

Editorial

Demands require action for realization

Greed, corporate corruption and the rich taking advantage of the poor are being ushered out of America. Since Bank of America has disposed of its \$5 per month fee to use a debit card, the Occupy Wall Street protesters can finally go home, right? One of the largest banks in the country, with more than \$2 trillion in assets, has finally listened to its consumers. Specifically, co-chief operating officer David Darnell stated, "We have listened to our customers very closely over the last few weeks and recognize their concern."

Meh. Aside from the fact that they probably won't, if the news about the port at Oakland, Calif., is any indication, they probably shouldn't stop caring just yet. One example of a bank getting rid of one fee because its customers were irate does not indicate a general trend. It does not mean the action can stop and that the people who care can go home again.

The same way political liberties are always in danger and must be exercised to be protected, social and economic freedom from control by others, including non-governmental actors, requires constant vigilance and action. Economics often informs political issues or serves as the basis for political action.

Consumer dissatisfaction and boycotts have even featured in America. They have even done so, tea party disdain for the Occupiers notwithstanding, in the context of the American Revolution. One response to the Townshend Acts of 1767, which taxed glass, paper, lead, paint and tea imports from Britain, was a non-consumption movement. Merchants in Boston voted to suspend its trade with Britain as well as other colonies that continued to trade with the British. Later, in 1774, the First Continental Congress passed a prohibition of trade with Britain.

Large-scale action by many individuals can have an effect. Movements led to beginning our own war to become our own country, and similar movements encouraged the adoption of civil rights legislation in the 1950s and 1960s. Peaceful protests over decades in India led to their independence in 1947. With enough people and the right message, groups of people can change the world even with all the odds stacked against them.

Politics doesn't exist only on election day. There is a time and place to be political, especially in an extremely politicized world. But talking amongst yourselves about issues that affect us all, whether they be matters of government or society or economics, and making yourselves aware of those issues, is vital to securing any change.

Just don't forget to eventually act on that discussion.

Editorial Board

Jake Lovett, editor in chief
 Michael Belding, opinion editor
 Rick Hanton, assistant opinion editor
 Jacob Witte, daily columnist
 Jessica Opoien, daily staff writer
 Ryan Peterson, daily columnist
 Claire Vriezen, daily columnist

Feedback policy:

The Daily encourages discussion but does not guarantee its publication. We reserve the right to edit or reject any letter or online feedback.

Send your letters to letters@iowastatedaily.com. Letters must include the name(s), phone number(s), majors and/or group affiliation(s) and year in school of the author(s). Phone numbers and addresses will not be published.

Online feedback may be used if first name and last name, major and year in school are included in the post. Feedback posted online is eligible for print in the Iowa State Daily.

Speech

Erosion of modern English

Use of slang changes our language for worse

When did Vinny and Pauly D replace Webster and Roget? Popular words and phrases always change from decade to decade and generation to generation. In recent years, however, our generation has contributed to the degradation of the English language. There is a growing push to have more Americans become bilingual, but how can we be expected to do that when we can barely master spoken English?

Instead of expanding our vocabularies and aiming for eloquence, our verbal skills are focused on being hip and slovenly. We may no longer use "sit on it," "necking" or "daddy-o," but the slew of recent hip terms that have arisen in the past few years would make the script of "Clueless" sound like a Thoreau poem.

Bro, broski or brah — If we cross paths out on the town and I do not know you, this is not an acceptable form of introduction; this rule also applies to dude or chief. When I go to Hy-Vee and ask for help, I expect to find a helpful smile in every aisle, not somebody directing me where to go followed by the term "dawg."

Awesome or sick — At some point in time, these became the only two adjectives used to describe anything. Everything you saw, did or accomplished was not

