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How often have your plans to spend the day with friends conquering the roller coasters at Cedar Point or an evening bar-hopping at the Flats fallen to the wayside because you have had “too much to do?”

We all have exams, papers, projects and various commitments that demand our time. Grades, bills and job hunting are always of concern. But one thing to remember is that college is a learning experience, not only in the academic realm but in the social realm. The friends we meet in college watch our convictions develop to an extent that even our parents may not witness.

It’s very easy to . . .

Wait a minute. This is boring . . . Let me take a stab at the humorous route. I’m not very good at philosophical thoughts, anyway. (That’s what happens after too many episodes of 90210, Melrose Place and Beavis and Butt-head.)

Even though David Letterman is one of my least favorite TV personalities, his Top 10 Lists do have some merit. I think I’ll do some “creative borrowing” and make a list of my very own. So . . . from a windowless room in the basement of Taylor Hall . . . here are the Top 10 Reasons to Read This Issue of The Burr . . .

10) It’s Monday. The Stater doesn’t come out today, so you won’t have anything else to read in your classes.

9) We don’t ever mention budget cuts, decreasing enrollment, diversity or task forces.

8) Where else can you learn what your profs do in their spare time, how to buy alcohol before your 21st birthday and how not to be like Kurt Cobain?

7) It’s better than reading about O.J.

6) Think of the poor trees that sacrificed themselves for this.

5) This makes a great addition to your list of ways to procrastinate, instead of studying for those finals looming in your near future.

4) It’s a season of giving. Give us a break and read it.

3) It’s free. (Except for those few tuition dollars each of you gave.)

2) Look at the cover models. Need I say more?

1) The other staffers and I spent the ENTIRE semester putting this together for your viewing pleasure. We sacrificed our social lives, our sleep and our sanity for you, our 10,000 readers. So, please, show us some gratitude and read this thing from cover to cover.

Good luck on finals and enjoy the holidays!

Angelica Semler
Thursday Night. A night to go out, have a good time and forget about all the hassles and pop quizzes that spoil any college student’s week. While many college students associate a good time with drinking alcohol, many are also under the legal drinking age of 21. What’s one solution to this “minor” problem? A fake ID.

Amy, a 19-year-old sophomore, acquired her fake ID over a year ago. “I work with this girl,” Amy says. “We are the same height and have the same eye and hair color. I gave her money, and she gave me her birth certificate and Social Security card.”

Amy says she then went to the license bureau and posed as the woman, saying her wallet was stolen. The new license canceled out the woman’s other license. Before renewing her actual license, the woman had to wait a few months.

Amy, who says she doesn’t feel comfortable using the ID at bars, uses the ID for buying alcohol before going out. “Sometimes at Ray’s, people look at me like I’m not old enough to be there,” she says. “The driver’s license says 22, and I know I don’t look like I could be that old.”

Most of the bouncers at local bars agree that the fake IDs they catch are usually a driver’s license of another person, rather than an altered license of a minor. But Jill, a 20-year-old junior, says her friend’s brother fixed her ID. “He whited out the birthdate, expiration date and just typed in a new number,” Jill says. “The seal is still there. He just made me 22 years old.”

Of the bars Jill has been to, only one bouncer questioned her. She says this bar checks IDs beneath a streetlight. When the license is flipped a certain way under a light, Jill adds, a person can tell that it was tampered with. The bouncer told Jill to “try the bar down the street because it’s easier (to get into).” He was right.

Zdenek Jakoubek, a bouncer at bw-3, says he catches about two to three fake IDs on a busy night. Erik Jones, a bouncer at the College Street Library, says on Fridays and Saturdays he catches about 10 to 15 IDs.

Andy Busack, a bartender at the 18-and-over Robin Hood, says the Hood also confiscates a larger number of IDs. “We’re more prone because we have a lot of younger kids coming here,” Busack says. “We have more of a rush at the door because we fit more people in than some of the older bars.”

Although fake IDs pass by some bouncers’ eyes, Joe Venice says his mother, who checks the IDs at the Venice Cafe, is one of the toughest people to fool because she knows about 85 percent of the bar’s customers. “She’s the strictest person in Kent,” says Venice, bartender at the cafe. “She can tell if the license itself is altered in any way.”

Most of the bars look for the same information when determining if an ID is fake. “You look at generally the picture,” Jakoubek says. “You look at the nose, the nostrils, the earlobes, the bridge of the eye. If you’re in doubt, you just don’t let them in.”

Robert Morris, a bouncer at bw-3, says if he has any doubts about a person’s identification card, he asks personal questions. “They study everything like their Social Security number, address and age,” Morris says. “So we pop a question on them that they are not ready for — that they’re shocked for hearing.”

Steve Harris, who checks IDs at Ray’s Place, says people usually don’t protest when a fake ID is taken from them. “We send them on their way, tell them they have a fake ID and to get out of here, or we will call the police,” Harris says.

Kent City Police Captain Jim Peach says if an ID proves to be fake, the person using the false information can spend up to six months in jail and pay a $1,000 fine.

Many believe that if they are old enough to vote and fight for their country, they should be old enough to buy and drink alcohol. But the law is the law, says Kent City Police Chief William Lillich: “The law prohibits the sale, distribution, delivery, offering, consuming or attempting to purchase alcoholic beverages under the age of 21.”

— Stephanie Kwisnek is a senior broadcast news major. This is her first contribution to The Burr.
It's often difficult to imagine the professors and administrators at Kent State doing anything but shuffling paperwork and preparing lectures. But each of them actually does have a personal life with interests as varied as...well...as each of the students.

*Animal Lover*

The hectic work week has come to a close. It's a Saturday afternoon, and Nancy Bredemeier is at her home in Suffield. She has traded her usual business attire as director of student services in the College of Education for a pair of faded blue jeans, tennis shoes and a gingham blouse. She wears on her belt a buckle decorated with horses.

"The university is our top priority," she explains, "but when we're not involved there, we're busy with our paints and pintos," referring to the types of horses they raise and show. While only three horses occupy their barn now, at one time the Bredemeiers had as many as eight. "I've loved animals all my life," she says as she leans down to pet her cat. "Growing up in the city, I was never able to have animals as a child. Now, I'm able to have all that I want."

The Bredemeiers have taken part in hundreds of shows on national levels of competition. They have also used their hobby to enhance the lives of others. Horseback riding is used as an alternative therapy for physically challenged individuals, and they have had several people visit their farm. "It gives them something to look forward to," she says, "so they don't have to go through the same day-to-day therapy routine."

*On Call*

Joseph Fry notices that the alarm clock reads 3 a.m. as he picks up the phone and hears, "Dr. Fry, there's been a fire. We need you for backup."

This is not unusual for Fry. In addition to his duties on campus as an art professor and assistant to the director of the art department, Fry also dedicates about two hours a week to fighting fires for Nelson Township. "I don't have a lot of time," he says, "but what I do to help out makes me feel like a part of the community." The "community" includes Garrettsville, where he lives with his wife and son. "My wife has some concerns about what I do, but I suppose she's sort of used to it," he says. With 27 years of firefighting experience, Fry plans to continue "until I'm too old," he says with a smile.

As if fighting fires weren't enough to fill up his spare time, Fry has several other hobbies, including competitive shooting and target shooting. "These are my fun," he says. "The firefighting isn't intended for fun." And does his dangerous hobby ever keep him away from his teaching duties? Art students, fear not. Fry has been hurt only once—an injury that he describes as very minor.

*Batter up!*

These two words are quite familiar to Thomas Hensley, professor of political science and 36-year veteran of softball coaching.

"I've always loved baseball," he says, looking at a softball his hand. "This was signed by the girls that I coached last year." Hensley began coaching at age 15 and coached during the summers while he was in college. He credits his daughter, Sarah, 13, and her friend with really getting him involved. During the height of the season, he coaches about 10 hours a week.

Hensley also has two sons who love to play baseball. During the off-season of baseball, Hensley still plays ball privately with his sons and daughter. "It seems to strengthen our relationship. They seem to open up more when we're doing that than when we're doing anything else," he says.

Hensley says he plans to continue coaching "until my daughter graduates to something else, but even then it'll be hard to quit. Baseball is in my blood."

These are just three of the many professors and administrators at Kent State University who go home each night to extraordinary hobbies. After all, there is life outside of the classroom.

— Angie DeRosa is a freshman pre-journalism major. This is her first contribution to The Burr.
Running A Different Course

No longer just readin', 'ritin' and 'rithmetic

By Nicole Wisniewski

In a perfect world, college students would wake up at noon and meander to class. No homework would be assigned, and students would earn only 4.0s.

In the real world, though, students have projects, exams and those classes that put even the most studious to sleep. Students plow through semesters plagued with ordinary, required courses, such as psychology, algebra and English. Fortunately, there are adventurous classes that may even con students into retaining a little bit of knowledge.

The Classroom: Intense heat saturates the Glass I classroom in the Michael Schwartz Center studio as the 2,000-degree furnaces boil molten glass. This class provides a hands-on introduction to basic glass-blowing techniques, while including a brief history of the art.

"I had a hard time getting my guts up to get into the hot furnace and collect the molten glass at first," says Heidrun Hultgren, an art history professor as well as a student in the class. "Now I'm quite excited to move on to something more difficult."

Here's Looking at You, Kid: Cult Films aims to inspire students to investigate the nature of cult films and the cult film audience.

"The primary fan of cult films is the college-educated student because of the popular stars and the films' bizarre nature," Professor Robert West says.

Students in the course watch and discuss classics such as Casablanca, The Rocky Horror Picture Show and Plan 9 from Outer Space.

"You think you're being entertained, but you're really being taught," says Robyn Pretzloff, a sophomore English major.

Couch Potato 101: Reading TV, Reading Ourselves is an English course designed to help students find out why they love or hate all those well-known television shows they tune into each week.

The course will make its debut in January and will analyze various types of television programs from the audience's point of view.

During the class, students will choose the programs they want to analyze.

"I hope that the students will get a better understanding of themselves as individuals and also as a society," Professor Mark Blacher says.

Let's Make a Toast: Proper ID isn't required for this class, but it is required to sample the course materials.

The Environment of Wineries explores wineries from the Lake Erie shore to the Appalachian uplands.

"I thought it would be a blow-off class, but I learned a lot about the process of making wine and what makes a good wine," says Eydie Warner, a senior business management major.

Students taste samples, take three daylong field trips and examine aspects of wine and grape-growing.

Fit to be Tie-Dyed: Not created as a retrospective class for '70s fans, the art course called Fiber Arts: Tie and Dye introduces students to fabrics and fabric design, including tie-dyeing.

"We organize collected color patterns and create art fabrics," Professor Joanne Giordano says. "This includes the tie-dyeing of T-shirts, but that's not all we do. I want to stress that textiles can be art."

"(The professor) is an incredible artist herself and inspires me with her views and creativity," says Meredith Elkin, a senior art education major.

For a break from the norm, these are five of the more outlandish courses offered at Kent. They may be a bit crazy, but they can offer a welcome escape from the real world.

