

# Dictionaries make it hard to write right

Complaints abound that today's students can't write. However, if the student who never mastered phonetics attempts to seek help from his dictionary, he may encounter doublespeak.

Many common words can be either/or. Take the word programming — Webster's Third International Dictionary says the word can be spelled with two m's or one. But, this doesn't mean the professoriat (or professoriate) at Texas A&M, will understand.

Everyone has a preference when it comes to spelling, and even though you may be proud of yourself for taking the time to look up a questionable word, you may not be happy when the word you chose is considered the "wrong" choice by the professor grading your paper.

Even worse, as an employee (spelled employe in the book, Economics of the American Newspaper) in a profession of word-smiths, an unpopular spelling decision may result in a rapid job departure.

Sometimes one spelling may seem more glamorous (glamorous) than another. The MSC Council decide to rename the MSC Basement, Rumours — according to The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language — a chiefly British spelling. Perhaps the council thought the American version — rumours — wouldn't add to the atmosphere.

A big MSC success last semester, though, was the Madrial Dinners, a representation of a medieval (mediaeval) Christmas feast.

The student government, this past semester, tried a campus canvas to get students reactions to important issues. Maybe the action would have been more successful if they had tried a canvass — a survey to ascertain the probable vote before an election.

If you want to buy a diamond for your fiancé, how many karats, or carats, can



nancy weatherley

you afford? Perhaps you should ask a friend who is a confidant, or at least a confidant.

For true tea connoisseurs, do your Arabian tea leaves come from the kat, khat, qat, q'at, quat, or cat shrub?

Names can present special problems. Even the media can't agree on how to spell the name of the Libyan leader who supposedly sent assassins to kill the president. Should the media report about Col. Muammar Khadafy, el-Qaddafi, or al-Qaddafi?

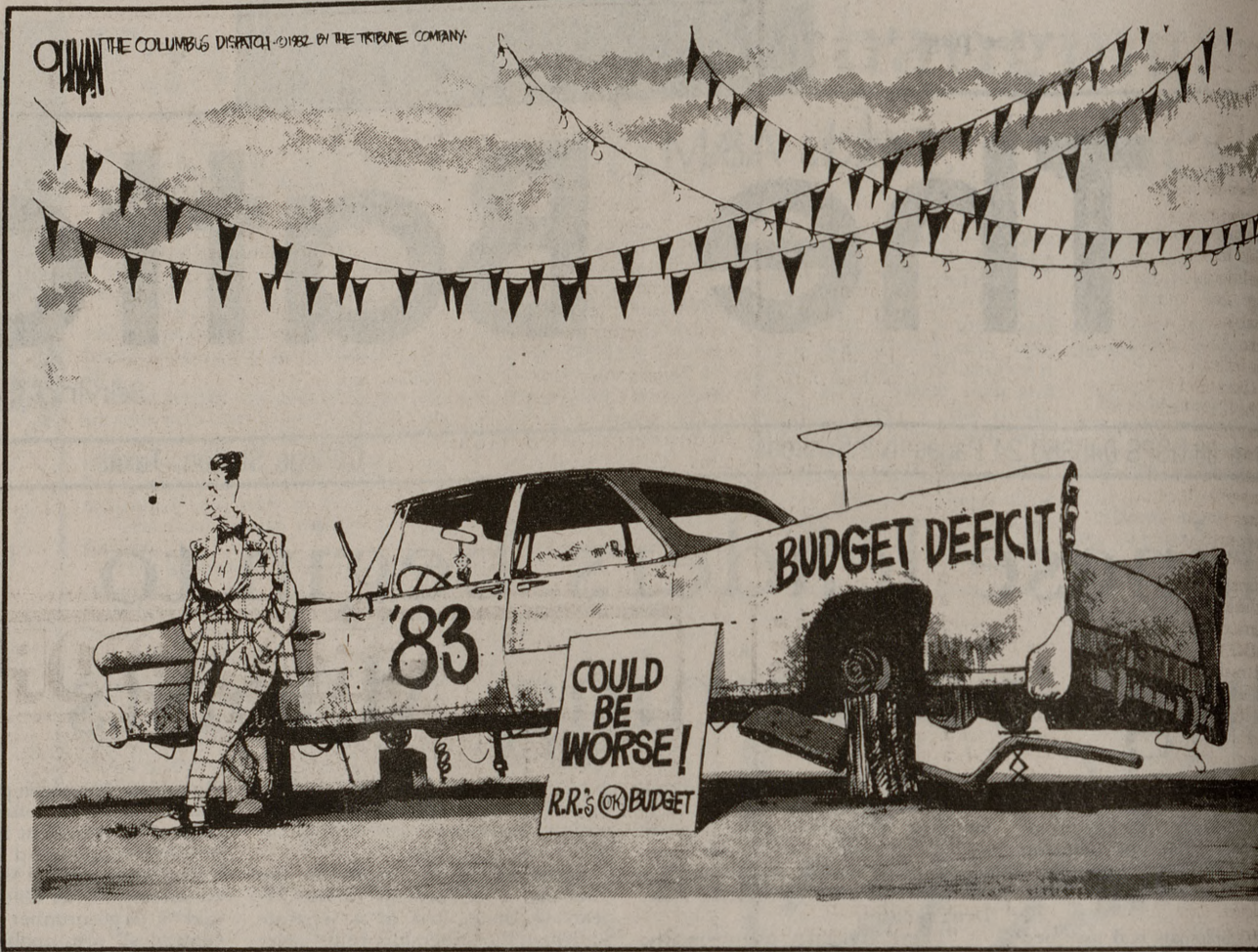
If you go to Mardi Gras in New Orleans this weekend be sure and try some bisque (bisk) soup — a thick cream soup made of crayfish, or crawfish, depending on what sounds more appetizing (appetising).

