



# **Sister Bernadette's Barking Dog: The Quirky History and Lost Art of Diagramming Sentences**

*Kitty Burns Florey*

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In its heyday, sentence diagramming was wildly popular in grammar schools across the country. Kitty Burns Florey learned the method in sixth grade from Sister Bernadette: "It was a bit like art, a bit like mathematics. It was a picture of language. I was hooked." Now, in this offbeat history, Florey explores the sentence-diagramming phenomenon, including its humble roots at the Brooklyn Polytechnic, its "balloon diagram" predecessor, and what diagrams of famous writers' sentences reveal about them. Along the way Florey offers up her own commonsense approach to learning and using good grammar. Charming, fun, and instructive, Sister Bernadette's Barking Dog will be treasured by all kinds of readers, from grumpy grammarians and crossword-puzzle aficionados to students of literature and lovers of language.

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