— Nicole Wisniewski is a sophomore magazine journalism major. This is her first contribution to The Burr.
THE COFFEE CLUB

BY JOE REEDY

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY KEN BLAZE AND JEFF CAMARATI

FALL 1994
THE STORY OF FOUR RECOVERING ALCOHOLICS TOLD OVER COFFEE

It’s Thursday night at the local doughnut shop, and another meeting of the Coffee Club has begun. Every Thursday, two friends and I go somewhere and talk after we attend an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting.

I met Phil* and Tom two years ago when I attended my first AA meeting, shortly after arriving on the Kent campus. One night after a meeting, the three of us went out for coffee. That began a tradition.

Tonight, the Coffee Club has a new member. Tom, who has been sober for five years, is counseling a woman named Mary, who has been sober for 96 hours.

When you are a recovering college-age alcoholic, finding friends and support is often difficult. I know it was for me. You feel alone. For one, you don’t want to tell your parents about the difficulty you got yourself into. For another, college and drinking are perfect partners, just like bread and butter. I had a difficult time talking about my problem. I was too embarrassed. Finding people to relate to your problems and situations is also difficult. Plus, there are very few people ready to come out and admit their shortcomings — especially alcoholism. So every little bit of support you can offer others, such as Mary, helps.

I went through my recovery alone. If I had to do it all over again, I wouldn’t choose that. Maybe that is one reason why I am here tonight.

Tom brought Mary with us for two reasons: To get her out in public again and to show her that all of us have been through the same thing. The routes we have taken might have been different, but we’re all here.

In AA meetings, people beginning their recovery can call the group leader or other members for help. Tom is very good at being a peer counselor. He is friendly, outgoing and has a sense of humor.

“I went to a fraternity party and thought that I was going to be an outcast because I wasn’t drinking,” Tom tells us while pouring cream into his coffee. “For the first hour, nobody talked to me. But, then again, I really didn’t feel like talking. I looked pale and stood in a corner until this girl walked up to me and said, ‘You’re just out of detox, aren’t you? Don’t worry, I was the same nervous and shy person you are now.’

“We just sat and talked for the rest of the night. Without her help, I would have never made it through the night. The funny part about the whole thing is that I never got her name or saw her again. But I try to be like her. If anyone is lonely or out of place, I make them feel at home.”

Mary is silent. She stares at the floor and shakes. I look at her and see a reflection of me. I know of three certainties in life — death, taxes and that the first week of sobriety is hell.

The delirium tremens are grueling. You can’t eat or sleep, and somewhere

* The names in this story, except for the author’s, have been changed to protect their identities.
in the back of your mind you keep rationalizing that one drop of booze (even the stuff they pack maraschino cherries in) will cure everything. If you try to eat a simple thing like a piece of toast, less than 30 minutes later you’re throwing it up.

I know what Mary is thinking: “I’ve vowed to change my life, and this is the thanks I get?”

It’s easy to know what she is thinking right now. Every recovering alcoholic has, at one time or another, thought of it before. After one day of drying out, some decide to go back. Most, though, decide to continue. Unfortunately, drying out and the dt’s are the only way to recovery. If there were a miracle drug or pill to rid the body of addiction to alcohol, it would have been manufactured by now.

“I feel like everyone is staring at me,” Mary says as she tries to wipe some powdered sugar from her mouth. “I look like hell.”

Mary is wearing a baggy white T-shirt and a ragged pair of blue jeans with her hair concealed by a navy blue baseball cap. Only her face shows the rigors of the past four days. It is pale, and there are bags under her eyes. Actually, she looks better than most people do during this early stage of recovery.

Mary is still shaking as Phil puts his hand on her chin.

“Look at it this way,” he says. “At least you didn’t get carried out in front of 16,000 people.”

Phil has Mary’s attention. One night, at a Pittsburgh Penguins game, Phil had too much — way too much — to drink. He passed out in the stands and had to be carried out by two paramedics. When he arrived at the hospital, his blood alcohol content was .3, three times over the legal limit.

It was incredible that Phil survived, and he took advantage of it. Two days after being released from the hospital, he admitted himself to a detox center. For two years, Phil — who calls himself “the ultimate sports fanatic” — had problems adjusting to his new lifestyle. He couldn’t watch sports on television because of the urge to drink. But he faced the past and has been fine ever since.

Adjusting is the lasting step of recovery. Things you have done almost every day for years are suddenly not part of the routine. What used to mean getting off work and heading straight for the bar now means getting off work and finding an alternate route home. The new route may be five minutes longer, but if it means not drinking, the five minutes seem like one.

Mary excuses herself to go to the bathroom. Tom stares at her and shakes his head. “She has it more difficult than we ever had,” Tom says as he orders another doughnut. “She moved out of her dorm room and got a room in a motel because her friends drink all the time. She doesn’t want to tell her parents because she feels guilty, and she is beating herself up because she is trying to figure out how she lost control so fast.”

When Mary returns, she grabs Tom’s hand and stares at her black tennis shoes. “When the f— am I going to be able to hold down food?” she screams.

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FALL 1994
"At least you threw up a doughnut," I tell her. "Four days into my recovery, I thought I could hold down food with no problem whatsoever. I went to my favorite restaurant and ordered the biggest prime rib I could find — to celebrate. Got it with the works: baked potato, side of spaghetti and hot peppers. Two hours later, I was spending time in the bathroom. Have you ever thrown up hot peppers before? They are just as hot coming up as they are going down."

Mary’s pale face shows signs of color as she laughs.

Now it is my turn to try and make her feel at ease. "You know what the hardest words in the world to say are? I ask her. "'My name is Joe, and I am an alcoholic' in front of a crowd of people that you have never seen before."

"You know what the second-hardest words to say are? Try looking at yourself in the mirror and say, 'I've let you down.'"

It’s easier to say words like that to your parents and the people closest to you. Sometimes it becomes so easy that you say them involuntarily when you get in a jam. But the hardest thing to do is admit it to yourself. The person you always try to run away from— but can’t — is yourself. If there was one thing I wanted Mary to learn, it was that.

Every recovering alcoholic has a place where his or her greatest moments, and downfalls, occurred. Tom’s was High Street in Columbus. Phil’s was the Civic Arena in Pittsburgh. Mine was Room 102 of McHugh Hall on the campus of Wheeling Jesuit College.

I begin telling Mary about Wheeling. I had returned home at the end of the semester with a 0.9 grade point average and a drinking problem.

"At Wheeling I ended up becoming something that I vowed when I was nine years old that I would never become — an alcoholic," I say. "I saw my father almost drink himself out of a marriage, and maybe his life, before he got help. He put my mother through hell, and I was damned if I was going to repeat the chain. But I did.

"When I went to Wheeling, I got involved with the wrong crowd, ended up in a disastrous relationship and ended up letting everything lapse."

I wouldn’t call my family for days and let bills lapse for two, maybe three, months. I just didn’t care about anything other than a bottle.

"Last spring was the most difficult semester I have ever had, but I survived," I tell Mary. "I got a 2.75 and did it without drinking. You see, you are lucky. You acknowledged your problem before it was too late. Not many people can say that."

Mary asks if it is ever going to be easy. I wish I could tell her that it will, but I can’t. It gets fine for a while, but then there comes a time when the urge starts to take over again. There will be binges. There will be lapses. It is rare to hear the "I’ve gone 42 years without ever having a drop of alcohol" speech. Some repel the urge. But some go back.
"You never outgrow recovery," I say. "There are always friends around to help and to tell you the truth. But now is the time when you will find out who your true friends are. If, and when, you go back to your friends, and they respect you for the decision you have made, then they are your true friends. If you go back, and they ostracize you, then look for a new group. You don’t need them."

It demands great courage to stay sober in these times. If you could stay in a closet for the rest of your life or stay in your house and have everything delivered, recovery would be a cinch. But no one can live life this way, unless he or she lives like a monk. How do people survive? With a little help from their friends.

"The motto of recovery is, ‘One day at a time,’" Tom says. "It is also the road to picking up the chips."

After pulling out a cigarette, Tom tosses a yellow chip on the table. It says 30 days on it.

"I got that chip five years ago, and after that I knew that I was on the right path," he says. "The chip becomes a symbol and a good-luck piece. When I went to my first party after I received it, I held it so tight that it left an indentation in my hand."

Alcoholics have many good luck symbols. That symbol is often the chip. In the movie Clean and Sober, Michael Keaton best described what it means to pick up the chip. "I lost my job, a girlfriend and my friends all in one day," he said. "But I have this chip and I’m sober. You can’t take away those two things from me."

Three hours have passed since we sat down in the shop.

"Now it’s time for your story," Tom says to Mary. "They say that confession is good for the soul."

Mary sighs and then begins. "I had it all — a scholarship and great friends," she says. "I guess I went to drinking because it was a way of getting control of my feelings. When I was drunk, I was the life of the party. Everyone wanted to be around me and wanted to dance with me — maybe because I was easy to pick up when I had too much to drink."

"It started at parties and then grew to after classes. Before long, I was taking bicycle bottles of gin and tonic to classes (gin and tonic doesn’t have any odor and cannot be detected on the breath). Before long, I was caring more about where to pick up booze instead of when to study. My friends are the
same way, except they haven’t real-
zized the problems they have yet.

"I guess I finally realized my prob-
lem when my ex-boyfriend from high
school came to see me and called me a
lush. When he got here, I was drunk,
as usual, and told him that it wouldn’t
happen the rest of the weekend. What
a lie."

As Mary is talking about her ordeal,
a tone of confidence enters her voice. I
can see why confession is good for the
soul.

"I just kept drinking," Mary contin-
ues. "He took a beer bottle away from
me at a party, and I punched him,
almost knocked him out. When I
sobered up the next morning, I cried
because I realized what I had become.
When I got up, I saw a note on my
dresser that read: ‘Until you get help,
don’t call me again.’ You know what?
I’m not going to until I get my chip.”

I remember the day I picked up my
30-day chip and the joy it brought me.
I give her my phone number and toss
her my chip from four years ago. Right
now, she needs it more than I do.

"You can cash it in for a bright,
sunny one in 30 days," I say.

After more than three hours, five
Cokes, 16 doughnuts and 12 cups of
coffee, the discussion turns to tomor-
row. "You want to go and see the Ca
s game tomorrow?" Phil asks me.

"Nope. Gotta work," I reply. Tom
volunteers to take my place as Phil
invites Mary to come along.

"But I hate basketball," she says.

"You might hate it, but you will be
among friends," Tom points out.

Before we leave, we join hands and
say the Prayer of Serenity. Even
though I am not a great believer of
religion anymore, this is one prayer I
say each day: “God grant me the peace
and serenity to accept the things I can-
not change, the power to change the
things I can and the wisdom to know
the difference.”

A lot has happened in the eight months
since that night.

Phil and Tom both graduated from col-
lege. Phil has moved back to Pittsburgh,
and Tom is taking graduate courses at The
Ohio State University. Mary continues to
live sober. She regularly attends meetings
and has even counseled a few people.

“Live by example,” she told me during
the summer. “That is the motto I use. You
guys were the best ones to follow.”

As for me, there have been some good
times, and there have been some rough
times. But I’m still sober.

— Joe Reedy is a senior news-jour-
nalism major. This is his first contri-
bution to The Burr.
The Balancing Act

With tuition on one side and living expenses on the other, students find various ways to juggle their money.