Tourists swarm New Orleans at this time, so it probably wouldn't be surprising if you met a pittsburgher, or a pittsburgher — a resident or native of Pittsburgh.

For druggies who smoke hashish, are you sure you're not smoking hasheesh, or haschisch — ask your dealer.

I hope I'm not sounding like a know-it-all, or a know-all — I get just as confused.

The scholars who decide which words will become part of the dictionary could help students out quite a bit if they would select only one spelling per word. If they can't come to a decision, perhaps the word should be canceled, or is it cancelled?



# Blind dates can be a handicap

Over and over and again I've asked myself why I fall for going on a blind date. It's a baneful experience that I usually manage to avoid, yet last weekend I again found myself standing on the threshold of another social fiasco, knocking on a strange girl's apartment door.

This time I suppose the reason was sheer benevolency. In other words, my roommate sucked me into it with the line, "Oh, c'mon. I'm in love with this girl Brenda, who won't go out unless I find a date for her friend. C'mon, we'll double. It'll be fun!"

"Is she pretty?" I asked.  
"She's in a sorority. That means she's gotta be cute."

"Eleanor Roosevelt was in a sorority. There goes your axiom."  
"Look," he begged me, "she's got great personality."

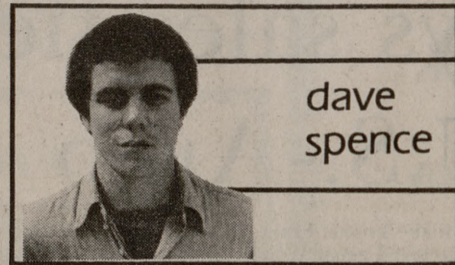
Normally, that "personality" bit would have led me to say no unequivocally, but my roommate promised to pay the tab, so I consented. What is life without a little pre-paid adventure?

So Friday night, there I knocked at my date's door, hoping I hadn't wasted my time in ironing a shirt and shaving.

I was alone. While I'd been showering that night, my roommate had clandestinely abandoned me to pick up his date in a separate car.

"Hi," she said, opening the door.  
Boy, she better have a great personality, I thought to myself.

Instinctively, I put on my charm, "My, what a stunning dress."  
"Oh, thanks. It's from Mexico."  
"Guadalajara probably," I commented.



dave spence

"No. really. It's from Mexico."  
"Right. Here, let me get that door for you; it's heavy."

"Thank you..., I like your car. It's neat."  
"Thank you, it's from Guadalajara. So, anyway, how do you know Brenda?" I inquired, hoping to strike up some semblance of a conversation.

"Um, we both rushed Alpha last fall and then we found out we lived next to each other and then we had a class together. Anyway, I made Alpha, but she didn't, but I thought she was nice, so we stayed friends."

"How big of you. Which sorority does Alpha stand for?"  
"Alpha Epsilon Rho. We call ourselves 'airs' for short."

"How appropriate."  
"You say 'how' a lot."  
"Well, I'm curious."  
"No kidding, I'm a Scorpio."  
"Right," I returned.

"You're going to think this is stupid of me..."  
"Never. Go ahead."  
"Well, I can't remember your name. Brenda told me, but I forgot it."  
"My name is David."

"David Smith, right?"  
"David Spence."  
"I'm sorry."  
"That's OK, Karen."  
"Carol."  
"Sorry. Brenda told me, but I forgot. That's all right. Say, I don't know your major."  
"Heaven forbid. I'll tell you. I'm in general studies."  
"Really?" she asked, beaming with a trigue.