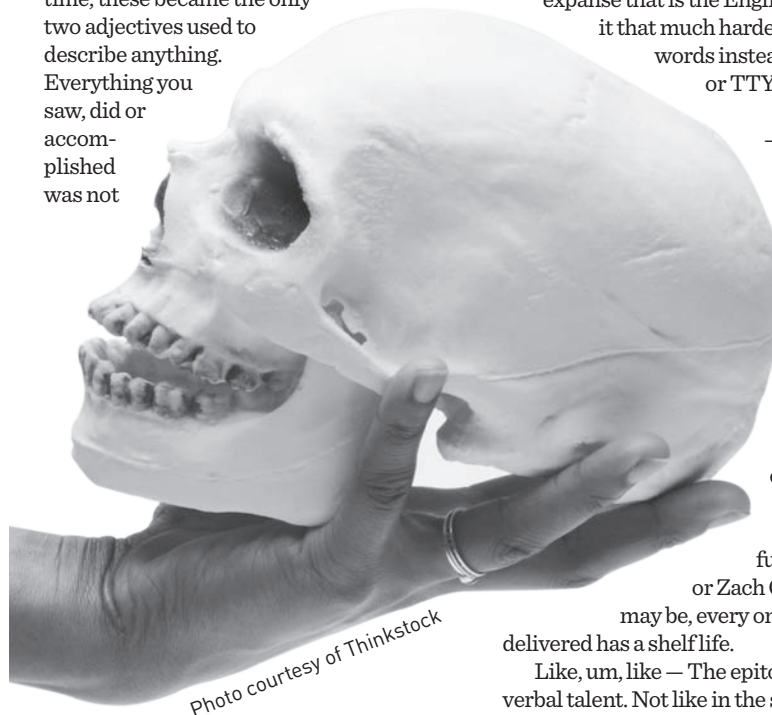


Photo courtesy of Thinkstock

By Darrin.Cline
 @iowastatedaily.com

sick or awesome. At least awesome was meant to be used in a positive light, but when did something being "sick" signify glory?

Face palm, fail, epic fail — Perhaps the slang for which I have the most personal contempt, this collection of terms has become so ubiquitous among young adults outsiders would think all we do is fail. Obama's stimulus plan may have been an epic fail, but an attempt to ride a laundry basket down a set of stairs hardly qualifies as epic in any sense.

TXT speak — It is acceptable on Facebook, Twitter and in a text message, not during a conversation. A prime example of our current level of laziness, speaking with text abbreviations is an insult to the

expansion that is the English language. Is it that much harder to use the full words instead of LOL, IDK or TTYL?

Movie quotes — Who doesn't love "Napoleon Dynamite," "Anchorman" or the Hangover movies? They are comedy staples and some of the funniest films of our era. Nonetheless, no matter how funny Will Ferrell or Zach Galifianakis may be, every one-liner they delivered has a shelf life.

Like, um, like — The epitome of squalid verbal talent. Not like in the sense of a

Facebook status, but like in the sense of every other word of an unprepared class presentation where like, every, like, other word, like comes out minced between likes. Everybody hears it, everybody hates it, yet no one makes an effort to stop it.

Words are beautiful things. They can make us stop and think or motivate us to action. They evoke emotion or anger. Words and language evolve and grow so that we may better ourselves, not so we can relegate them.

Unfortunately, our vernacular gives a representation of the time. In 2001, Merriam-Webster added "bromance" and "tweet" to their official collection, along with the pop culture definition of a "cougar."



Photo: Kelsey Kremer/Iowa State Daily

While many remember dictionaries as a reference for expanding vocabularies, their basis for inclusion is usage. Thus, the eroding quality and simplicity of commonly used words has forced the utmost authorities in language to select these putrid terms.

The president of Webster's even called "fist bump" as the "champion of the group." This coming from the company that previously honored respectable terms such as admonish and insipid among its words of the year. How many times has quixotic or quagmire been used in daily speech by a college student?

Slang terms come and go. Some terms are inescapable, and it is difficult to not let a few slip. They may be popular, but does not mean they are fashionable. Take pride in eloquence and use originality in speech.

Darrin Cline is a senior in agricultural communications from Decorah, Iowa.

