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While new clichés may seem like an obvious part of our language, our language is constantly changing; after all, how many folks knew about e-mail twenty years ago? And the same is true not only for individual words but also for the stock phrases we call clichés. Not only do new usages develop, but also some words and phrases die out. Thus, who today uses the phrase *corporal's guard* for a small group of some kind, or the *morning finger winker* for the passage of time? Yet both terms appeared in a dictionary of clichés published twenty years ago.

This revised and updated edition takes into account new usages and deletes some that are obsolete. I can't remember when I last heard (or saw in print) *die and atack*, and surely *blot one's copybook* died out along with ink-blotting and copybooks. On the other hand, I've added several hundred expressions that either qualify as clichés or are on the verge of becoming hackneyed. The business world is a rich source of new clichés, including such terms as *drum up*, *fork over*, and *go belly-up*. Another rich source is the military, which gave us *the balloon goes up*, *body count*, and *wicky mouse* and popularized *man/ fiber*. Popular novels, especially mysteries and thrillers, are rife with clichés, not so much in descriptive passages as in characters' speeches. Elsewhere I've described clichés as the fast food of language, and indeed, authors of popular fiction are recording language as it is actually spoken.

Apart from these sources, I rely on the fact that new expressions, especially those used by young people, give form to the particularity of an era's attitude. A quintessential example is *whatever*, the verbal expression of what in body language is a shrug. In a *Boston Globe* column of May 10, 2005, James Carroll quoted PFC Lyndie R. England telling the judge at her court martial that, when pressed to join in humiliating Iraqi prisoners, she said, "OK, whatever." Not all uses of this term express such callous indifference, but it nevertheless represents a refusal of decision making, as well as a rejection of responsibility.

—Christine Ammer