"Really," I affirmed.  
"I've always been fascinated with the military."  
"I can imagine. It's one big Freudian symbol."  
"Do you like it? Is it hard or anything?"  
"Oh, it's hard all right. A lot of people have to get out of general studies before they can graduate. But I find the challenge exciting. Yeah, I like it. What are you studying?"

"You mean what's my major?"  
"Yes, I suppose I mean that instead of 'I'm in home eco..., oh is that what we're eating?"  
"Sure is. Do you like this place?"  
"Oh, I love your hamburgers."  
"It's a seafood restaurant."  
"Oh, I know that, but I always make 'em fix me a hamburger," she explained.

Carol enjoyed her hamburger as she thought she did the entire evening, but the shrimp left me with ominous pains of nausea.

The next morning, my roommate accidentally stumbled into our room and into my sight for the first time since that day before.

"Never!" I yelled. "Never again will I ever..."

# Slouch By Jim Earle



"Sure, he was a great gorilla as King Kong, but could he have made it as Bobby Joe Kong?"

# Letter: 'Big wheel' bothers student

Editor:

An incident happened to me on Feb. 9 that makes me wonder about the "holier than thou" image which seems to pervade in the mind of at least one of our "big wheel" administrators who works here on campus.

My wife needed to pick up an insurance form in the Systems Administration Building and due to the cold weather this day I parked my car in the reserved parking space that was closest to the door of the building. She was just going to be a few minutes inside the building in picking up this form. We also have a two-week-old daughter who my wife had left in the car with me to care for while she ran in to take care of this errand. Shortly thereafter, a car pulls up behind me and begins to honk his horn. I knew it was this guy's space but I had my hands full of our baby at the time. He immediately got out of his car, walked over to my car window, and proceeded to verbally assault me about my being in his parking space. He said he didn't care that I had a two-week-old baby with me, only that he wanted me out of "his" space and he didn't care how I accomplished it! I decided to go ahead and back my car out of his space, all the while holding my baby in one hand and trying to steer with the other. My wife came out of the building 30 seconds after this had occurred and we promptly left the parking lot.

For the administrator who parks in reserve space #122, drives the Ford LTD with Texas license plate #MFY 645, just who do you think you are?

I couldn't believe the childish, immature and arrogant attitude that this "educated" man possessed over such a minute violation of his authority. Imagine how he would react to something serious! Thank goodness that it occurred to me and not to a prospective student and/or his or her parents.

I hope that this individual isn't a fellow Aggie, for Texas A&M has too much of a tarnished public image now and we don't need someone with this type doing further damage.

I love Texas A&M and I wouldn't have returned here to further my education if I didn't. But I do feel that some major changes need to be made in "high" places for A&M to once again reclaim its integrity.

Dean Shattuck '77

# A&M lacks entertainment

Editor:

We are submitting this letter because we are concerned about the lack of quality musical entertainment offered this semester at Texas A&M. This was brought to our attention by a recent article in the Focus section in The Battalion. The article pointed out that in a period of six to seven weeks, t.u. (Texas University) will have such attractions as Dan Fogel-

berg, Foreigner, The Cars, Jimmy Buffet, Oak Ridge Boys, Kool and the Generals as well as the Holmes-Cooney Big Band broadcasted on the closed circuit tv. All of these compared to the Oak Ridge Boys and the Harlem Globetrotters that have been offered this semester at A&M.

Recently President Vandiver stated the reasoning for the hiring of Coach Sherrill to a large contract was because A&M is trying to reach an athletic standard to compare with other universities of excellence. We feel for 33,000 plus students it is time to bring the social status of our school up to the same level of excellence. If t.u. can have great success in attracting groups, why should A&M play second string?

If A&M can spend large sums of money on renovating stadiums for athletics (i.e. new coach, facilities), why not renovate G. Rollie White or even build a new entertainment facility that would accept performing at with decent seating as well as acoustic standards. Has A&M not offered major gate attractions an opportunity to perform here this semester compared to last semester (The Commodores, Best Line, Chuck Whore House in Texas, Chuck Magione and Michael Murphy)?

It is time for this University to provide its students as well as the surrounding community the same benefits as given the athletic department and other organizations.

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Tim Widdison  
Scott Summerlin

# The Battalion

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The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography classes within the Department of Communications.

Questions or comments concerning any editorial matter should be directed to the editor.

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Columns and guest editorials are also welcome, and are not subject to the same length constraints as letters. Address all inquiries and correspondence to: Editor, The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843, or phone (713) 845-2611.

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