By Heather Lesco
Illustration By Sarah McGee
Have you ever felt guilty turning down a salesclerk who asks you if you want some great socks to go with that sweater you’re buying? Or are you one of the lucky (or talented or assertive) few who can tell them “Quite frankly, (fill in blank with the bubbly’s nametag) I am a college student. Can you define shoestring? And, no, my last name does not begin with an ‘R’ and end with ‘ockefeller,’ OK?”

This will be of interest to those of you who are constantly turning to your roommates, friends, relatives or what-have-you and pleading “Hey, can you spare a buck?” with a cartoonish smile. But this is also for those of you who are quite adamant about keeping your finances under control — you know, those of you who can strut past Arby’s, Wendy’s and Pizza Hut because you’ve gotta have your 59-79-or 99-cent deals. This is for everyone who wants to know how the rest of us budget our spending dollars.

Mr. Scrounge

Terry Sandoval’s way of dealing with money is quite simple: get it, spend it (even if you shouldn’t). Terry, 22, a senior individual and family studies major, says that although he knows he doesn’t have the money to spare, he just can’t help going out to the bars sometimes and spending the cash.

“I tell myself I shouldn’t be going out,” he says. “(But) it relieves the stress (of everyday concerns). It’s tough. It’s hard to weigh the options.”

Terry works two part-time jobs: one as a waiter at The Red Tomato in Hudson and another as a daycare assistant at Little Tykes. He says he’s putting himself through college for the most part, but his parents do help him out with tuition.

Aside from his parents’ help, paying the rent for the Holly Park apartment that Terry shares with three other friends is where a good deal of his earnings go right now. “If I don’t have a place to live, I can’t go to school,” he says with a laugh. That’s why his rent is top priority now and school funds come second. Three weeks into the semester, he still hadn’t found the money to buy his books.

But he says that might not have been the case if he hadn’t vacationed in South Carolina over the summer with his buddy and as he puts it, “blown a lot of money.”
Terry can be seen cruising across campus on his new mountain bike, something he says he bought when he probably should have been saving money for school.

But one thing that Terry doesn’t worry much about is eating. Because he works at the restaurant three or four days a week, he can eat there for free. For other meals, he says he “pretty much scrounges” for money and eats out. So what is the one thing he would head to Giant Eagle for?

You betcha – beer.

**Miss Smart Shopper**

Judy Wyant, 21, a senior medical technology major, recently purchased a new stereo system via the smart shopper system. She says that she shopped around at six stores before she found the best price at Wal-Mart and made her purchase.

Maybe Judy can thank her mother for her budgeting knowhow. She says her mom had her start putting a third of her checks from work into her bank account several years ago. It has become automatic.

Judy’s mother is helping her through college, but Judy comes up with the money for books and other school necessities. Judy says that where spending money is concerned, she just isn’t extravagant. “My sister spends her money as soon as she gets it,” she says. “I like to make it last.”

**Mr. Nothing Left**

Here’s a riddle (sort of): How do you pay for college, work a part-time job, take 16 credit hours and still find the time to go out and kick up your heels?

Chad Akins’ answer to that is: You don’t.

Chad, 19, an undecided third-semester freshman, stands behind the McDonald’s counter in The Hub, where about 26 hours of his week are spent transferring burgers, fries and Cokes to customers.

He says all he has to manage with his money is where it’s going next. “There’s really not much left to manage after I pay for school,” he says.

---

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He says his parents don't help him when he is feeling a crunch. "They suggested I put a loan on my car," he says, "which I actually might end up doing."

Chad is on the food plan, but he says even that doesn't help ease his worries. "I worry about food still because the cafeterias are closed before I get off work," he says.

Chad says he never feels bitter toward other students who have more money to work with. In fact, his roommate doesn't work, and it doesn't bother Chad at all.

To free his mind of monetary concerns, he practices with the Kent State marching band and plays pool. "I play billiards in my spare time," he says, "to get my mind off of everything else."

The Miss Spendhappys

For Tiziana Bernasconi and Dunja Branger, two Kent students from Ticino, Switzerland, money is not a major concern.

Dunja, 20, explains that through the student exchange program, this semester at Kent State is free. Dunja and Tiziana both rely on their parents for major expenses, but they hold jobs during their summers at home. Tiziana says that in Switzerland, their franc equals about one U.S. dollar; the prices are much higher there than they are here.

"(The U.S. prices) are cheap for us," Tiziana says.

Items that cost less in the United States include food and clothing, the pair say.

"We’re used to the prices (in Switzerland)," Dunja says.

So does this mean that they don’t have to watch their spending here at all?

"We try to be careful when we go shopping," Tiziana says.

Dunja says that she spends what she needs to spend.

"I don’t have a limit," she says. "So sometimes I’m thinking, ‘Yeah, maybe I have to stop.’"

— Heather Lesco is a senior magazine journalism major. This is her first contribution to The Burr.

Dollars and Sense

Daphine Pruitt, an accountant in Kent State’s Financial Affairs office, says that one of the most important things a student can do to start a budget is to keep track of his or her disposable (extra) income.

"(They should) write down what their expenses are," she says. "Then they’ll know what their disposable income is."

Pruitt says that when students plan to go out at night, they should only take an amount of money that won’t strain their wallets. This can effectively put a stop to those situations in which overspending can occur.

Too often, overspending occurs on credit, she says, and the results can come back to haunt anyone. "When you overspend," she says, "it’ll mess up credit for the future. Look at the consequences for that."

A Huntington National Bank representative agrees with this philosophy. "It’s too easy to let things get away from you," she says. "Temptation is the biggest enemy."

The representative says abusing credit is the worst budgeting mistake. She says, for example, that some people charge their groceries, and that is not always a good idea. "If you’ve used (the groceries) up before you pay for it," she says, "that’s a danger."

She says this is bad because it usually means the person doesn’t have the money to pay for the groceries, and that could mean bills that are higher than he or she can handle.

Pruitt says that when she was a student, she wrote down all of her expenses, kept track of what her budget was and then purchased and partied on the excess money.

"If I couldn’t (afford it)," she says, "I just didn’t buy it."

— Heather Lesco
Courtney Garrison, a senior Pan-African Studies major, leads a line of dancers at a jam in the Kent State Ballroom.
African-American and GREEK

A Lifetime Membership in the Black Greek System

By Jill Farrell King

In 1906, seven African-American men from Cornell University in Ithaca, N.Y. had a dream. They longed to start a fraternity much like the ones they were being excluded from in the white community on their campus. They struggled to grasp the dream that was alive and burning strong in their hearts and minds.

Today, men and women all over the world are enjoying the result of the efforts of those seven men. They founded the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., which was the first in the line of many African-American fraternities and sororities now thriving in hundreds of countries from Japan to Liberia.

Between 1906 and 1922, eight black fraternities and sororities were founded nationally by men and women assembled under the principles of unity and a desire to educate their members about their strong black roots. Six of them now have chapters at Kent State. All eight existed at Kent at one point, but two have been removed from campus — one for a hazing event and another for holding an unauthorized strip show on university property.

Four of the six organizations in Kent’s Black Greek system were founded at Howard University in Washington, D.C., which served as the foundation for most African-American fraternities and sororities. Most of Kent’s six fraternities and sororities originally existed only at predominantly black colleges, and it wasn’t until 1949 that Kappa Alpha Psi became the first Black Greek organization to be founded at Kent State. The others soon followed.

Tammy Matthews is the president of the Kent State chapter of the Zeta Phi Beta sorority. She believes the Black Greeks are very united and committed to serving their community and says this is partially a result of the struggle they went through to establish themselves.

“I think we’re close-knit and secretive because we work so hard for what we get and go through so much to get the letters we
Eric and Derek Spottsville, fraternity brothers of the Alpha Phi Alpha (Pi chapter), step in the Kent State University Ballroom.

"I think maybe we lost some of our leadership nurturing. At a predominantly black campus, you don't have other mechanisms pulling at your attention," Easterly says. "There is a friendlier atmosphere on campus because most black colleges are smaller schools. All of these things make a difference in the concept of being able to bond."

But Anthony Keys, vice president of Phi Beta Sigma fraternity at Kent, says having Black Greek organizations on a predominantly white campus gives African-American students a place where they can go to feel at home and be accepted.

Regardless of where the black sororities and fraternities were founded, history has shown that at most college campuses where the chapters exist, leaders have emerged and been discovered. In fact, there are famous members of various Black Greek chapters all over the world today.

Zeta Phi Beta has spawned such famous women as former Miss America Vanessa Williams and singer Patti LaBelle. Martin Luther King Jr. and Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall are among the more famous members of Alpha Phi Alpha. And according to Keys, Phi Beta Sigma is the only organization in the Black Greek system to have a member go on to become the president of a nation. Kwame Nkrumah was the president of independent Ghana in Africa, as well as a Phi Beta Sigma member.

Along with fostering famous members and world leaders, all of the Black Greek organizations at Kent State have established chapters globally.

Ben Hunnicutt is the president of Kent State's chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha. He says his fraternity has established chapters in many countries, including Liberia, Canada and Germany. Matthews says
her sorority claims over 500 chapters worldwide and was the first to institute chapters in Africa. The missions of the African chapters are based on the same principles and values as their American counterparts.

Pamela McCall, president of Delta Sigma Theta's Kent State chapter, says that because her sorority was founded as a public service organization, present members are still committed to helping their community.

"We were founded as a public service sorority because our founders didn't want to be a social sorority," McCall says. "They were looking for ways to uplift and give back to the community."

Members of Delta Sigma Theta recently worked with Habitat for Humanity and helped build a house in Cleveland. The Alpha Phi Alpha chapter at Kent State has a program called the Weekend Warriors. This is a program that the brothers engineered to help students use their time on the weekends for education. Members can go to the library to study, and the person who accumulates the most hours is awarded by having his books paid for.

Lesia Harsh, the publicity chair for Sigma Gamma Rho sorority, says her organization was founded under the doctrine of education. Present members have remained committed to the idea of academic excellence.

"One of our motives is to uplift young black women in the sorority," Harsh says. "We were founded by seven schoolteachers, so we stress the importance of academics."

Matthews says her sorority developed a program called the "Stork's Nest." This program involves Zeta Phi Beta members nationwide taking on a commitment to help African-American teen-age mothers.

"We set up shelters all over the nation to help counsel young African-American women and give back to the community," Matthews says. "We help a lot with sex education."

Students enjoy themselves at a jam in the Student Center Ballroom, which was held as part of a memorial service for a lost fraternity brother.

Photo By Jeff Camarati
Students crowd the dance floor in the ballroom to show their spirit at a dance held by Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.  Photo By Jeff Camarati

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Most physicians at Robinson Memorial Hospital are independent practitioners.
Members of the Black Greek system say they do make an effort to program charity events with the White Greek system. Members of Delta Sigma Theta and Sigma Gamma Rho held an ice-skating party last winter to raise money for PEC School.

Londell Smith, a member of Kappa Alpha Psi, says that although the effort isn’t always successful, his fraternity is open to help with programming.

“We encourage any organization to help us,” Smith says. “It doesn’t even have to be a Greek organization. We’re always open to assistance.”

Marvin Peek, a member of and adviser to Alpha Phi Alpha, says he believes a big difference between the two Greek systems is the range of commitment expected when joining. Peek says the Black Greek system expects its members to be active for life, and, therefore, many members become advisers and establish graduate chapters.

