

## Spell Check Serendeputy

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What was the world like before Spell check? Well for one thing we didn't exchange thousands of written words per day. After all you don't need spell check to talk on the phone. Although after listening to a few recent conversations at the DMV I'd say some of you need one of those little seven second delay "beep" buttons. Still without spell check I suspect email, texts and blogging would be much worse (and they are pretty bad now). Spell checkers correct many egregious...egregious...egriugies... many obvious and glaring errors. But sometimes they have a way of intercepting our thoughts and turning them into something else entirely.

I once wrote a paper for publication that referenced the practice of astral-projection. Don't worry - it wasn't a tech post. I finished the copy and prepared to send it to the editor. As I was reading through it I realized that I must have misspelled astral - maybe added an "h" to it or something. My paper now described the practice of *ashtray-projection*.

Recently my sales director sent a note to a customer checking in to see if they had any upcoming projects. The customer replied "We will *defiantly* keep you in mind." Now that's the sort of customer I love! They are going to use us no matter what anyone says dang it!

It gets better. When I'm texting spell check is its own worst enemy. My current phone (a blackberry Storm) tries to help me, first by guessing the letter I might have meant on the touch screen and then by suggesting and pre-filling words for me based on its guess. It also apparently stores words from previous messages as ok. At least that's what I think is happening. Every time I use the word "today" it comes out "toady". My wife takes offense at that ("Hey... what are you doing toady?").

As the main target for much of my texting my wife gets to laugh at me on a daily basis - not that she needs texts messages to do that. As a typical husband I'm sure I provide copious ammunition. But to sample her daily dose.... she asked what I wanted for supper one time and I told her burgers on the groin would be nice. I once told her I was on my way to "homeless depot". I was making a pie and she was at the store getting supplies. I asked, "did you remember the alamos?" I meant almonds but the mistake was quite serendipitous. I could imagine her at the grocery store with one hand on her heart and the other scratching her head in puzzlement.

Sometimes when I try to correct my text misspellings I get into even more trouble. Recently, after indicating that I thought someone was a "really nice gay" (not that there's anything wrong with that) I told him I was sorry, I meant "guy" and I blamed it on my "cat fingers". Since then I've had the inexorable craving to lick myself and spit up in the corner - not necessarily in that order, but still.

So hears too awl yew spell czek funsters out their. Lets hope the next decayed brings us a spell checker that can reed mines as well.