Survey Results

English spelling conventions differ somewhat depending upon the country. We tend to think of a British model vs. an American model. What about Canadian?

*How do you spell each of the following words?*

- **honour vs. honor**
  - Among our respondents, the clear winner for this pair is *honour*. In this case the Canadian standard is in agreement with the British. *Honour*, and other words spelled with a “u” (like *flavour, labour*) have become a Canadian badge of identity, a way to contrast with the United States (where *honor, flavor, labor* prevail).

- **realize vs. realise**
  - Our respondents had a preference for *realize* with a “z”. This is the spelling most common in the United States, while *realise* dominates in Britain. These results confirm those in published studies that find Canadians also prefer “z” in the –ize/ise suffix (*realize, finalize*).

- **specter vs. spectre**
  - Most respondents chose the –re ending which is associated with British usage; however a large number chose the American –er spelling.

- **catalogue vs catalog**
  - The clear winner here is *catalogue*, which is the common British spelling. Americans use both spellings with a tendency towards *catalog*.

So what do you think? Do Canadians spell like the British, the Americans, or in their own way?

*Results from posters in two locations: Outside Strathy Language Unit office (Macintosh-Corry F406) and the 3rd floor of Kingston Hall. New surveys and results from previous surveys will be posted every 2 weeks.*