“Once you become active, you are active your whole life,” Peek says.

“There’s no de-pledging going on. You’ve crossed those lines and are a brother, whether you want to be or not further down the road.”

Peek says another reason Black Greeks don’t leave one organization to join another is because certain things, such as handshakes and passwords, are learned upon membership and can’t be passed on to others.

Elizabeth Boyer-Miles, adviser and member of Zeta Phi Beta, says she believes the White Greek experience is viewed as a college experience only, that after graduation, the commitment ends. She says that isn’t the case with Black Greeks.

“It’s not just a college experience,” she says. “It’s a lifetime experience.”

Organizations in the Black Greek system are also typically smaller than those in the White Greek system, mainly because many of the Black Greeks have stopped recruiting new members and have been participating in training programs at the national level due to past hazing problems.

Easterly says Delta Sigma Theta currently has only three active members on campus. She says they haven’t initiated any new members since 1992, chiefly because they decided to revise their program.

“We have a new membership intake program because of hazing problems.
in the past," Easterly says. "Once you pass the changes through the national level, you must then go through training."

The hazing problems were brought to light when the Kent State chapter of the Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority was suspended at the local and national levels for a hazing event that occurred during a pre-pledge week Feb. 4-8, 1991. Nine women, all who were members of Alpha Kappa Alpha, were accused of hazing 13 pledges, five of whom say they were paddled so severely that they all required medical care. One was hospitalized.

The nine members were found guilty of hazing and assault in county court and the sorority was dismissed from the university by Student Conduct Court.

But Dave Wallace of Sigma Phi Beta fraternity says hazing still goes on, despite efforts to curb it.

"I know in the black and white Greek systems, as far as fraternities go, it still goes on to some degree," Wallace says.

But Wallace says there are Greek organizations that believe some hazing is necessary to make potential members work to earn their letters.

Mccall says the episode with the Alpha Kappa Alpha's was unfortunate, but because it also happens elsewhere, it made people take a closer look at the seriousness of hazing.

"It was a shame that it did happen, and it shouldn't have happened," McCall says. "It made everyone look closer at the process, and the whole system was changed and revised as a result."

McCall says she doesn't believe the incident had a negative effect on her sorority's image directly but rather on the image of the Greek system as a whole, black or white.

The Omega Psi Phi fraternity also
has been removed from Kent's campus and denounced at the national level for its members' involvement in a strip show held April 30. Some members of the fraternity held the show in Oscar Ritchie Hall as an unauthorized part of the fraternity's 25th anniversary celebration. The men were discovered by a faculty member, and an anonymous letter and photo were sent to the Board of Trustees. Following recommendations from the national level, university officials suspended the chapter from the campus until 1997.

Smith says the incident with the Omegas was a shame, and he does think it was a negative strike toward the Black Greek system. He says the Black Greeks have been trying to stress the positive things they do in order to overcome the negative happenings, such as the suspension of the Omega chapter. "It put a damper on us, and it was a strike toward us as a system," Smith says. "It's another way for people to look down on us as the 'bad Black Greeks.' We're still trying to stress the positive things that we do because sometimes only the negatives get recognized.'

Harsh says it would be hard to predict the future of the Black Greek system because it largely depends on whether the organizations succeed in attracting qualified men and women to carry on the founding traditions. "As long as the chapters continue to instill in their members the history and original reasons they were founded on, then we can continue to grow," Harsh says. "But if we get sidetracked with wearing the letters and being a part of Greek life, then we may lose it."

— Jill Farrell King is a junior news-journalism major. This is her first contribution to The Burr.
I want to be a man for an evening . . . " That's what I told a roomful of people in August. The reaction: dead silence.

Really, I didn't think it would be that big of a deal. Haven't the Madonna videos and fashion magazines desensitized us yet to the concept of gender-bending? Men land contracts with modeling agencies to show off women's clothing. Female bodybuilders take male hormones so they can display their bulky muscles in tiny string bikinis.

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Photos By Beth Parsons
It's only when I cover smooth legs with jeans and smooth cheeks with hair that I understand the disbelief.

I am not doing it for as noble a purpose as some of my predecessors, such as Joan of Arc. I'm not donning a military uniform and jaunting off to defend something. I'm not pretending to be male to gain access to some haughty, all-male institution. I just want to see if I can do it.

I frequently get the feeling that answer is unacceptable, especially since I am a woman. Why do I want to hide my femininity, even if it's just for a night? Several of my male friends have dressed in drag, but none of my female friends have done so.

Females are socialized since Day One to be self-conscious about their appearance. The importance of other people's perceptions supersedes logic and comfort. Little girls wear ribbons and frills. Junior high school girls hike up skirts and overdo makeup trying to look like the models in Seventeen. Women throw away money on miracle face creams to look younger, tanning salons to look darker and now Wonderbras to make breasts look bigger. We'll never know how much human effort women have wasted throughout the centuries trying to make themselves look more womanly.

But here I am, with a 6-inch-wide Ace bandage wrapped around my chest atop a sports bra to flatten what I have been socialized to flaunt. It feels unnatural and constricting, yet strangely liberating. For the night, I am Jack.

FRIDAY NIGHT 6 P.M.

Wearing a green Eddie Bauer sweatshirt fresh from the thrift store, Doc Martins and a backwards baseball hat with a fish emblem leaping off the flap, I'm looking a little too grungy but male enough. I comb my hair into a loose ponytail. Otherwise, I look like a take-no-prisoners, disgruntled gas station attendant ready to gun down the next station wagon of Little Leaguers looking to fill up.

'CAN'T HAVE PEOPLE THINKING WE SERVICE THAT KIND OF PEOPLE HERE'

Before we leave the dressing room, I am preparing to have a blast. However, my friend, Brian/Bridget, is petrified. His black shoulder-length wig hides his face as he looks down at his Converse tennis shoes. So far, his choice phrases of the night have been along the lines of "I make a butt-ugly woman" and "I'm gonna get my ass beat."

I feel a tinge of sympathy. Only a tinge. While he won't walk anywhere by himself all night, I feel safer than usual. Too bad this goatee took so long to apply. I'd love to carry it in my backpack and slap it on whenever I feel scared walking by myself at night. Who needs guns or Mace for protection when a little believable facial hair could do the trick?

I think the night will go fine as long as I remember to sit with my legs open and resist the urge to rip off my goatee. It's as if the circle around my mouth has been tarred and feathered. Wayward strands of fake hair find their way up my nostrils. It's difficult to solve that problem politely. A pretty sure way to blow my cover is to keep inhaling my beard and choking on it.

THE MALL 7 P.M.

Our first stop of the evening. It should be a short one since we aren't allowed to be photographed in the mall as long as we're cross-dressers. "Nope," the mall manager said earlier. "Can't have people thinking we service that kind of people here."

I head to Victoria's Secret. Just as I walk into the store, looking disinterested and slightly embarrassed, two young guys walk out.

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As a woman, I fall somewhere in between Tony Curtis in *Some Like it Hot* and Dustin Hoffman in *Tootsie*.

I'm walking through the mall with a *Burr* photographer and am trying to look as inconspicuous as possible. My heart's trying to beat its way out of my chest. I spent a lot of time in malls when I was in high school, and I know that a man in drag would be an easy ass-kicking target for the redneck jocks who sometimes inhabit these retail jungles. The fewer people who notice me here, the better.

As we pass by a group of middle-aged women, one of them stops midsentence and taps her friends on their shoulders. In what can only be described as a stage whisper, she gasps, "That's a man!"

I tilt my head so that the wig I'm wearing hides part of my face, and I walk a little faster.

Cross-dressing as a cultural phenomenon goes back to the ancient Greeks and beyond. Native Americans recognized transvestites as a third sex and called them bordaches; Tahitians called them mahoos; Aztecs had the bardage.

Cross-dressers have run the gamut from being revered as religious leaders to being reviled as anarchists. Throughout history, they have included in their number such colorful personages as Roman emperor Caligula, New York and New Jersey governor Edward Hyde (1702-1708) and 300-pound transvestite/actor Divine.

All of this makes me wonder how people can be so rude. After all, if the governor of New York can promenade down the street in a dress with a parasol on his shoulder, why should my guts be in knots over a quick trip in drag through a shopping mall?

If I were a quadriplegic, most people would at least be polite enough to cluck their tongues in pity only after they were out of my line of sight. Or if I were an Indian woman, wrapped from head to toe in a sari with a big red dot on my forehead, most people would wait until they were out of earshot to say something stupid like, "Did you see that? That's a real Indian!"

As a man in drag, though, I get no respect. I get stares from middle-class women who point and, with increasing volume, say, "Oh my Gawd!"

What if I were just a big ugly woman? Would they be offended if I told them to close their mouths before they swallowed a fly?

When we walk into Victoria's Secret, the salesclerks avoid us as tactfully as they can. I don't know why. After all, we're just two girls out shopping for underwear.

"Do you need pajamas?" the photographer asks me, trying to sound casual.

"Not really," I say. "Let's look for something purple. I like purple."

We locate a few over-priced, frilly purple things. I figure they don't have my size. No one's staring, but I'm starting to get paranoid. I feel like I'm having a panic attack. I walk the photographer briskly out of the store and back to the car.

The photographer and I hook up with Jacquie/Jack in the parking lot. I want to get back to the safety of the car before anyone else sees me.

When we get to Kent, we make a pit stop at Taylor Hall. I use the women's restroom, and then hook up with Jamie, my male "date" for the evening.

The Ground Round is a nightmare.

I'm cursing my constricting tights, cursing my uncomfortable wig and cursing my friend Jacquie for ever talking me into this. She only had to paste on a fake beard and wrap a bandage around her chest. I'm walking into a crowded restaurant in a skirt, scared to death that I'm going to get jumped in the parking lot and feeling more self-conscious than I ever have in my life. Jamie doesn't act like he's enjoying this any more than I am.

I manage to keep my face hidden

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"Yes!" says one behind my back. "I'm not going to say a thing!"

Strike one. I drop my head and walk away from the saleswoman, who is avoiding me anyway. I wander around the pajama section (I just can't propel myself toward the real lingerie). What am I doing wrong? I thought I had the walk down — legs apart, arms slightly away from the sides. Now it feels so awkward. I can't figure out what to do with my small, bony hands, and I am sure my goatee is flaking under the bright lights. Three minutes later, I flee.

I have no balls.

I hide myself in an aisle of a shoe store and then venture to the men's section of Kaufmann's. While riffling through a table loaded with dress shirts, I realize that I look as wrong here as I do in Victoria's Secret. Guys who look like me (as a guy) hang out at Metallica concerts, tattoo parlors and monster truck pulls, not in suburban shopping malls.

I am thinking escape. Soon I am outside in the sanctuary of darkness, but I came out the wrong entrance.

Panic. What if I have to ask someone for directions?

Thankfully, I see Brian/Bridget clutching his purse and scurrying his stocking-clad legs toward my car. "You owe me big time," he seethes.

I think of an appropriate way to lighten the mood. A "Come on, buddy, you could be wearing high heels" slap on the back? How about a heartfelt "I'm sorry" whisper? In his condition, I just don't know what would work.

