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## Language

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## Greetings Fellow Truth Seeker:

It has come to my attention that the English language has transgressed beyond the bounds of understanding. The tragic effects of losing this communication tool — among thinking men — are unclear, but it is clear that its perversion must cease or the language must be terminated.

It may seem ludicrous to attempt to explain the perversion with the perversion, but this is done in order to demonstrate the full extent of the languages abuse. The salutation above was written without the aid of a dictionary. (All other key words were found in **THE RANDOM HOUSE DICTIONARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE**.) The words used within the salutation were derived from my own understanding. Here is, in effect, what I said to you:

**Greeting(s)** (gre'tingz), n., 1. The act or words of one who greets. 2. a friendly message from someone who is absent: "To bring a greeting from a friend in another country." 3. greetings, an expression of friendly or respectful regard: "Send greetings from me to all your family." "On the glass was etched, "Greetings from Long Branch New Jersey".

**fellow** (fel'o), n.1. a man or boy: "A fine, old fellow; a nice, little fellow." 2. INFORMAL. beau; suitor: "Mary had her fellow over to meet her folks." 3. INFORMAL. person; one: "They don't treat a fellow very nice around here." 4. a person of small worth or no esteem. 5. a companion: "The doctor conferred with his fellows." "They have been fellows since childhood." 6. one of a pair; mate; match: "a shoe without his fellow." 7. Educ. a. a graduate is granted for special study. b. Brit. an incorporated member of a college, entitled to certain privileges. c. a member of the corporation or board of trustees of certain universities or colleges. 8. - a member of any of certain learned societies: "A fellow of the British Academy." 9. OBS. a partner a partner — v.t. 10. to make or represent as an equal with another. 11. ARCHAIC. to produce a fellow to; match — adj. 12. belonging to the same class or group; the same condition; "Fellow sufferers" "fellow students".

**truth** (trooth), n., 1. true or actual state of a matter: "He tried to find out the truth of a matter." 2. conformity with fact or reality; verity: "The able fact, proposition, principle, or the like: Mathematical truths". 4. a state or character of being true. 5. actuality or actual state of character of being true, existence. 6. existence: "The basic truths of life." 7. agreement with a standard or original. 8. honesty; fact; truism; latitude. 9. accuracy, as of position or adjustment. 10. ARCHAIC fidelity or constancy. 11. in truth, in reality; in fact; actuality; "In truth moral decay hastened the decline of the Roman Empire."

**seeker** (se'ker), n. 1. one who or that which seeks. 2. ROCKETRY. a. a device in a missile which locates a target by sending some characteristic of the target, as heat emission. b. a missile equipped with such a device.

After reading these definitions I became confused as to what I originally intended to say to you. I believe I meant definitions three, five, six and one, but I could have meant definitions two, four, one and one as well. Or maybe definitions one, three, three and two?

Since I have become aware of the problem, I have been trying, in effect, to "clean up my own act" (cliche'). Two words I use quite frequently are further examples of my own perversion of the language. The words are "screw you". Because of the two words apparent change in meaning over the years, I have tried to put "screw you" in perspective by instead saying, "intercourse you". By using these words (intercourse you) I have given people the impression that I have a dirty mind. It seems they believe that "screw you", (which means the same thing as intercourse you") is merely a statement of displeasure, whereas "intercourse you" is an admission of a "one track mind" (cliche').

In light of my discovery of the language's perversion, I decided to bring up the problem at a board meeting of the Marshalls of the Arts. The Marshalls of the Arts are, if you remember, an organization dedicated to the renovation, restoration and refinement of the Arts. What they do is set up rules and regulations for the populace to follow.

Two weeks ago I brought up the problem at one of their meetings. Since I knew I would have difficulty getting learned men ~~published by a Digital Publishing Company~~ to understand them famous, I took down everything they discussed. Then with dictionary, thesaurus, and pocket computer in hand, I promptly ripped apart everything they said.

"Persons," I said when the Marshall allowed me to speak, "do we have any LOVERS among us?" (I said this, oh fellow truth seeker, merely to get their attention. I don't have a one track mind — honestly I don't.)

William Lover, descendant of Samuel Lover, the Irish artist, asked me what I required of him. (This was the one and only correct language reply.)

The other said "yes" or "no" — according to their own hang-ups. I turned to a perfectly grisly man, one of the Marshall Order, and asked him as naively as I could, "What is a lover?"

The man took off a flower he had on his T-shirt, (which had printed on it, incidently; Help Stamp Out Children) and said, "Find out tonight."

The dictionary has no definition for lover in the physical sense.

So, I said, "Do you mean we will discuss it tonight?"

"No," he said. (The man was definitely not a prude — I could take him to the limit.)

"What do you mean?" I said.

"Sex, physical performance — primarily good — that is what makes a lover," he said.

That is what I wanted to hear. I got up out of my chair and sat on the table. I methodically removed my shoes and exposed my bare tootsies to prove a point.

"You, my fellow idiot, have misused the English language. You who sit here at this meeting have been placed here because of your unique "insights" and you have one here among us, as we have just seen, who cannot accurately use his own language. "What will you do?", I inquired.

"Depose him," they said.

"Depose him?", I said, "Why stop at that? Why not kill him? Why not kill all of us since we are all guilty?"

I showed them their misuses of the language that they, themselves, had committed in the course of the night. (Which included, among other things, six meaningless words, thirty-two cliché's and ten redundancies.)

"But," I said, my bare tootsies all a flutter, "since killing people would be useless, why not terminate the language?"

"Terminate the language?" said a young, intellectual, genius, "How would we communicate?"

I crawled across the table and gave him a hug. I thought very hard, "mental telepathy", but he could not read my mind. I could read his though. He was thinking, "Why is this person hugging me?"

"Mental telepathy," I said. "I am hugging you so it will be easier for you to read my mind."

The young, intellectual genius became very uncomfortable. He said, "But language is so much more expressive!"

But he was thinking, "Reading people's minds could be very dangerous. (Not all his thoughts were the concerns of genius' alone.)

"Don't worry," I whispered in his ear, "we all think 'off the wall' (cliche') occasionally."

The young intellectual genius removed himself from me entirely.

I put my hand on the table and read all the other Marshalls' thoughts.

The other Marshalls agreed with the young, intellectual, genius — with variations — according to their own hang-ups.

At this point the General of the Arts spoke up.

"I see the point and the problem and I agree something must be done about the language's abuse. But mental telepathy is not the answer. We, as representatives of the artistic community, must set up guidelines for the populace and ourselves.

Everyone was relieved. They applauded him for five minutes.

These, my friend and fellow truth seeker, are the guidelines the Marshalls wrote up:

1. Anyone seen or heard writing or saying a cliché' will not be shot immediately.
2. Anyone caught mis-using a word will be shot immediately.
3. Anyone who is caught without a dictionary in his/her possession will have to take English 101.
4. Any discrepancies about the meaning of words will be discussed in court. (A new court — English Abuse with twelve dictionaries as jurors).
5. Anyone suspected of using mental telepathy will be banned from society.

At the end of the meeting, the General of the Arts asked if anyone had an idea for the topic of the next board meeting.

Everyone was speechless.

I put my shoes back on.

Well, fellow truth seeker, I am now in prison. I like it here a lot though. I read, I write, I study. And, oh yes, the board members bought me a dictionary.

Sincerely,

Your Fellow Truth Seeker