

that he struggled more desperately with the ropes. Only the ropes stood in the way! Only the ropes! The ropes! There might be a hole in the fence which he might squeeze through, if he could rid himself of these ropes. He struggled wildly as his anxieties overcame him. His strength dwindled rapidly and he neared a state of exhaustion. The thumping of his heart was loud against his chest, and he gulped short, difficult breaths of the cold November air as his strength vanished.

When they came for him he was still exhausted. He still gasped for air and his body twitched involuntarily. There was little sense to resist, nor was there any energy with which he could resist. Though unable to move, many questions ran through his mind. Why me? Why should he, still so young, die for someone else's pleasure or whim? He did not even notice the rough way they handled him as they dragged him from the sturdy, high wire fence that imprisoned him. There must be some way out. But fear of what was to happen blotted all thoughts from his mind. He could feel the hard pounding of his heart throughout his body, and he trembled even more violently from his fear now. They threw him on an old log that had deep gashes in it, and was spotted with red stains. His head rested on the log only momentarily, when he caught a glimpse of the sharp blade of the ax—then he feared no more. He died the same way many of his brothers die each year, and ended up the same way—as Thanksgiving dinner. It is no wonder turkeys seldom find anything to be thankful for on Thanksgiving Day.

## "Prefixitis" is Spreading

Betty Geise

JACQUES BARZUN has some very interesting ideas on the use of the English language in this modern age. Of all the ideas introduced in his essay "English as She's Not Taught," the most interesting, and I think by far the truest, is blaming the highly educated people for disrupting the English language. I agree one-hundred per cent with Barzun in his analysis of today's new "technical" trend in speaking. It is not the people who have had no college training that distort the English language. These people express themselves in plain, simple English that anyone can understand. The people who really distort our language are the college-bred: the laymen, the businessmen, or the men in the technical fields. Besides mixing up our standard commonly-used words, they add many new words with no regard to whether they can be understood or used properly. Barzun gives vivid concrete examples of these new additions, but he fails to elaborate on common words that are used daily and given a number of meanings by adding a prefix.

Of all the distortions in the English language, the one that disgusts me the most is the habit of adding a prefix to good words to make them sound distinguished or technical. A good example of the

prefix craze, and I think it is a craze, is the use of the prefix *anti*. This little prefix is tacked on to innumerable words, and the person who uses this little ditty is looked upon as being very enlightened on his subject or else very ignorant of it. You have probably come in contact with both types of these people, but I think the latter of the two is the most interesting. A good example of the latter: the person attempting to sound informed is the college fellow who once told me he was an anti-basketball player. I presume he meant he was an ex-basketball player, but to this day I am not certain.

Another little item which is just as over-worked and misused as *anti* is the prefix *pro*. I understand that when a person uses the prefix *pro* in front of another word (usually a noun), he is in favor of that subject, such as, a pro-Republican, a pro-unionist, or a pro-Methodist. In my opinion it is much easier to understand and say, I am a Methodist, rather than, I am pro-Methodist. In fact one day I became so irked with a fellow who was writing a term paper on labor organization, I was actually so impolite as to let him know of my disgust. He boldly told me that he was a "pro-laborite," so I said, "That's fine! I hope it isn't catching." Because of my cutting remark he became aware of his constant use of these meaningless words, and he was unable to carry on any further conversation since he had been robbed of his technical terms.

One horrible monster in our language is the prefix *ex*. I am not sure that I understand what this means at all. Even as early as the fourteenth century, people were "ex-communicated" from the church. I gather that this meant they were forbidden to associate with any of the other members of the church, and vice versa. Today *ex* has been added to scores of words. For example, the popular word husband has unfortunately become the victim of *ex*. Instead of saying "He is my former husband," women now say "He is my ex-husband." Even our text books are marked with this "prefixitis." In one chapter of my history text, information was given about the barbarians who became civilized. After these barbarians had maintained a complex society and achieved civilization, the text referred to them as ex-barbarians. The use of *ex* seemed to turn the clock backward on these people, who in actuality made a great achievement.

Because of the use of these various prefixes, I am not sure whether I can state my position on anything. I have become so confused, that I do not know whether I am a pre-graduate or a pro-graduate. I am not sure whether I am an anti-high school student or an ex-high school student. I do hope that people will cease to be lazy about their speech. Instead of tacking on these little prefixes to save them from saying too many words, I hope they will begin to use all the words in their vocabularies. It does not take too much extra breath to use a few more words, and the listener gets a much better mental picture of what the speaker is trying to say.