Then his mood softens. "Do I look anything like a woman?" he asks me, a hint of disappointment entering his voice.

"Well, you do have very beautiful eyes," I tell him.

DINNER
8:30 P.M.

My date for the evening, Heather, with her good personal hygiene and lack of big hair, looks as if she belongs with someone tons classier than Jack.

The waitress doesn't let on that she suspects anything, except for a smile and maybe a quick wayward glance or two. A couple of friends show up to make Heather and me look more like a couple.

"Hey, Jack, pass any classes last semester?" one of our conspirator friends asks. I grunt.

The food comes, and I determine that gyro sauce contains some chemical property that counteracts the face glue that had previously adhered the goatee to my skin. I watch the hairs flit with every jaw movement. It looks as if there is an animal on my chin crawling up every time I chew.

"Stop wiping your mouth so much," Heather scolds. "And don't talk so loud. There's a piece of something on your lip... No, the other side... Um, no, to the left... Here."

When we finish, I make a trip to the men's restroom. No one is there. I make sure I leave the toilet seat down before I leave.

On the way back to the car, Heather keeps saying that we should have

Continued on page 30
from the hostess until we sit down at our booth. She doesn't get a good look at me until she hands me a menu. Her eyes bug out and she stammers, "Your waitress will be right with you."

Our waitress, God bless her, manages to keep a straight face throughout the whole ordeal. But she seems to hurry from our table as quickly as possible. Jamie orders an appetizer; I order a salad. We both want to escape from here as fast as we can.

The couple sitting right behind me talks about us for a full 10 minutes. A woman walks by with a toddler and does a double take. She looks at me. She looks at Jamie. She shakes her head and walks back to her table. Then she points at me and makes sure that everyone at her table turns to stare at me.

The whole time, I'm looking right at them thinking, "WHERE ARE YOUR FRIGGING MANNERS? YES, I'M A MAN! I SPELL M-A-N!"

The minutes tick by slowly. We finally get the bill. I leave a note with the tip that reads: "Thanks for keeping a straight face."

I know one of the hostesses at the Ground Round. She finally recognizes me as we are on our way out and nearly goes into shock. Someone else in the restaurant says, "There sure are some freaky kids going to college these days."

Jacquie and I get our makeup retouched at about 10 p.m. Her beard's falling off. Mine's popping up through my blush.

The touchup doesn't even take half as long as the initial makeup. I had to start my evening sitting in a chair for an hour while Gina, my makeup artist, prodded around my eyes with pencils and applicators and did her best to cover my chronic five o'clock shadow.

"You're doing great," she told me. "You're being really patient."

"Just call me Job," I said.

Jacquie gets a fix of spirit gum (a goopy adhesive for fake hair). I get a few puffs from a compact and some fresh lipstick. I honestly don't know how women can go through this blush, eyeliner, eyeshadow and mascara ritual every single day — all the while wearing a bra that digs into their ribs and styling hair that falls into their faces.

I've got a runner in my tights, and my pillow-stuffing breasts are starting to itch. That's a shame because they're perky. They are, in fact, the perkiest breasts I've ever had the pleasure of coming in contact with. If they didn't itch so much, I'd probably keep them.

I quietly pray for midnight, so I can turn back into a man.

I feel more comfortable at the Town Tavern on Franklin Avenue than I have the entire evening. The guy at the door barely raises his eyebrows at me when I show him my driver's license. Jacque and I are with a crowd of friends, and the photographer is taking pictures all over the place. Some drunk guy at the bar turns to one of my friends and, in a voice dripping with cheap American beer, asks, "Is that a guy?" I smile, wave and down a Kamikazee.

Word quickly spreads down the bar. After that, nobody pays any attention to us, except two gay guys who keep looking at me and laughing. I smile, wave, and down a shot of Jack Daniels.

On our way out of the bar, I spot one of my professors. He looks drunk. As I walk by, he looks at me with wide eyes and starts babbling, "Oh... oh boy... " I ponder dropping that class.

A brief word from Deuteronomy (22:5):

"A woman shall not wear anything Continued on page 31
parked closer to the restaurant. Someone throws an egg out of a truck at us. He misses.

**THE BAR**

**11:15 P.M.**

Soon we find ourselves on the strip. As I walk down Franklin Avenue, I feel out of place amid the pizza vendors and the people of various levels of intoxication who pass me on the sidewalk. Other versions of this feeling have come over me in the past. Walking across campus with the hem of my skirt caught in my pantyhose comes to mind. I know I’m bending some sort of conduct code, breaking some sort of rule. It’s as if I’m walking down the supermarket aisle taking items out of other people’s shopping carts. Saucer eyes. Swivel heads. Is she really doing this? Is this for real? I catch my bearded reflection in the window of a parked truck. Yes.

But Brian/Bridget is definitely the attention-getter of the two of us. We head to the Town Tavern.

'I ADMIRE THE DEEP, RED WELTS ON MY CHEST AND SHOULDERS LEFT FROM MY SELF-INDUCED TEMPORARY BREAST REDUCTION'

The bouncer smiles at me when I give him my ID. He doesn’t have any doubt about my true gender, and I’m glad to add some variety to his evening. He even tells Brian/Bridget that he looks good. I order a beer and a Kamikazee for Brian/Bridget. My voice has whispers of female in it. The middle-aged bartender stares at me for a few seconds and then decides not to say anything. I unsuccessfully attempt to carry the drinks like a real man. A guy stares at me, confused, from the bar. I pucker my lips and kiss the air at him. He turns away, and I decide that was fun.

Drinking my beer, however, is a disappointment. When I had practiced drinking like a man the previous weekend, I had forgotten that there would be porcupine spikes glued to the skin above my top lip. I see an old friend and bump into him. He glances up once, looks back, looks shocked and then realizes it’s me. We laugh. His friends take a picture of us. Brian/Bridget introduces himself as “the other part of the experiment.” Pretty soon, I’m not even bothering with my wanna-be guy voice.

After an hour, we are back on the strip again, dodging comments and walking quickly. I don’t wait to get to the car before I start ripping off my facial hair. When I walk into my apartment, I admire the deep, red welts on my chest and shoulders from my self-induced temporary breast reduction. The only thing more uncomfortable than flaunting femininity is concealing it. As I pull on jeans that fit me and swab ruby red across my lips, I realize I have no desire to cross-dress again anytime soon. But I may invest in a stick-on beard and a baseball cap. For safety purposes.

‘CROSS-DRESSERS HAVE RUN THE GAMUT OF BEING REVERED AS RELIGIOUS LEADERS TO BEING REVILED AS ANARCHISTS.’

—Jacqueline Marino is a senior majoring in journalism and political science. This is her second contribution to The Burr.
THE ONLY THING MORE UNCOMFORTABLE THAN FLAUNTING FEMININITY IS CONCEALING IT.

that pertains to a man, nor shall a man put on a woman’s garment, for all who do so are an abomination to the Lord your God.

Not a very tender sentiment, but looking in the mirror when I get home, I’m inclined to believe it. Abomination might be a stretch, but I make an ugly woman. I take off my wig and pull a dozen bobby pins out of my real hair. I smear cold cream on one side of my face, rinse it off and stare into the mirror.

There I am, beside myself. On one side, a man in a dress; on the other, an outrageous parody of womanhood. I rub my face raw taking the makeup off.

A shower, a change of clothes and a bottle of malt liquor later, I’m a man again. My head aches from the tight wig, my groin aches from the even tighter tights, and both of them are telling me my career as a female impersonator is over.

In the last eight hours, I have broken just about every gender taboo in the book. I have looked into my feminine side and discovered . . . there’s not much in there.

It’s just as well, I suppose. I couldn’t survive for long in pantyhose, and I was starting to like those pillow stuffings way too much.

‘YOU GOT A POINTY BRA, 10-INCH WAIST, LONG BLACK STOCKIN’S ALL OVER THE PLACE, BOOTS, BUCKLES, BELTS OUTSIDE. WHATCHA GOT IN THERE YER TRYIN’ TO HIDE?’

— WHAT’S INSIDE A GIRL BY THE CRAMPS

It’s good to be back in my hairy, masculine guise. No bra, no pantyhose, no lipstick. Just me, a bottle of beer and an abundance of testosterone.

I lean back, let my gut sag out and wonder how women do it every day. Dunno, I think as I take a swig of beer. Some mysteries men just weren’t meant to solve, no matter what they’re wearing.

— Brian Albright is a senior magazine journalism major. This is his first contribution to The Burr.

Costume designers and makeup artists for this article were Lisa Kozminski and Gina Gornik.
We’re lazy. Slackers. All we do is whine. We’re just spoiled crybabies. That’s the rumor, anyway. The rumor of Generation X.

Once known only as the name of Billy Idol’s punk band, “Generation X” has mutated into a brand, burned into the hide of some 40-odd million people unwittingly born, roughly, between the years of 1965 and 1975. The babies of the Boomers. The “twentysomethings.”
**Brand X**

Though Generation X lends itself to almost as many definitions as there are people under the label, it is loosely defined as a generation without a future. We stereotypically share a communal sense of hopelessness because of a bleak economic outlook, a future of low-paying, go-nowhere jobs, an increasing national debt, depletion of the ozone layer and the ever-present threat of AIDS. We have no Red Scare. We have no Cold War. We have no Vietnam. Some say we have nothing at all.

Because we twentysomethings have no apparent, major issue to combat collectively, many outside the circle have jumped to call us apathetic and lazy, expecting everything to be handed to us — something many Xers resent.

"For them to say, 'Well, you're in the 13th generation (Generation X), this is who you are: you're a failure. You don't value anything, and you don't hold any ideals true' — to me that's an insult," says Kevin West, a 20-year-old advertising major. "I just think it's a bunch of crap."

Sam Busby, a 22-year-old secondary education major, says having lazy people in a generation is nothing new.

"I think there are lazy people in our generation, but there were Eddie Haskells back in Beaver Cleaver (days), too," he says. "If maybe in 10 years, no one comes out and does anything (to make changes), then I'll say we were lazy. But we haven't really had a chance yet."

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**‘I don’t think Ethan Hawke or Winona Ryder can speak for who I am’**

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**The Flak About Slack**

Since Richard Linklater's 1991 film, *Slacker*, the term has become synonymous with the twentysomething generation. As a film, *Slacker* is a moving collage that splices together the seemingly pointless lives of several young people in Austin, Texas. It also helped to define a generation, while creating a reference point for films to come.

Once Generation X became a sort of entity, moviemakers tried to hit the market bullseye with films that were supposed to talk to Generation X. Movies like *Singles* and *Threesome* were born. Then there was *Reality Bites*, which was deemed the Generation X movie.

Moviemakers then discovered one thing typifying Generation X is true — it has its cynics.

"The movies *Singles* and *Reality Bites*, if you take them from a cinematic view, they're OK movies," West says. "But if you take them from a Generation X perspective, it's crap. I don't think Ethan Hawke or Winona Ryder can speak for who I am, or necessarily, who the general populace is."

In *Reality Bites*, Winona Ryder plays a recent college graduate who, while working on a documentary about her friends' lives on the side, works as a production assistant for a tyrannical talk show host. Ethan Hawke plays a "slacker" who has been fired from 12 jobs and spends his time smoking and staring at the TV all day.
Eventually, Ryder's character loses her job, runs up a $400 phone bill calling the psychic network and lives off a gas credit card her dad gave her for graduation.