Sciences

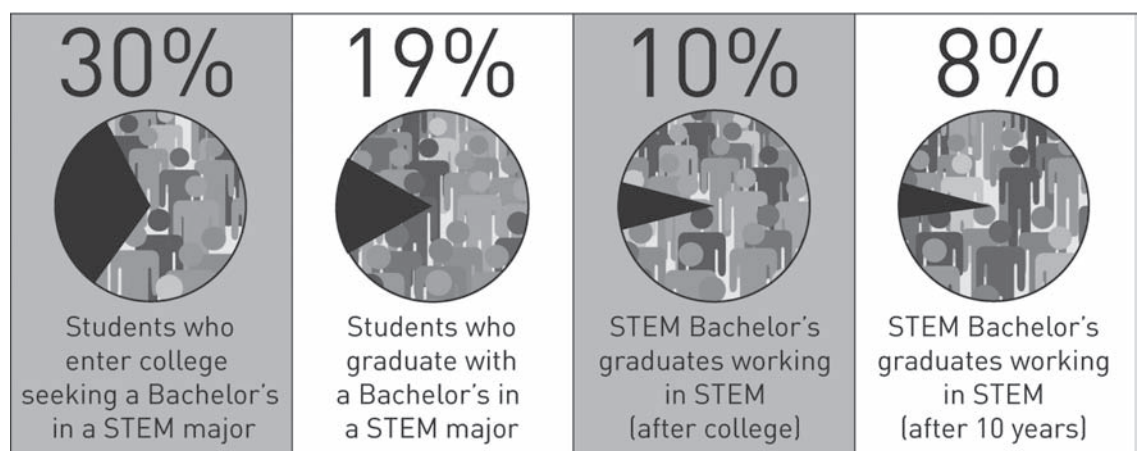
STEM graduates essential in US

We live in an incredible time. Our parents saw the development of the personal computer and the Internet. Will we have prolific maglev trains and space travel by the time we are in our 40s and 50s? Who knows?

In any case, what we do know is that our business and personal lives will make heavy use of science and technology to make our lives easier. One result of that fact is that most industries will require more science, technology, engineering or mathematics knowledge.

A new report on Oct. 20 funded by the Lumina Foundation and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and conducted by the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce reported that we may lack enough graduates in STEM careers over the next decade. This isn't because we are not graduating a large number of new engineers, mathematicians and scientists. It is because so many are currently defecting from STEM career paths during and after college.

Right now, 19 percent of students graduating with a bachelor's degree in the United States graduate in a STEM-related field, but many who start school in STEM majors graduate in an entirely different field. Of those who graduate in STEM, just more than half actually take up STEM-related careers like physics, engineering or biology post-graduation. Some of those individuals soon end up vacating their positions to move into higher paying management or business positions as well.



Graphic: Kelsey Kremer/Iowa State Daily

The lack of graduates in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics is a problem that could be solved by taking a closer look at our education system and promoting programs that encourage students to enter STEM fields.



By Rick.Hanton
 @iowastatedaily.com

With so many businesses counting on these science-minded professionals to advance their businesses, getting enough students into the field to counteract any attrition is vitally important. Even for the many students here who are not in STEM majors, you will likely work with science or technology professionals on a daily basis, so this is a problem affecting your future success too.

So what can we do about this?

Well, one solution is to examine how our education system works and doesn't work. From my research, it seems that you should not necessarily listen to those who shout about a massive percentage of STEM students coming from schools in Asia and China. Their system generates a large percentage of STEM

students partially due to the fact that few countries there have a universal education system like the United States. Similarly, if we only taught affluent students in the United States, we too would likely have a higher percentage of STEM interest.

But on the other hand, some reports do note that Eastern schools tend to delve deeper into core topics than schools in the United States and that they are not deeply tied to major book publishers as we are.

I hope that in the next 10 to 15 years perhaps a few professors will have an "iTunes" moment and realize that they can publish cheaper textbooks directly using the e-book format and a bookstore like Amazon.com. This would allow a greater variety of texts to proliferate and would weed out the poorer texts easily.

While that is happening, there are a few other programs that may convince more students to enter science and technology fields. Among these are For Inspiration and Recognition of

Science and Technology or "FIRST" — an organization started by inventor Dean Kamen and supported by thousands of engineers, scientists and teachers around the world.

Organizations like FIRST are trying to teach students about the fun in science and engineering and change the stereotype that science is not "cool." To this end, I'm happy that a few high-profile individuals have voiced loud support for FIRST over the last few years. Everybody from will.i.am to President Barack Obama to Snoop Dogg has been showing their support of the yearly robotics competition that Kamen has arranged since 1992.

It isn't just this one competition either. FIRST robotics doesn't exactly have a college equivalent, but the lessons it teaches are applicable in many different project-based college groups. As we showed ISU graduate and astronaut Clayton Anderson our lunar mining robot in Howe Hall the other day, he remarked a few times that "we didn't have this when I was in

school." This and other new competitions have been arranged in recent years to teach students basic science and engineering techniques.

So kudos to you if you have persevered and are still studying a science or engineering major as many of us are at Iowa State University. I wish you the best and can tell you that based on this research, you have a bright future if you choose to continue working in your field. I hope this new report inspires engineers and non-engineers alike to help with programs like FIRST.

As I have described over the past few weeks, science and technology are important to our nation and the world. Math and science are tough to master, but necessary to maintain our technologically advanced world. With a bit of work though, math and science can still provide a lot of fun and an enjoyable career.

Rick Hanton is a senior in computer engineering from Arden Hills, Minn.