

Live and Let Live

Be yourself. You may wear a shoe with a giant size 13E or a diminutive 3AAAA. Whichever it is, wear it with ease. You may be 6'7", 5'6", or 4'10". Whichever it is, walk with confidence. You may be a Southerner who drops the r's in words you speak—"How fah is it from heah to yoa home?" or you may be a Yankee who replies, "I have no idear." Whichever you are, speak with assurance. Your skin may be brown, white or black. Whichever it is, let self-respect make you a compliment to that race.

There is a uniqueness about every person that we sometimes forget or override. In your frantic desire to "belong," you may try to dress, speak, and act like the "big men on campus." As a matter of fact, these BMOC's may be worthy examples. But more important than imitation or emulation of them is the cultivation of the inimitable you. Emerson said it this way:

There is a time in every man's education when he arrives at the conviction that envy is ignorance; that imitation is suicide; that he must take himself for better for worse as his portion . . . Trust thyself: every heart vibrates to that iron string. Accept the place the divine providence has found for you, the society of your contemporaries, the connection of events.

Contemporary society may seem to compel a conformity that relieves you of individuality—"The multitudes of men that kill the single man . . ." as poet Wallace Stevens puts it. Interdependent though you are and liable to conformity in many areas, you need not lose your identities, like checkers moved about on a checkerboard. Adapt yourself to the requirements of life around you by conforming as you need to, but be aware that you are conforming or not conforming, as that need arises. William H. Whyte summarizes such an idea thus: **The organization man is not in the grip of vast social forces about which it is impossible for him to do anything; the options are there, and with wisdom and foresight he can turn the future away from the dehumanized collective that so haunts our thoughts. He may not. But he can.**

A necessary corollary to "Be yourself" is "Let other people be themselves." If, for example, you think soft pink is your girlfriend's most becoming color, but she prefers an ugly purple, need you offend her by loudly expressing your distaste? Or, if you happen to be quite a talker, must you stab your silent companion with "Why don't you talk more?"

Self-respect does not imply a consequent lack of respect for your neighbors. An inordinate self-love or insecurity leads to snobbery, some forms of which Russell Lynes categorizes as Regional Snobs ("We've had it tougher than anybody," "We know how to live better than you do," "I have lived here longer than anyone"), Moral Snobs ("I am more tolerant than anybody"), Emotional Snobs ("I feel things more deeply than anybody," "Nobody can get along with me"), Physical Snobs, Intellectual Snobs, Reverse Snobs or Antisnob Snobs! Probably no one is exempt from snobbery, but that is no reason to let it go unrecognized in yourself.

Part of the Christian ethic is that the man-being is partly the "image of God." Such a concept by its very nature encourages you to respect the God-image in yourself and in people around you. Be yourself and let others be themselves. —Mary Ihrig

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LITTLE MAN ON CAMPUS



Shun Gobbledly-Gook!

Do you know what the following sentence means? "Upon the advent of the investigator, his hegemony became minimally co-extensive with the areal unit rendered visible by his successive displacements in space."

Translated into plain, everyday English, it simply means, "He came, he saw, he conquered."

Too many people today use gobbledly-gook when they should be using plain, ordinary English. The consequences of faulty communication can be disastrous, especially for the college student.

To get your ideas across properly and persuasively, semanticians and psychologists recommend that you follow these five rules:

1. **Avoid words that are too familiar or not familiar enough.** Words that are heard too often and end up not being heard at all. They make no mental impression. They are stale, lifeless, "blah." Nowadays, perhaps the English language is "fabulous," that there are two most-over-used words, "great" and "lousy."

On the other hand, don't go too far out of your way to use unfamiliar words either — like "telelogical" or "entity." If you have something worthwhile to say, you don't have to check it in dazzling clothing.

2. **Don't confuse or misuse words.** Even one of America's greatest writers has confused words. William Faulkner, in his novel *Requiem for a Nun*, consistently used the word "euphemistic" when he meant to use the word "euphonious." ("Euphemistic" means substituting a mild expression for one that might be unpleasant; "euphonious" means having a pleasant sound.)

It's easy to make a mistake. A "Breton" lives in Britany, France; a "Briton" lives in Great Britain. A "correspondent" is someone you communicate with; a 'core-

Letters...