West says that as a college student who worked three jobs over the summer — one in retail, one at a movie theater and one teaching tennis lessons to inner-city children — he just couldn’t relate to the slacker image portrayed in the movie.

Kristin Roof, a 22-year-old education major who waitressed to put herself through school, shares West’s view.

“I’d say a lot of those (in Generation X) are going to school full time, which is a job, and waitressing, bartending — working these terrible jobs just to put themselves through college. So how can they say we’re lazy?’’

**Media Blitzkrieg**

Ask someone in the X generation where the label comes from, and it is almost guaranteed that he or she will say the media.

But before becoming the media’s darling, it was a book.

In 1991, author Douglas Coupland, himself a twentysomething at the time, opened a can of worms he never anticipated.

His book, *Generation X*, details the lives of three characters in their 20s who quit their meaningless jobs to travel the country searching for meaning in their lives, while desperately trying to cling to the fantasy of decades past.

Coupland’s book unwittingly gave the media just the words they were looking for, and it’s been downhill ever since, students say.

“The attitude comes from living in a culture where everything is handed to you, and you’re told what to think by these news organizations,’’ says 20-year-old John Cockrell, an international relations major. “You’re not told to think of what the term Generation X means or what the people in it mean. You are just told by Dan Rather these are the characteristics of Generation X: they sit around wearing flannel shirts bought from May Company, they have ripped jeans and they’re down on themselves.’’

From the media, the convenient package of Generation X snowballed into a marketing tool for other industries, says 18-year-old Karen Meehan, a fashion design major.

“I think the media had to have something to call everyone,’’ she says. “Then they decided to make money on it and started the fashion industry with the grunge look and the movies that are supposed to cater to Generation X.”

Some in the media admit the phrase is their creation but add that the media is only making a name for information they’ve drawn elsewhere.

“I think the whole phrase is media-generated, but I don’t think the label is too representative of the group as a whole. I think it’s just generalities,’’ says Carl Chancellor, columnist for the Akron Beacon Journal.

“Those generalities are usually fielded by (marketing) surveys. The media compiles the surveys and gives it a picture. When the media picks up a survey, and it has sexy little aspects to it — once it’s put in the local media, then the national media, it becomes magnified.’’

Kevin Johnson, pop music critic at the Beacon, says the label is simply a “tagline” by the media that really has no meaning.

“(The label) caught on, and it’s a catch term that everybody uses despite that fact that the people who tend to fall into those categories don’t really acknowledge those tags.”

**Boom or Bust?**

Members of Generation X have been referred to as “baby busters,” since they were born during the time of declining birth rates. Generation X is the first age group ever to be fewer in number than the one before it.

But like a poppy seed under an old man’s dentures, Xers are becoming a nuisance to their bigger, older counterparts.

Busters are blaming Boomers for the “messes” they have left behind for their children to fix. They resent that Boomers got the good jobs and free love, while the Busters get jobs at Taco Bell and the threat of AIDS.

Boomers say Busters should quit whining.

On campus, the Boom-or-Bust fire thrives.

“I think Generation X is an unfair label put on our generation because we’ve inherited this crappy world,” Busby says, referring to pollution and the economic conditions. “We’ve been brought up in a fantasy world, but yet, we get this reality. I think the stereotypes are just an excuse for what (earlier generations) messed up, basically. They just want to put it on us.”
Amy Courtney, a 20-year-old chemistry major, says the Boomers' view of Generation Xers might be somewhat true but says Xers are justified in their actions. "We're just trying to be ourselves," she says. "We'll do whatever we have to do to survive. I think we have a lot more to worry about than older generations. They didn't worry about AIDS. We're into ourselves, but we have to be."

Sarah Jess, an 18-year-old fashion design major, agrees. "I'm trying to be concerned with myself," she says. "If I worried about everything else...that just wouldn't be good. That seems the same with everyone else. I don't see (other Xers) worrying about the national debt."

But others are worrying and believe they've been unfairly labeled. "All the generations before us have been labeled after they've done something," West says, "but we haven't had a chance to do anything yet. We haven't had a main event to bring us together for us to decide what we want to be."

But from a sociological standpoint, Boomers and Busters have more in common than they realize, says Susan Roxburgh, assistant professor of sociology. "What all these labels share is a kind of idea that youth is about being different from your predecessors, that being part of the establishment is a negative," she says. "I think the Beat Generation, the '60s and Generation X will share that point of view."

Issues of X

Members of Generation X might not have Vietnam, but they do have definite opinions about what's important to them and their futures.

"I think AIDS is a big issue in this country. It should be," says Manuela Fernandes, a 25-year-old journalism graduate student. "So many of my friends have suddenly been writing to me that they're getting tested for HIV, people I never thought would."

For Cockrell, government issues are the top of the list. "The political system needs to be changed. It's too business-dominated," he says.

Cockrell believes an improved economy would clear up other problems facing our generation, such as racism and poverty. "Economic problems, in my opinion, are the root of every problem in the world," he says. "If you keep people with full stomachs and roofs over their heads, you're not going to have any problems. But without a good economy, that's when all the problems start. That's when the racism comes in. That's when the radical solutions come into effect."

The environment is also a big concern among the generation. Busby, who considers himself a "tree hugger," says he is concerned about pollution because he was brought up in a town where steel mills were all one could see for miles. He recalls one day in junior high when he wore a white shirt to school. When he came home, his forearms were black with soot from his desktop. Now, he says, he makes every effort to recycle to do his part for the environment.

Cockrell says it's important for young people to get involved in what is going on because older people in
legislation "are going to be dead, and we're going to be living in the prime of the problems."

On the Homefront

According to a Newsweek article, divorce touched one million children a year in the 70s and 80s. Those children are now the adults and young adults of Generation X.

Some say this has lead to skepticism about the institution of marriage and further entrenched the stereotypical sense of hopelessness on the part of Generation Xers.

"I think, in a way, people are accepting divorce as a norm," says Meehan. "They don't believe there could be a family. That it's a fairy tale. Families break up."

Jason Stewart, a 22-year-old geography major, agrees with Meehan. "Marriage has less of a meaning than it used to," says Stewart, a newlywed. "People think, 'If it doesn't work, I can bail. It's only five grand to get divorced.'"

But Roof has hope for the future. "I was raised in a very old-fashioned small town. Everybody says they believe marriage is forever," she says. "I'm still very into the white picket fence, the 2.5 children idea. That's what was instilled in me."

Horrid Horizons?

Generation X is predicted to be the first generation that fails to surpass the standard of living of the previous generation. And these days, a college degree guarantees nothing.

"It is true. Jobs are harder to come by with a bachelor's degree, and compensation to those college-educated has not kept up with price levels," says Eng Seng Loh, assistant professor of economics.

Despite the bleak economic outlook, students at Kent State believe hard work pays off.

Stewart doesn't believe he'll have a hard time finding a job. He is willing to accept a job below his expectations, if that's what will get him by until he can move on.

Roof says some think that older, successful people began their careers in their current positions.

"The misconception is that you get out of school and make millions of dollars," says Roof, "but if you've got the power, the drive and the ambition, you're going to get a job. The first one you get might not be exactly what you want, but I don't believe (students) are going to go out there and not find a job."

Everybody's All Alternative

Despite a possible dim economic future, twentiesomethings are being targeted as consumers because of the large amounts of disposable cash they have now, Loh says.

He says because people in their 20s are not getting married or are marrying later on, they generally have no house payments. This means they have more cash at their disposal.

"(Generation Xers) probably have more disposable income than before, but their prospects seem less than before," Loh says. "If they have a picture of a bleak future, they don't postpone consumption. They will spend now, not thinking about bills in the future and go into debt up to their necks."

According to the magazine American Advertising, members of Generation X spend about $125 billion annually on consumer products, with 'alternative' being the key marketing word. But cynical Xers don't buy into the marketing of alternative.

Meehan says the media has made it nearly impossible to be alternative because they've taken the attitude to the point of overkill.

"The word alternative is obsolete," she says. "There's really no such thing as alternative unless it's something really underground. People that used to be alternative were looked down upon, but now the media has made it something everybody wants to be."

West says the overabundance of thrift store-looking clothing in department stores has killed the idea behind the alternative attitude.

"I went to Coventry, and they're selling the same shirts (as the Salvation Army) for 48 bucks. This is capitalism. It's the same stuff alternative is supposed to go against," he says.
Cockrell agrees with the alternative marketing barrage. He says it hit its pinnacle during Woodstock's 25th anniversary with the "Woodstock '94" concert in August.

'Generations are changing. Expectations are changing. The world is changing. We're changing as a people, as a generation.'

"It was an obvious attempt to cash in on the name," he says. "The sad thing is you're hearing interviews with kids afterwards saying, 'This is our Woodstock.' That was never said at the first Woodstock. They (at Woodstock '94) are only saying this was their Woodstock because that's what people have told them in the papers or the Pepsi ads."

Changing Face of a Generation

There might have been a time when one could classify a generation by a label, but students say such a time is long gone. "I think (the label) is just something to categorize us," West says. "But you can't do that. There's too much diversity in our generation, and that's something that really hasn't happened before."

According to a Newsweek article, twentysomethings are actually the most racially diverse of any previous generation. The article supported its statement with these statistics: Generation X is 70 percent white, 13 percent black, 12 percent Hispanic, 4 percent Asian and 1 percent Native American.
The Baby Boomer generation is 77 percent white, the article said. As someone born in Uganda and raised in England, Fernandes doesn’t feel she fits the Generation X stereotype, although she does fit the age group.

“It seems like such an American sort of phenomenon,” she says. “I don’t really consider myself part of it.”

X-tinguished and X-pressionless

Not knowing exactly where it came from or what it exactly means, the busters, slackers and whiners under the X just hope one thing—that the “Generation X” label crawls back into whatever depths it came from, taking its stereotypes with it.

“It’s going to burn out. It’s a here-and-now type of thing,” Stewart says.

Roof sees it all fading in time.

“Generations are changing. Expectations are changing. The world is changing,” she says. “We’re changing as a people, as a generation. We’re adapting to the social environment and the world today, and (outsiders) are trying to analyze the changes our generation is making.”

“They analyze them. They stamp them. So now what?”

—Angela R. Gent is a journalism major. This is her second contribution to The Burr.

KURT COBAIN: NOT THE CHOICE OF A NEW GENERATION

Every generation has its icons and cultural stamps. Mention the ‘60s, and images of Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin and Woodstock jump to mind. But mention the words “Generation X,” and faces don an ashen expression. Grunge. Gang violence. AIDS. Deforestation.

And then there’s Kurt Cobain.

On April 8, Kurt Cobain, lead singer of rock group Nirvana, was found at his home, dead from a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head. The report came as a shock to the music world and Nirvana fans alike. And soon the news media began labeling Cobain—with his pained expressions and growling, angry vocals—a spokesperson for the disenchanted Generation X.

But many didn’t buy it.

“You can’t compare a rock star to an ordinary person,” says Sam Busby, a 22-year-old secondary education major. “We’re talking about a person who was habitually addicted to heroin. If he represents us, we’re in big trouble.”

