

Slang, colloquialisms dominate dialogue

"Back in this mo-fo for that nine-seven, Funky G, slangin' an bangin' this crazy text for hella prop. So what's up on the down low, Cowdaddy?" "Well, me 'n Cooter gonna head on down to tha Hall an bustle us up some fillies, yallinna come?" Slang.

One day English will be the only language spoken on Earth by civilized individuals, and we owe it all to slang.

How so? Let me explain. The world is going to need one language when we become the global village of which so many speak. The world really is getting smaller, though none of A&M's geology professors would allow themselves to be quoted on that.

Just look at what is going on in Europe. They are working to establish one currency for all the member nations of the European Economic Community. And then there is the Internet, which makes it extremely easy to discuss the merits of UFO's and obscenities with people from hundreds of countries all over the globe. As interaction between people from different regions of the planet increases, so too will the need for one language.

Why will it be English? Because, to encompass people from so many different cultures, a highly adaptable language will be needed. And Americans' propensity for slang is just a manifestation of the easy adaptability of the English language, a language which has a vocabulary about half Germanic and half Romance (and by Romance I mean French and Latin, not "I really love your peaches, wanna shake your tree"). Also, many of our science terms have been borrowed from the Greeks, not to mention the geeks.

A convenient way for words to work their way into common use

Columnist



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age is to start out as slang. So if slang is the doorway to the future of language, what better place to be than a college campus (unofficial motto: where cultures mingle unless there is any way possible they can avoid it).

A quick walk across campus allows you to sample no fewer than three types of slang, which I have conveniently pre-stereotyped for you as homey, dude and bubba.

Members of each "slanguage" do not fall into any strict racial or ethnic categories. But people who speak heavily in a "slanguage" is outside their cultural context are referred to as, and here I borrow from the "dude" lexicon, posers (see: Marky Mark, Vanilla Ice).

I encourage everyone to find out what "slanguage" they speak, since it is not always readily apparent. For instance, the phrase "What's up?" can be used by both homeys and dudes, but the pronunciations differ. Homeys prefer the quick "Wassup?," whereas dudes tend to use the slowed-down "What's uuup?"

But some phrases are immediately identifiable, like the bubba terms "heifer" and "crop rotation." If you think you need to spice up your conversation with a new "slanguage," then experiment. Hang out in different areas around campus. English professors are notorious for saying things like "that jive-turkey best step off o' my ho."

And the fun-loving chemistry T.A.s are famous for their use of Australian slang ("throw another nucleotide on the barbie, mate").

Whichever "slanguage" a person settles on, two things should be remembered — it should be used correctly and in moderation. After all, it's the future we're talking about.

Last bus to Aggieland

Walking offers more benefits, less trials than the bus

Students looking for an adventure to bring them closer to their fellow Aggies, waste their time and enhance claustrophobia don't have far to look. They simply need to ride the bus, more specifically the "On-Campus Shuttle," better known as the lazy way to get around campus.

Of course, if they want to get to class just as fast, get a little exercise and enjoy a beautiful day, they could walk. But then they would pass up the chance to participate in the "See How Many Aggies Can Fit On a Bus" contest at the Texas A&M Circus.

Riding the bus is an adventure, and here are some tips to make a bus trip the best it can be:

When it comes to the bus system on campus, there is an early bus and a late bus for each stop between class periods. But several things can happen when one attempts to catch the early bus.

Let's say "Jim" the Aggie needs to get to class. To guarantee a seat on this early bus, Jim arrives at the bus stop at least 25 minutes before class begins, in which case he has time to walk anyway.

Second, Jim comes in sight of the bus stop just as the bus is pulling up to it. Jim runs like a scalded ape in a hail storm to get there before it takes off, only to have the driver floor it just as he gets to the rear of the bus.

Black smoke billows out of the tail pipe and into Jim's lungs, causing him to pass out. Fellow Aggies take him to Beutel, where he's told he is pregnant.

But let's say Jim does make it. Let's say the timing is perfect and he secures a place of his very own on the bus of his choice. The adventure has just begun.

