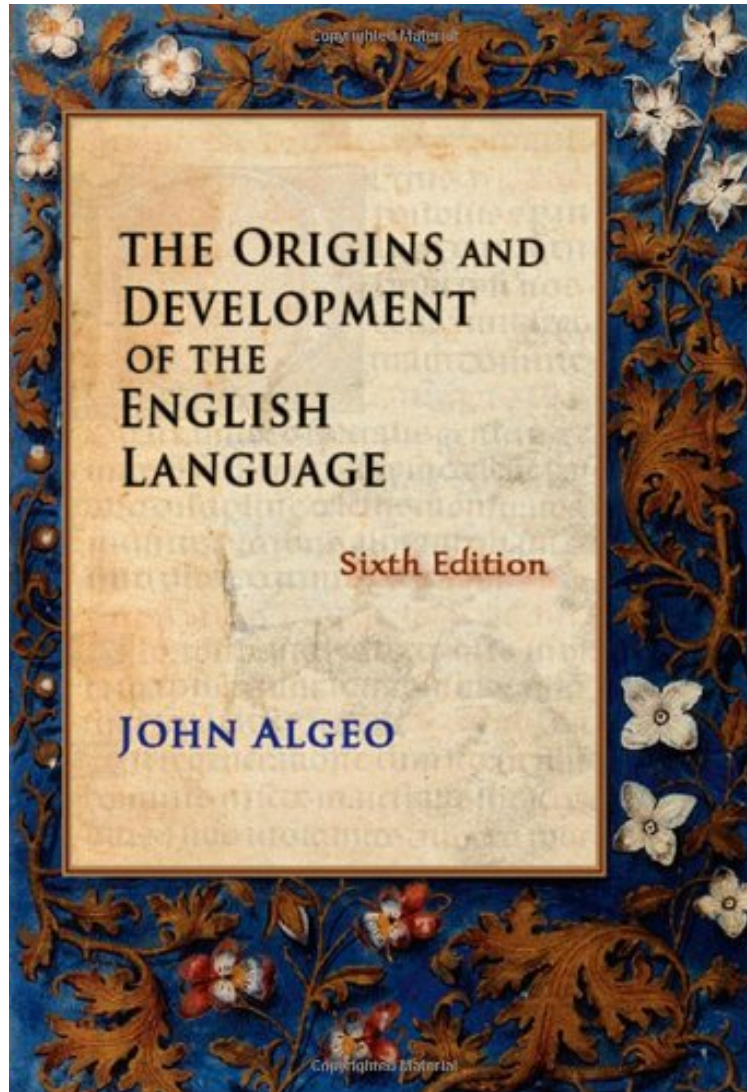


[Get free] The Origins and Development of the English Language

The Origins and Development of the English Language

John Algeo

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#993184 in Books Cengage Learning 2009-02-02Ingredients: Example IngredientsOriginal language:EnglishPDF # 1 .70 x 6.40 x 9.50l, 1.36 #File Name: 1428231455368 pages | File size: 78.Mb

John Algeo : The Origins and Development of the English Language before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Origins and Development of the English Language:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Makes the ConnectionsBy Karen M. CarlsonI found this book interesting and enjoyable to read. That may seem odd, given that it is a textbook (for freshman-level linguistics/English majors); but four decades past my college days I read this just for fun.The book might be difficult to follow for someone with absolutely no background in linguistics or the earlier stages of English, or at least some knowledge of a language (for example, German) that retains more inflections than modern English. I have learned

some Old English, and have picked up bits and pieces of linguistics although I have never studied it in any systematic way. However, Algeo's book is certainly not for just the serious student of linguistics. After some general chapters on language and linguistics, the book takes the development of our language chronologically. It begins with the Proto-Indo-European (PIE) and Proto-Germanic phases, before English existed as a language. It then goes through Old English, Middle English, early modern English, and late modern English. There are then a few more general chapters: about how languages change, and (with many examples) how words have entered English. Each of the chapters on Old through late modern English includes some brief history of English speakers as the history pertains to what happened to the language during the period under discussion. A strength of this text is how it makes the connections to show the development of the language. It does not just give a snapshot of English at various dates, but keeps referring back to previous periods. The author takes an informal and occasionally irreverent tone. As a bit of a pedant about usage (colloquially, a grammar Nazi) myself, I recognized myself as a type the author pokes gentle fun at. His point is that language changes, usage changes, the meanings of words change, and it is more profitable to study how English is actually used than to try to prescribe some unchanging rules. English is an evolving system, but one in which we can find a good deal of continuity back to its early roots.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. An absolute mind-blower for those who formally studied German. By John Some parallels with modern German are obvious in verb inflections such as Middle English "thou hast" with modern German "du hast" (both meaning "you have"). But this book goes much further, making parallels regarding case, gender of nouns, and much more, in rich detail with lots of examples. Fascinating stuff! The OE word for "sister" was "sweostor" (like German "Schwester"). Sometimes the Old Norse words --in this case "syster"-- won out, and this was long before the Norman Conquest of 1066 from which we got most of our Latin and Greek loan words. This book is lean and dense (no fluff). It begins with brief overviews of language in general, what distinguishes it from animal communication, the sounds people make with a cross section of a human head to illustrate places of articulation (and related terms like "fricative" and "plosive"), and major language families, past and present.

FAIR WARNING: you will likely be lost unless you have studied a language formally because there is a lot of detailed discussion about case, tense, noun declensions, verb inflections, and the like. But if you "dig" languages, come on in.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars. By Amber Gray I can't wait to use this book in my summer class.

This text is intended for History of the English Language courses that are generally taken by linguistics and English majors as well as future teachers of English (for whom the course is often required).

"ORIGINS is comprehensive, allows a professor to be selective, and reflects new research." "It remains the best choice for my students." ". . . provides the greatest coverage of periods . . . presents the elements of language . . . in an approach which trims down the entire period but leaves enough of the linguistic elements for students to be able to understand how language actually does change." "The [companion book of problems] is one of the textbook's greatest strengths because it allows students to put into practice the principles that are presented. The exercises help to complete learning that starts with the readings in the textbook." "This relatively slim volume is attractive and accessible for undergraduate and graduate students, has so much information, and could serve even as a reference source." About the Author John Algeo is Professor Emeritus of English at the University of Georgia. He is past president of the American Dialect Society, the Dictionary Society of North America, and the American Name Society. He was an associate editor of the OXFORD COMPANION TO THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE and editor of Volume 6 of the CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE: ENGLISH IN NORTH AMERICA. He was a Fulbright Senior Research Scholar and a Guggenheim Fellow at University College London and is author of the 2006 Cambridge book BRITISH OR AMERICAN ENGLISH? A HANDBOOK OF WORD AND GRAMMAR PATTERNS.