... my sincere appreciation to the Hilltop staff and others for their expressions of sympathy at the death of my father.

—Dan Keels

spondent' is a person involved in a divorce suit. "Sensuous" pertains to the senses; 'sensual' means full of pleasure.

All of these words are deceptive because they are similar to other words with different meanings. There are also words that people simply misuse. A "fulsome" speech is an offensive one. A person who "tinkers" with a radio is doing a bad job of trying to repair it. Most Scotsmen don't appreciate being called Scotch. A person who is "masterful" is domineering.

As the saying goes (and our English teachers will be telling us), "When in doubt, look it up or leave it out."

3. **Be terse.** Theodore Bernstein, assistant managing editor of the *New York Times*, is forever telling his reporters: "Use one idea to a sentence. It's easier to understand something that is brief."

4. **Recognize the connotation of a word as well as its denotation.** A word's denotation is what it means precisely. Its connotation is what it suggests. It also would be helpful to recognize the emotional implications of the words you use. Take the word "mother." It suggests many more things than "woman," "parent" or "relative."

As John Opydke, a language expert, has said, "house for sale" is cold, but "home must be sacrificed" is expressive.

If you still don't understand the difference between denotation and connotation, try calling a girl in your class "fat" instead of "plump."

5. **Seek simplicity.** Of the 450,000 words in Webster's *New International Dictionary*, only one out of ten comes from the Anglo-Saxon (Old English). Yet these are the most essential ones. They are short, hard, gritty words, the words that bite. (Examples: "the," "short," "hard," "gritty," "words," "that," "bite.")

You don't have to recognize words of Anglo-Saxon origin. Just make sure that whenever you can use a word of one syllable in place of a word of three syllables, you do it.

National Magazine Hits Homework

Homework, a subject that is dear to the heart of every Mars Hillian, was given much discussion in last Sunday's issue of *Parade* magazine. Assigning papers, requiring parallel amounts, making math problems so long it takes all night to work one of them, having students interpret poetry that makes little sense to one but a scholar who has spent years in translations, and having music students practice their fingers are sore—these are some of the homework requirements noted on campuses throughout the country.

While the student may not always agree with the amount of the assignment, the teacher usually has a reason behind it. One main complaint here at Mars Hill is made when there are special events on campus and professors make the most est possible assignments. Perhaps this sounds unfair to the professor, but often it is the case.

Dr. Harold Moore, superintendent of schools in Littleton, Colo., predicts that if the present trend in workloads continues, we will see an increase in "mental health problems beyond the scope now existing." He adds, "It is false to think that only putting students through academic material of the kind now present will improve the educational system."

One authority criticized "quality vs. quantity in homework." More schools seem to be giving more and more homework and beginning earlier each year, he said.

Eric Groezinger of the New Jersey Department of Education recently wrote that "some schools are so busy trying to be tough that they actually undermine the purposes of education."

Overloading hit suburbs in Virginia and Connecticut this summer when students in the 10th grade were given list of novels to read and report upon by September. Books were required to be read while "on vacation." This vacation reading caused students not to be able to read for pure enjoyment and not to have much time for leisure activities that homework prevented during the regular school term. Studying during the summer cut into piano lessons, reading for pleasure, family vacation trips, and other things.

Some school officials maintain stoutly that heavier workloads in school are part of "a pattern" in which parents push children to grow faster, mature earlier, and achieve more than they themselves did."

Other educators feel that work is a discipline. "A lot of life is drudgery and they might as well get accustomed to it," said one teacher. Feeling sorry for students is a waste of time, according to one educator. The parents are the one who are complaining, and the children seem to be much better under the pressure.

Mars Hill professors often give too much work. I realize that we must practice a certain amount of self-discipline and do what is expected of us as college students, but must the faculty members all assign papers due the same week, parallel enough for three courses to be done in one week? On and on the list could go. Students often find time on their hands one week and can hardly get assignments done the next. Is there not some way that the homework situation could be remedied in order to space the papers and reports over the semester and when every other professor is assigning homework assignments or when tests are being given? We are here to learn; however, if we are given much work to do that we do it to meet a deadline instead of really being able to learn, are we failing to accomplish the real purpose of genuine learning?

Homework, or home study, is essential, please let us enjoy doing it and feel that we have learned something in the process.

—Mary Mattison