Jason Stewart, a 22-year-old geography major, rejects the notion of Cobain as spokesperson, too.

“I like Nirvana—great band—but I’m not going to put Kurt Cobain on some pedestal because he’d had it with his problems and decided to end it all when he had other responsibilities (a wife and child),” he says.

John Cockrell, a 20-year-old international relations major, says by painting a picture of Cobain as a symbol of a generation, the media overlooked many other points of view.

“They don’t know about individual views,” he says. “They generalize that these people (Nirvana) were superpopular and their songs were about, at times, being depressed or pissed off. That does sum up a lot of feelings people have, but they sum it up in a nice little package for grandma and grandpa to see on the evening news: ‘These crazy, flannel-wearing youngsters want to commit suicide’ or something. But it’s not something you can sum up like that.”

Cockrell has a point. Generation X is a very diverse group in many ways, and to call Cobain, as Time magazine did, “the John Lennon of the swinging Northwest” is to ignore the millions of young people who never knew him or his music.

“Musical tastes of our generation are so diverse that you can’t say that,” says Kevin West, a 20-year-old advertising major. “You can walk down any dorm hall on campus, go into each and every room, and there’s going to be something different playing in every room.”

But there are some who think the media creation of Cobain as spokesperson could have merit.

“He showed the frustration,” says Kristin Roof, a 22-year-old education major. “Maybe (his drug use) is symbolic. Maybe that represents a generation—a generation that doesn’t feel a lot of responsibility, or feels frustration or feels unhappy with themselves. But I don’t think you can say that’s everybody.”

— Angela R. Gent
Typically, students spend so much time looking ahead that when someone dies, they are forced to do something unusual: look back

By Dana Mastropieri

Photos By Pat Burk
Death
My grandmother’s funeral was like a movie. The church parking lot was flooded because it was raining so hard. Inside, the sound of rain echoed through the church’s hollow interior. But it didn’t seem empty that day. I was certain it was filled with Grandma all around us, and she was the one tapping at the windows — not the rain outside.

One priest led three other robed men toward us at the back of the church. The priest held a long pole with a crucifix towering above him. Bells rang. Rain tapped. Incense burned. And it didn’t feel like Grandma was in that box in front of us.

The priest droned on through his funeral routine like an actor bored with his lines. He spoke absently about Grandma. He didn’t even know she emigrated from Italy to better the opportunities for her family. He didn’t know about the fantastic meals she cooked or the songs she sang. But her family knew. We remembered.

Memories of her smile, her walk and her broken Italian accent flooded over me.

Her legacy sat in the front pews, and I said goodbye the only way I knew how. I read Grandma’s eulogy.

—I still talk to her like she’s here. I pray to her more than any other saint. My mom is like my guardian angel now—

Poetry had poured out of me the night she died. It was the only thing I could do to ease my mind. As I then read my words, the rain got louder — as if she were applauding me.

Returning to college at the end of the long week, I felt I was leaving a part of my family behind. My grandmother suddenly became an ancestor who my future children would never know. I had to handle my emotions, so I again wrote down everything I felt — through endless pages of poems and short stories about our family, which had just lost its oldest leader.

College students who face a death in the family often have a difficult time dealing with their emotions. Typically, students live by a daily planner, focusing on things to come. They spend so much time looking ahead that when someone dies, they are forced to do something unusual — look back.

Danielle Filipelli, a third-year physics major, was forced to deal with her mother’s death while being away at college. Danielle was sitting in the hall outside her dorm room smoking a cigarette in April when she noticed her uncle and younger sister rushing toward her. She knew something was...
Danielle burst into tears when her sister told her that their mom had died in a car accident. Denial and fury overcame her as she threw all her belongings off her dresser, swore at the top of her lungs and tipped over the furniture in her room. She went home later that day and had to deal with family life without Mom.

Danielle says her father was an emotional wreck, and her sister was grief-stricken from witnessing the accident. She had to be strong for them while trying to hold her own emotions together.

After a long visit at home, including all her mom’s funeral services, returning to college became Danielle’s “own little paradise.” She could escape and forget about all of her problems when she was busy with school and friends.

Now, more than a year later, even though Danielle has tests and homework to occupy her thoughts, she still takes time each day to remember her mom, whom she calls her best friend.

“I still talk to her like she’s here,” Danielle says. “I pray to her more than any other saint. My mom is like my guardian angel now. I just tell her normal stuff like me and (my boyfriend) broke up, but it doesn’t matter because I like his best friend now. Or I tell her how I failed another test.”

Danielle says praying helps her fill the emptiness she feels without her mother in her life. That’s where Danielle’s Catholic beliefs act as a foundation in helping her deal with her feelings. “I still believe there’s a heaven, and that’s where my mom went,” she says. “That’s how I deal with her being gone.”

Danielle is one of many students who has taken a class at Kent State that deals with handling a death in the family. The class, “The Art of Living with Dying,” is taught by the Rev. George Gaiser from Lutheran Campus Ministries. Although it is centered on handling one’s own mortality, many students are taking it to deal with a family member’s death.

Gaiser conducts the class informally. The students develop a closeness, which he says is important because they share many of their greatest fears and secrets about life and death.

Danielle says she took the class to help her listen to and understand her father’s feelings.

“He’ll say, ‘I had a bad day. I cried a lot,’ and I change the subject,” Danielle says. “I hope this class will make me feel more comfortable listening to him.”

Jane, who asked that her last name not be used, also took the class and says it has helped her deal with losing her grandmother.

Jane remembers her grandmother as a strong woman who mowed her own lawn, nurtured a big garden and made endless crafts for the family. “Our whole Christmas tree is full of Grandma,” she says.

But Jane’s main reason for enrolling in the course was to help her boyfriend confront his feelings about his sister’s death in a car train accident and then losing his father only three months later.

Jane says the class has made her question her belief in heaven.

“Since the class started, I really wonder about religion,” says Jane, who is from a Christian family. "Now that
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I've heard so many different options, I don't know what to believe.”

Both Danielle and Jane say the class is not based on religion or a specific belief. Rather, it deals with feelings about death, and many times, religion is the main topic.

Jane’s boyfriend has a difficult time confronting the reality that his sister is gone. Jane says it affects her deeply because he is still in so much pain.

“He doesn’t deal with it,” Jane says as she begins to cry. “If I bring it up, he says not to talk about it. But he talks about his dad all the time.” Her boyfriend’s father and sister share a grave site, but he won’t even look at his sister’s tombstone. Jane says he feels that if he doesn’t acknowledge it, maybe it somehow won’t be true.

Jane says her boyfriend feels guilty about not spending more time at home when his sister and father were alive.

Dr. Cathie Scanlon, coordinator of Kent State’s Counseling and Human Development Center in White Hall, says that in many cases, people are overwhelmed by emotion and go through a denial stage when someone close to them dies.

They cannot begin to deal with it, she says, so they shut off their feelings and refuse to confront them.

Scanlon says the normal time for mourning varies. “If it’s a close family member, and it was unexpected, it may take a few years,” she says.
"Many people make a mistake and think the mourning period should be over sooner than it actually is."

Scanlon says that the hardest time to deal with death is after the funeral. She says people are expected to be upset at the wake and funeral, and those outside of the family give a lot of support to the person in mourning. After the funeral, however, the person in mourning is still trying to get over their grief. Many times, they do it alone.

When we left the church to bury my grandmother, it didn't turn out the way I had expected. The mausoleum was full of once-pretentious people who were afraid to think of their bodies in the ground.

We left Grandma in the lobby. My brother and I went to see my grandfather's stone in the mausoleum, where he had been for nine years.

Our aunt and other family members, who are now blurry to my memory, were also there. Instead of a marble slab in front of Pa's tomb, a small red curtain covered the slot, which was two casket-lengths deep. The tombstones went ceiling-high, and he was in the second drawer up. My aunt peeked behind the curtain and said, "Look, there's Pa's casket."

I saw it and froze. Its cream-colored wood conjured up memories from his funeral when I was 13 years old. My breathing quickened, and thoughts raced through my mind. I wanted to scream because I had realized so suddenly that his body was still in there. I don't know why I thought the casket would vanish when it was in the wall. I was forced to remember him not for his life, but for his death, which had affected me at such a young age.

I was no longer going to merely be away at college, not seeing them for a semester. I would never see them again. The reality of death waved through my body like nausea, and my mind replayed old memories for weeks afterward.

Now, all that remains of Grandma and Pa are the fond memories they gave me and the last name they left me, etched deeply in the rock.

— Dana Mastropieri is a senior journalism major. This is her first contribution to The Burr.
Dealing with Depression

How to help and understand

By Tiffany Morris

I hear the telephone ring, waking me out of my sleep. I turn and look at the clock. It is 3:30 a.m. I groan. I have to be up for work in two hours.

"Hello," I answer.

"Hi. It's me. Did I wake you?" my best friend asks. He is crying.

"Yes. What's wrong?" I ask.

"Could you come over?" he pleads. "I really need some help. I want to kill myself."

He had told me earlier that I might receive a call like this. He had been feeling strange lately, he said. But this phone call was more than I was prepared for. I left a note for my parents and went over to his house.

My friend has bipolar disorder, also known as manic depression. He had just started taking lithium to help stabilize his moods. The doctor warned him that he might experience a period of extreme depression before the medication took proper effect, and that was the root of the phone call.

Depression is a term almost everyone is familiar with. Even Abraham Lincoln knew it well. "I am now the most miserable man living," he once wrote. "If what I feel were equally distributed to the whole human family, there would not be one cheerful face on earth. Whether I shall ever be better, I cannot tell. To remain as I am is impossible. I must die or be better, it appears to me."

Depression is a normal reaction to upsetting situations, says Danielle Sims, the assistant director of the Psychological Clinic in Kent Hall.

But those who usually take advantage of the Psychological Clinic's services suffer from something more serious than a few days of unhappiness. Many of these people experience bouts of depression lasting for long periods of time — at least two weeks. They may have undergone some major change or changes in their normal living patterns. And they may be suffering from clinical depression, Sims says.

The inability to concentrate, feelings of extreme anger, changes in eating habits or sleeping patterns, reclusive behavior, hallucinations or delusions, guilt and suicidal thoughts are all symptoms of someone who is suffering from clinical depression, she says.

"For individuals who are depressed, there are varying forms of treatment, and certain treatments work better for certain individuals," Sims says. "Some may require medication, but medication doesn't work for everybody, and it's certainly not necessary for everybody. There are other forms of treatment that work on a talking cure, where it's therapy rather than medication. Often, both of these can be used together, depending on the individual and what their circumstances are like."

Sims says periods of depression may be triggered by an event — such as the loss of a loved one — that would cause almost anyone to become depressed.

"In that case, the individual may show symptoms of depression for a period of time, but that doesn't necessarily mean they have clinical depres-
“In that situation, you would expect it, and it really is normal. It’s only when that extends for a long period of time that you might start to feel concerned about that. A lot of things really need to be considered.”

Jeannine Monnier is a graduate student and counselor at the Kent Hall clinic. She says that once the counselor and client get to know each other, they begin to set small goals.

