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New Words

"Antiethical" is not a word to be found in the unabridged *Webster's New International Dictionary*, at least not yet. If it does come to be accepted, future etymological dictionaries may cite the 25 August 1967 issue of *Science* as the place of its birth. The invention was quite unintentional. In the summarization of a statement by the Federation of American Scientists that held classified research on a university campus to be antithetical to the values of higher education, the typesetter misread *antithetical*; a proofreader nodded, and "antiethical" was born. It is a fine new word with a sharp and vigorous ring; it connotes a stronger attitude than does the accepted term, *unethical*, which seems weak and toneless by comparison.

Whether "antiethical" enriches the language or is quickly forgotten, it illustrates an amusing game that one can play by looking for instances in which an error creates a new word having a special aptness or logic for the context in which it appears. Not any typographical error will do, but occasionally an old word is printed by mistake, or a brand new one created, that is just right for the context. Here are a few other examples that turned up during the past year.

The debate as to whether classified research should be conducted on a university campus—the debate that produced "antiethical"—was the occasion for another error. When the University of Pennsylvania faculty arguments over this issue were much in the news, the *Washington Post* put an unintended word into the mouth of the president of the University—and expressed a suggestion that may appeal to persons who think we have gone too far in emphasizing publication of results of research as a primary responsibility of faculty. President Harnwell was quoted as saying that faculty research should always be freely *punishable*.

The same newspaper coined a word likely to be useful to spokesmen for government agencies (and also to spokesmen for industry and labor), who are sometimes hard pressed to respond satisfactorily to reporters' questions without jeopardizing negotiations that are still in progress. The *Post* said that State Department Press Officer Robert J. McCloskey, when questioned about Russian attitudes toward antimissile systems, had responded with "the 'miximum' form of diplomatic circumlocution."

A book on management of personal finances extolled the virtues of the "ownerwhip" of property. If one disregards the redundancy of the intended phrase (the ownership of that which is owned), the error evokes thoughts of the downtrodden and propertyless under the lash of the owner's "ownerwhip."

In these days of trouble over federal budgets and worries about the amount of money to be made available for the nation's research and development program, *Science* invented a new word appropriate to the times, and one likely to provoke a "that's just what I've been saying all along" reaction from those who think we spend too much on scientific activities: in the 10 February issue, *Science* referred to a scientific "expendition."

We cannot eliminate the possibility that typesetters have a sense of humor. But with their intentional or accidental help, let us hope that our 1968 typographical errors are equally creative.—DAEL WOLFLE