

## FOREWORD

You are probably not reading this, since hardly anyone ever reads the foreword to any sort of book, let alone a dictionary. Nevertheless (Ahh, there's a good word!) forewords are demanded by editors and publishers in order to justify or apologize for the inability of the ensuing text to stand on its own without preliminary explanation.

The present volume (foreword-speak for "this book in your hand") being no real exception, I will attempt a modest introduction to this obviously ground-breaking (and heart-breaking) work of exceptional genius (I so characterize the book's quality in case you may not notice it).

I have always been a political junkie – you know, one of those people who actually follow the issues of the day, stay up late on election nights and buy newspapers solely for the editorials and the crossword puzzle. I've also been a longtime admirer of Ambrose Bierce's *The Devil's Dictionary*, from which this book obviously draws inspiration. What exactly are my politics? I hear you immediately ask. Well, I'm going to be coy on that one, since if I claimed a particular stripe, no one of the opposing viewpoint, tragically, would buy the book.

And I intend here an equal opportunity work as far as partisanship goes. If you are a ("raving") liberal or a ("staunch") conservative, or anything else, you will find, I trust, plenty with which to take exception within these covers. Politicians, after all, are really just one big happy family. They may regularly indulge in heated disagreements, partisan battles, mud-slinging skirmishes and occasional fisticuffs, but underneath, politicians are all the