As Jim and the other lucky bus

Columnist



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riders pile onto the bus, he remembers he must fill the empty seats first. If Jim sits next to someone when there is an empty seat elsewhere, he is labeled a freak and deserves the stares he gets.

Since Jim is a guy, he might as well not even sit down, for he most likely will give his seat to a woman anyway.

Certainly this is the the chivalry causes more congestion when a guy gives up his seat to a woman 10 feet down the

aisle. Asking a woman to climb over five people in order to take the seat offered her is stupid.

Practicality is the key, and many times the bus is simply not practical. This is especially true for anyone trying to get to West Campus from Southside. Once again there is usually an early bus and a late bus — sometimes just two late busses.

For business students who live on Southside, trying to get to the Wehner Building leaves them with two options: take the Rudder bus and walk from Kleberg to Wehner, or walk to the YMCA Building and catch the Yell Practice bus to Wehner.

Either way, the trip takes 20-25 minutes, which is about the time it takes to walk that distance anyway.

Despite what Texas Monthly says, Texas A&M University has a beautiful campus. Although it rains a lot, the clear days here can be spectacular, making for a great walk to class.

Everyone could use a little exercise. Just try the "Corps speed-walk" to class one day and you'll see why we do it. You will arrive to class faster and feel more awake and invigorated when you get there.

The simple fact remains: A&M has a lot more sidewalk space than room on the bus.



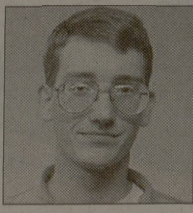
A&M students neglect professors as interesting people

Most Aggies see their professors as mere sources of instruction. Students only visit an instructor's office to ask questions about an assignment or complain about the grading of an exam, if they bother to find the office at all.

Students rob themselves of terrific experiences when they fail to meet their professors and get to know them better. Everyone should meet their professors to get advice, hear experiences and make a friend.

Professors are hired for their knowledge and experience. Students can take advantage of these attributes, even outside of a classroom setting. At a world-class university such as Texas A&M, many professors have noteworthy backgrounds. Many members of the faculty are involved in renowned

Columnist



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research projects, know various celebrities and lead interesting lives.

Many instructors have been teaching for several years, so they are familiar with problems common to students. From scheduling to work pressures, professors can usually offer constructive advice. Few people would consider a teaching job if they did not care about students. Faculty members are almost always happy to help out Aggies.

A large number of A&M professors also have worked in private industry for many years. Their work experience allows them to help students who are trying to start careers. Professors in University departments have often already worked in the fields that interest students. The po-

litical science department is staffed with former lobbyists, and even President Bowen had an impressive career in chemical engineering.

Often the richest information professors can provide is their personal anecdotes and experiences.

Professor Richard Stadelmann, director of religious studies, often shares his sundry experiences with students. In his small office overflowing with books, he tells of the time he debated Gary Hart, went to school with the Rev. Jim Jones or spent a few days with the homeless in Austin "to see what it was like."

Students are amused by the wide range of Stadelmann's stories. Besides his activity in religious organizations (he met the Zoroastrian high priest), he has been involved in state and national politics (he served as parliamentarian for the Republican Party of Texas).

A&M's instructors are usually experts in their field. Anyone with an interest in a particular academic topic could benefit from visiting with a professor about current research and developments. Even if a student never plans to take another course in the field of their professor's expertise, they can expand the scope of their knowledge by using the resources available at our University.

