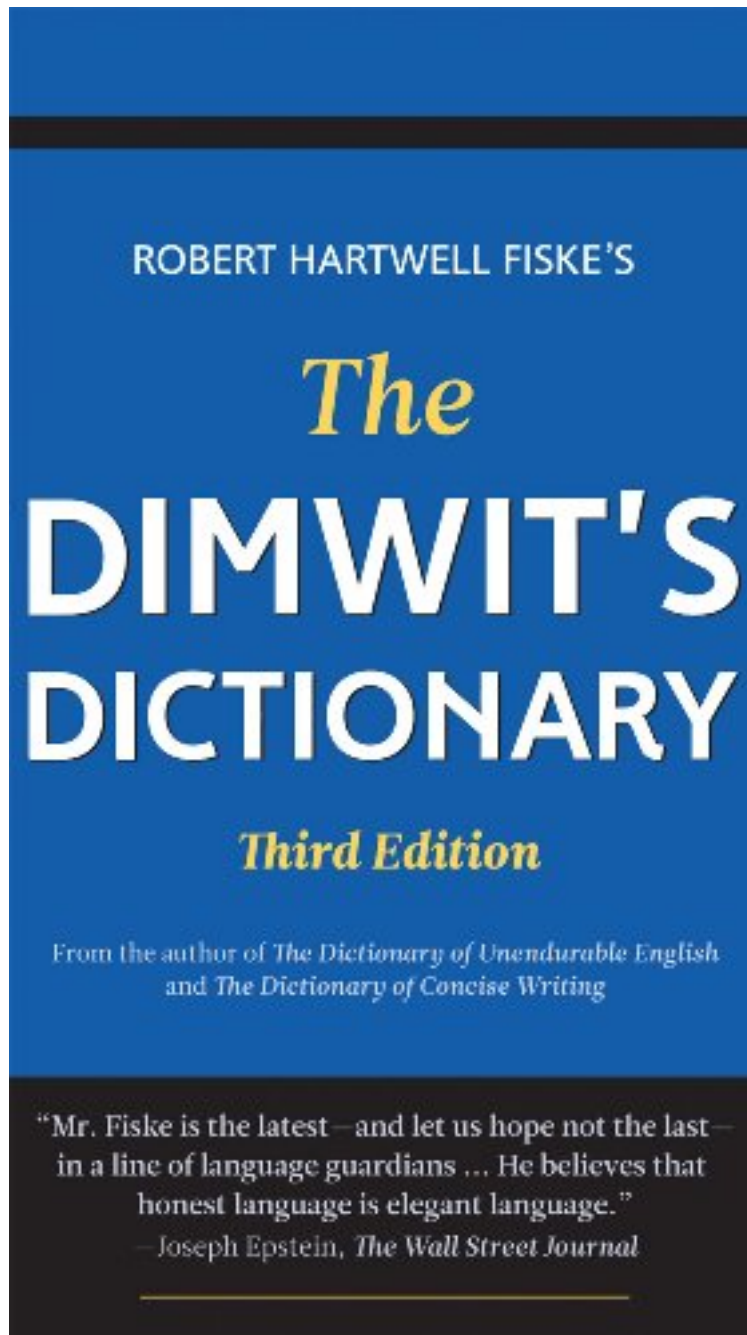


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## The Dimwit's Dictionary, 3rd Edition

*Robert Hartwell Fiske*

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Whereas a witticism is a clever remark or phrase -- indeed, the height of expression -- a "dimwitticism" is the converse; it is a commonplace remark or phrase. Dimwitticisms are worn-out words and phrases; they are expressions that dull our reason and dim our insight, formulas that we rely on when we are too lazy to express what we think or even to discover how we feel. The more we use them, the more we conform -- in thought and feeling -- to everyone else who uses them. The Dimwit's Dictionary, Third Edition, is a compilation of thousands of dimwitticisms (clichés, colloquialisms, idioms, slang, and the like) that people speak and write unendingly. "Mr. Fiske is, in short, a fanatic, an extremist who apparently believes that clear language is our only hope for clear thought, that dull language deadens the mind and dampens the imagination, that a felicitous phrase is good news, that a strong prose style is a gift to be cultivated and cherished, that nothing, no, nothing in the world exceeds language in its significance to the human enterprise. As it happens, I believe in all this, too, which makes it an honor to salute a fellow fanatic and wish him and his book the great good fortune both deserve." -- From the foreword by Joseph Epstein

"Readers will cheer his trouncing of cliché, redundancy, and windy generality." Dallas Morning News