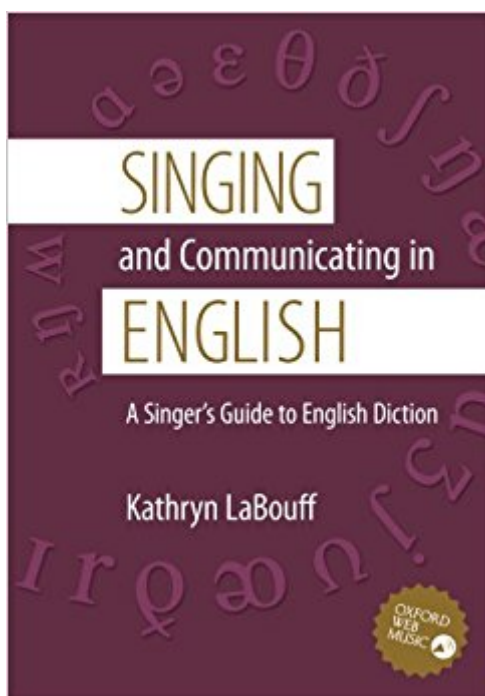


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# Singing And Communicating In English: A Singer's Guide To English Diction



## Synopsis

From the Foreword by Renee Fleming: "Kathryn LaBouff has developed an approach to singing in the English language which is wonderfully user-friendly, and which has surely saved much wear and tear on my voice. It is a technique that has empowered me with the knowledge and skills to bring a text to life and to be able to negotiate all of the sounds of the language with the least amount of effort. I have found her clever and extremely creative use of substitute consonants or combinations of consonants in creating clear diction utterly delightful because they are surprising and because they work. These techniques have been equally useful when singing in foreign languages. We sopranos are not usually known to have good diction, particularly in our high range. I found that working with Kathryn improved my ability to be understood by an enormous percentile of the audience with much less vocal fatigue than I would have experienced if left to my own devices. I have often told my colleagues enthusiastically of her interesting solutions to the frustrating problems of diction. I am thrilled that her techniques are now in print for all to benefit from them." In *Singing and Communicating in English*, internationally renowned diction coach Kathryn LaBouff provides singers with an accessible guide to the principles of English diction they need to communicate the text successfully. Her thorough and much sought-after technique clarifies the physiology of speech, emphasizes the studied practice of careful and articulate pronunciation, and focuses on the study of English cadence. Covering aspects of phonetics from vowels to diphthongs to fricatives, the book includes multiple practical exercises in International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) transcriptions, helpful diagrams, and pronunciation drills, each chosen from the most essential English art song and operatic repertoire. In addition to standard American and British English, a variety of regional dialects and accents are covered in depth. A companion website features a full range of vowel/consonant drills, poems read aloud by the author and by theater and voiceover actor John Keating, as well as an exercise answer key, and publishers' lists to help the singer locate a vast array of English language works for performance. This book is an invaluable resource for all vocalists (both professional and aspiring), diction instructors, teachers, and coaches, and choral directors. VISIT THE COMPANION SITE AT [www.oup.com/us/singinginenglish](http://www.oup.com/us/singinginenglish)

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Singing in English clearly and expressively is no mean feat. Kathryn LaBouff's methodical and vocally healthy approach to singing in English empowers and frees the singer/actor to deeply communicate while singing in English. She has revolutionized singing in English, and no student or coach should be without this book. This book is a must for all who wish to master the art of singing in English."--Allison Voth, Principal Coach, Opera Institute, Boston University

"In the rehearsal process Kathryn LaBouff is my secret weapon. She has an uncanny ability to take dramatic ideas and unify them with her own technical and diction work for the performer. The result of her collaboration is that the performer can activate and communicate the text like no one else. The diction techniques that she developed are easily accessible in this book, and will help clean up English text delivery in productions around the world. This is a must-have for all directors, coaches, teachers, performers and anyone who champions opera in English." --Francesca Zambello, Director, Artistic Advisor to San Francisco Opera

"Staggeringly high standard of diction. The surest method of converting people to Opera." --Opera Now

"Singing in English can be one of the most satisfying experiences for a singer. Whilst singers realize considerable skills in a range of European languages, English remains sidelined, expected to look after itself. This book offers guidance to singers for 'singing and communicating,' which then leads to comprehension -- for artist and audience alike. In exploring this rich and varied language, Kathryn LaBouff deals fully with some obvious, and other much less obvious aspects of singing in English. Her book deserves a special place in every singer's library." --Sir Thomas Allen CBE, Kammersänger of the Bayerische Staatsoper Munich

"Offers clear, concise explanations with pertinent examples. The author's vast experience as a diction coach is evident on every page. The linked website augments the text's usefulness. Singers, voice teachers, and coaches will find Singing and Communicating in English an excellent resource." --Journal of Singing

Kathryn LaBouff teaches English Diction and English Vocal Literature at the Juilliard School of Music, the Manhattan School of Music, and the Curtis Institute of Music. Diction Coach for the Metropolitan Opera, New York City Opera, Houston Grand Opera, and Washington Opera, she has coached and prepared more than 300 professional opera productions in English.

This book is all that I hoped for, on this subject, and then some. "Singing in English" by Kathryn LaBouff covers bases I didn't even know needed covering. I am cobbling together a group of singers from all-over the country and one goal is clear diction so that we are easily understood on recordings. Ms. LaBouff is thorough with her explanations, charts, graphs, tables, exercises and examples. Sound files are available on-line (link is included in the book) which ensures that a clear understanding is maintained all the way to completion. In fact, this book is so systematic, I'm taking my dear, sweet time to make sure I grasp every nuance. For the content and level of expertise presented, this book is a BARGAIN. It's a must have if you're SERIOUS about singing clearly and understandably. BONUS: Special sections are included to help those who want to sing British English and New England English. A GEM!!

The best book available for the study and art of English Diction.

Rules, diagrams, techniques, and illustrations abound. Techniques such as "getting it across" vocally, "phrasal doublings" or "legato connections" are discussed. Exercises for practice include glides, breath lifts, shadow vowels, merges, and expressive doublings. IPA, the International Phonetic Alphabet, which is essential to pronunciation and diction of the English language, is the key to all languages, and is used in this book. There are various appendices and a selected Bibliography and Resources. I highly recommend this book!

This is an excellent diction book with the latest thinking on how to sing in English for the classical singer.

A fabulous resource, the best English diction book out there. I've now owned 3 copies, 2 in print and one on my Kindle, and refer to it whenever I'm working in English. I can't recommend it enthusiastically enough, and I speak as a faculty member at a notable school of music.

goood!

excellent breakdown of the ipa and its importance in singing

A thorough text , clearly detailed with much online support, much material to read aloud including poetry and lyrics from songs.

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