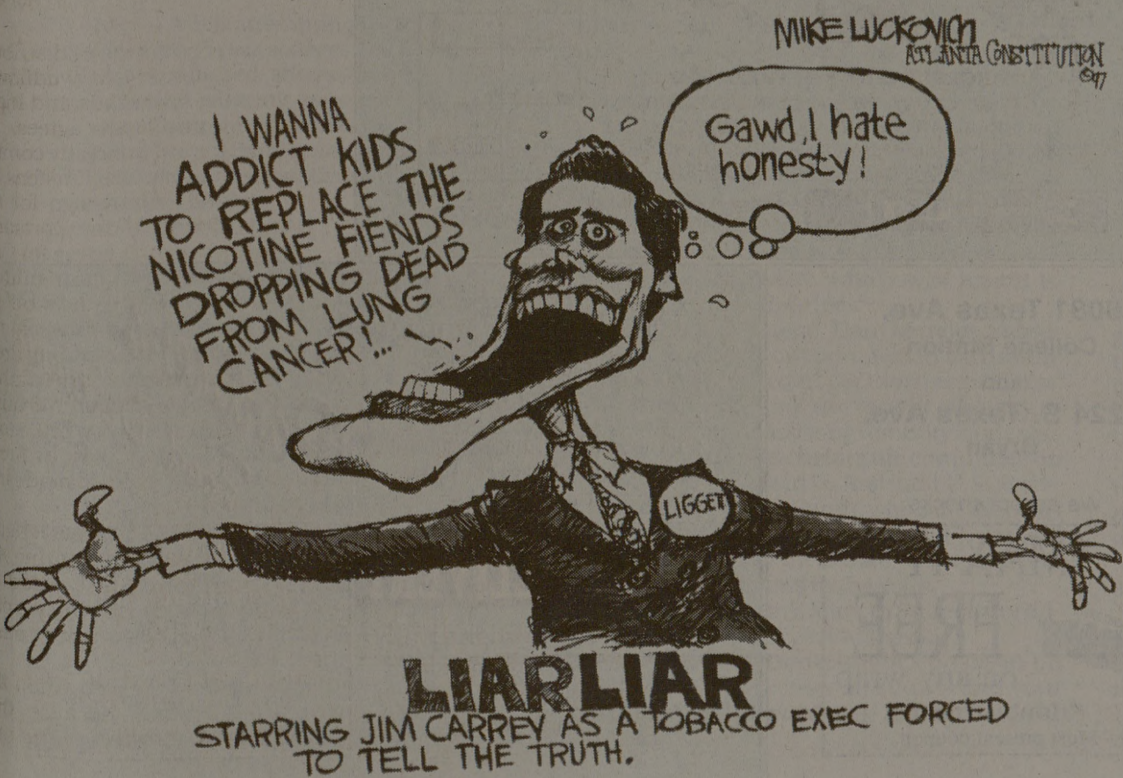
Though faculty members are often busy, they usually are available to help students. Professors can provide input on projects from other classes, help with private undertakings or answer student's questions.

Unfortunately, students are often afraid to even approach their own professors about a class concern. As a result, some instructors actually dread the office hours they are forced to keep in case a student happens to come by. Students miss a

great opportunity to learn outside the classroom.

Aside from the personal aspect of meeting an instructor outside the classroom setting, professors enjoy feedback from their students. It helps them understand where the class is having problems, what aspects of the course are most beneficial and what should be changed in future semesters. First-hand reports are more beneficial than a Scantron-style evaluation form completed in five minutes. Conversations with faculty members can have far-reaching benefits.

The University environment lends itself to opportunities students may never get again. Institutions of higher learning have a high concentration of brilliant people and intense researchers. Aggies should be careful not to waste this opportunity to meet and get to know such prominent and interesting people.



MAIL CALL

Arrogant students fail to respect song

Regarding Brendan O'Reilly's April 1 Mail Call letter: I am amazed at O'Reilly's arrogance. As an American, I have witnessed the outrage displayed when individuals do not show the American flag the respect it deserves. As an A&M student, I have also heard the outcry of voices when individuals do not remove caps in the MSC.

Students fully expect visitors to the MSC to show respect even if this tradition "does not mean anything" to them. It seems to me that recognizing the Negro National Anthem out of respect for the struggles of African-Americans would go far in

making African-American students feel welcome and valued at A&M. O'Reilly's rigid refusal to show respect for the Negro Anthem only shows a level of ignorance that runs counter to an education at a "world-class" institution.

Sonia R. King
Class of '97

Non-regs support A&M traditions

In response to Dave House's April 1 guest column. Contrary to popular belief, most non-regs at this University do support the traditions that go on here. If they didn't, the traditions

would die. At last count, a lot more than 2,200 people show up to watch Bonfire burn — I think it's around 70,000. If anyone honestly believes that 2,200 people could keep 40,000 non-consenting people standing year after year at football games, they're smoking something. House is right about one thing — Highway 6 does run both ways.

Adam Greer
Class of '98

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