

Andrew Carnegie led a campaign in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to reform spelling. Eventually, after donating more than \$280,000 to the doomed cause, he gave up. In 1915 he told the editor of *The Times* of London, "Amended spellings can only be submitted for general acceptance. It is the people who decide what is to be adopted or rejected."

Technology has provided us with the opportunity to resurrect simplified spelling. It brought us texting. Through this innovation, the entire English language – which is the language of the Internet, and therefore the world, has been reduced to acronyms. This has given rise to a kind of understanding that may advance human communications beyond our wildest imagination. With the assistance of the text message, which has replaced letter writing, we have removed nearly all connection between vowels and

consonants. And language is finally on the verge of becoming telepathy.

Through this populace miracle, complete treatises can now be conveyed in just a few letters. All that is left is the education of a few older professors, and the transition will be complete. When it is done, it will be possible to sum up, in just a few lines, an entire collection of masterpieces. In time, anyone will be able to summarize and articulate the whole of human knowledge in just a few minutes. Finally, after two million years of evolution, man will finally be able to communicate with a bark and a growl.

There are thousands of these acronyms - each one tailored to a specific occasion and expressed emotion. I will give a few examples of this. They might be unfamiliar to the casual user of the Internet, but they are worth learning for the advantages they offer over Standard English. Principal among these is that their

user need no longer be concerned about knowing how to spell a word.

EMRTW: Evil monkeys rule the world. I wish the Internet had been invented long ago. If it had existed only one hundred and thirty years ago, this phrase would have saved me from needlessly writing thirty years of political and social criticism.

BAG: Busting a Gut. I spent a good deal of time on the Barbary Coast in California. In those days, Busting a Gut meant you had a few too many and were on the giving end at a brawl. It was serious business. Now it is reduced to something laughable.

143 vs. 183: This is English reduced to its most useful and perfect form, for the alphabet has been discarded entirely. Both mean I love you. But they are ambiguous references, and offer nothing to improve upon the language. In Carnegie's day, the

simplified spelling movement addressed the problem by differentiating the spelling of words - words like s-o-w, b-o-w and others of the class. Through differentiation, the new spelling of a word like s-o-w made it clear whether you are calling a hog or planting a seed.

But I wonder if these numbers represent different types of love. Instead of removing ambiguity from language, they increase it. How do we know they are not misspelled, or simply a misunderstanding? Can we know for a certainty that such a love is safer if practiced from a distance?

But Language has a habit of evolving, and we might hope that sentiments as expressive and compelling as these might evolve into something quite extraordinary, like 143VMAWLTDSAIBCBILOAP. Which of course means I love you very much and

would like to do something about it but can't because  
I live on another planet.