“People who are really depressed can’t get out of bed,” she says. “They won’t even brush their hair or take showers, so we start there with simple things. Once they see they can accomplish these small goals, they’re starting to feel better about themselves.”

In cases of bipolar disorder, which is different from clinical depression, the individual experiences periods of elation (mania) where he or she may feel invulnerable, act promiscuously, go on spending binges, sleep very little, behave recklessly or compulsively and generally have much more energy than they normally have, Sims says. The periods of depression match the symptoms of clinical depression, and the individual may feel hopeless.

This disorder becomes problematic when individuals do not wish to lose the manic state.

“There are positive aspects to having that manic state,” Sims says. “They may be extremely creative or productive. If they lose the energy level, they won’t feel as terrific.”

Those who suffer from bipolar disorder need medication to stabilize their moods because of the tendency for destructive behavior, she says. The most popular drug is lithium. Patients often must remain on the prescription for a long period of time.

The most popular drug prescribed for sufferers of clinical depression is Prozac, an anti-depressant, Sims says. There is a controversy in the medical field about the drug and its popularity.

“Usually what happens is the individual is prescribed one type of anti-depressant, and if that doesn’t work,
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People should know that medication isn’t offered as a panacea to fix all the problems that they have,” she says. “It takes work on the individual’s part, too.”

Paula, a Kent State student, is familiar with Prozac. She’s been taking it since her doctor suggested it about three years ago. “It helped me out of a bad situation,” Paula says. “I tried it because there was nothing else. It made me feel a lot better. It made me want to get out of bed and start going back into public.”

Paula says she tried to wean herself from the drug before but was unsuccessful. “I went off it for a while, then I started taking it again,” she says. “The doctor said it was a drug that should be taken for years. I just thought I was doing better, and I was sick of taking it. I don’t want to be dependent on anything.”

After she began to feel herself slide back into the cycle of depression, Paula then another one will be tried,” she says. “Usually they take a couple of weeks before they start to work. I think Prozac is probably the most widely known. The idea was that it seemed to have the least negative side effects. Now there’s a question about whether or not it’s actually prescribed for some people who don’t really need it.”

Sims says people run into trouble when they think the drugs are going to solve all of their problems.

‘Find out if the person is serious about suicide. If they have a plan and the means, you should consider calling someone. If they tell someone, then chances are they don’t want to kill themselves’
started back on her prescription. “I just hope not to be taking it all of my life,” she says. “That’s one thing that I find kind of disheartening. I don’t want it to be a crutch. I want to be responsible for my happiness.”

Monnier says society tends to regard mood disorders and therapy negatively. “I think that a lot of people are hesitant to come to therapy because they feel like they are going to get labeled, and other people will think differently of them, which is unfortunate,” Monnier says. “Some people who do come to therapy and end up staying in therapy often feel badly about themselves and that they had to come to therapy — instead of looking at it as something that’s good. It’s really strong to come to therapy, and it takes a lot of courage to do it.”

People don’t need to wait for things to get bad before deciding to seek help, Monnier adds. “You don’t always have to come in when you’re in crisis,” she says. “A lot of times, it’s more productive for people to come in when they’re feeling good about themselves because they are ready to make changes. When people are in a crisis, they are just trying to hang on, not necessarily better themselves. When you’re over your crisis and you are more relaxed, you can be introspective and think about why you do certain things.”

Both Sims and Monnier recommend talking. They say it is the best way to cope with mood disorders. “Encourage them to talk,” Sims says. “It doesn’t have to be to a mental health professional, just someone they feel comfortable talking with. Find out if the person is serious about suicide. If they have a plan and the means, you should consider calling someone. If they tell someone, then chances are they don’t want to kill themselves. If you feel it’s something beyond what you can deal with, you should call for help.”

I went to my friend’s house that night, trying to calm and reassure him. After a couple of hours, he finally fell asleep. I went home the next day and haven’t received any more early morning calls. He still takes lithium, but it’s no longer a big issue with him. He’s accepted the drug and the stability it provides.

— Tiffany Morris is a senior magazine journalism major. This is her first contribution to The Burr.

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Pamela Farer, coordinator of Psychological Services and Cynthia Terezis, a counseling specialist, are two of the several licensed psychologists who offer counseling at the DeWeese Health Center.

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**Places in the area that offer counseling:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psychological Clinic</th>
<th>University Health Services—Psychological Services</th>
<th>Kevin Coleman Mental Health Center</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location: Kent Hall</td>
<td>Location: DeWeese Health Center, Second Floor</td>
<td>Location: 5982 Rhodes Rd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room 303</td>
<td>Phone: 672-2487</td>
<td>Phone: 673-1347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: 672-2372</td>
<td>Hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday</td>
<td>24-hour Line: 673-6400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday and Wednesday and 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday, Thursday and Friday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fee: Free to Kent State students</td>
<td>Fee: Initial session is free. Additional appointments are $20 per session.</td>
<td>Fee: Sliding scale based on income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselors: Graduate students who are supervised by licensed psychologists.</td>
<td>Counselors: Licensed psychologists</td>
<td>Counselors: Licensed psychologists</td>
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They are everywhere. No facet of the media is safe from their constant bellowing. Radio stations nationwide broadcast their daily attacks on American society. Late-night television is plagued by their images for an entire mind-numbing hour. They even desecrate print journalism with their infuriating opinions. But the American public must tolerate this molestation of the mass media. Why? Because the Constitution guarantees freedom of speech — even to that conservative bigmouth Rush Limbaugh and that crude shock-jock Howard Stern.

Mr. Limbaugh (and I use the term “Mr.” lightly) bases his platform on the belief that this country faces doom and damnation at the hands of the liberals and their captain, Bill Clinton. During an episode of his radio show he said, “I’m hard-pressed to understand why anyone sees liberalism as hope for the future.”

OK, Rush. What about those conservatives you so highly praise? In an October 1993 National Review article, you named William F. Buckley Jr. as one of your heroes. You call Buckley “the epitome of conservative scholarship.” What sparked such admiration was an article Buckley published in Playboy magazine. “(Playboy is) a magazine I always scour for articles by conservatives,” you claim. So where are those high morals you claim for the conservative population?

But Limbaugh doesn’t just attack liberals in general. He has specific complaints, particularly with the Clinton administration. In his opinion, our government is in gridlock. He loves, even thanks God for, gridlock when liberals are in office. This is a counterproductive opinion for someone who preaches about the improvement of the nation. Should we, as citizens, approve the locking of governmental horns? Perhaps governmental officials should be more concerned with passing legislation to uplift the status of our country and less concerned with sticking it to the other party.

Fear not, liberals, for you too have a self-proclaimed spokesman. Crowned radio’s bad boy, Howard Stern followed in Limbaugh’s footsteps. He is now an author and late-night talk show host. This loud-mouthed liberal extremist is the epitome of vulgarity. Stern’s behavior brought on a $400,000 fine for his broadcasting company, Infinity Broadcasting Corp.

Stern’s antics cross the borderline of insult. He uses his outrageous style to hold the American public hostage. His platform consists of conservative-bashing, objectifying women and other abrasive topics. Stern is a sickening display of the abuse of the media. He has even devoted an entire segment of his show to sniffing the navel of a model who appeared as a guest. Even more disgusting is the pay-per-view New Year’s Eve special he billed as a benefit for John Bobbitt.

So, there they sit — high upon their self-made pedestals — Limbaugh on the right and Stern on the left. They turn up their noses to the world, criticizing and scoffing at anything that does not meet their standards. What turns my stomach more than Limbaugh and Stern, however, is the following the pair have drawn. Here’s a little tip to the cults of Stern and Limbaugh: The problem with putting someone on a pedestal is that they usually fall off. And chances are, they will land right on top of you.

Despite their accusations and attacks, every day, in some form or another, Rush Limbaugh and Howard Stern reach out to the American public. This little facade of the conservative Superman and the liberal Hero is all too transparent. In my opinion, the tights and the capes are part of the single biggest cry for attention this nation has ever seen.

— Jami Armintrout is a freshman pre-journalism major. This is her first contribution to The Burr.
ICONS OR IDIOTS?
and Howard Stern fit into society

Howard Stern is the voice of reason. He speaks to me in layman’s terms about sex, heavy metal and New York state politics: the things I try the most to relate to.

To anyone who claims to never watch television or read People magazine and is perhaps unaware of Howard Stern, he can be found on 98.5 WNCX-FM daily from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. Those who haven’t already, ought to check Stern out sometime. Besides, what else is there to do that early in the morning other than skip psychology?

Stern generally gets paired with ultraconservative Rush Limbaugh because both men began their careers in radio. Rush, however, can be found only on uncool, lo-fi AM radio. Both have become multi-media stars — branching out of radio into publishing and syndicated television.

If the world were a perfect, non-competitive place, Howard and Rush would be best buddies. Instead, they’ve become adversaries. But the thought of them being pals makes sense. They both tend to be a little misogynistic, meaning that they hate women. Well, Stern tends to be very misogynistic.

Limbaugh’s attitude is patronizing. He loves to belittle the “makeup babe” on his TV show. I can easily picture the two heading out to the bars on a Saturday night, drinking way too much beer and getting beaten up for hitting on someone’s girlfriend. Then they would crawl up Main Street en route to the apartment they rent, where they would vomit simultaneously, as comrades, into their filthy toilet. Feeling much better, the two would settle onto their living room couch to watch Porky’s III on USA: Up All Night before passing out.

To quote Rush, “That’s the way it ought to be.” But it isn’t. That’s where the similarities between them end. Many find Stern offensive and refuse to recognize his opinions. His only perceived agenda is to insult women for maximum shock value.

This is too bad. Stern’s funniest moments are often his most sexist. I feel bad about laughing, but I go ahead and laugh anyway.

Stern is doing important work through the media. He is redefining the American moral imperative, in terms of the First Amendment to the Constitution: Free Speech.

If Stern wants to talk about Cindy Crawford in crude terms, then more power to him. As if she would go out with him anyway. Stern realizes the importance of saying exactly what is on his mind. I would rather hear messages from Stern than from intellectuals like Gore Vidal or Norman Mailer, who also seem to hate women but are probably a lot less fun to hang out with.

This is crucial stuff in an age when political correctness is destroying our ability to think for ourselves. And we have Rush Limbaugh spoon-feeding fascist propaganda to the masses.

When he’s not being a creep, Stern gives equal time to chastising and laughing at groups such as the Ku Klux Klan or any radical conservative white people who are probably Rush Limbaugh fans. His rantings are mostly benign. He devotes too much airtime to objectifying women and is only intermittently political. He should be responding to Limbaugh’s spew. Stern recently made a bid for governor of New York as an independent, but he withdrew his candidacy before the primary. If Howard Stern ran for president, I’d vote for him in a minute. I bet President Stern would remove sin taxes on alcohol and tobacco, and everyone would have cable.

— Justin Mills is a senior history major. This is his first contribution to The Burr.
Howard Williams’ first pair of in-line roller skates was the 20th prize in a contest his mother entered four years ago. And they sure beat the third-prize coffeemaker she had won the week before, the senior economics major says. “I was always poking fun at my mom for entering contests and winning worthless things,” he says.

But when Williams saw the in-line skates, the street hockey fanatic immediately realized their potential. After a lot of practice and a little frustration, Williams mastered the in-line skating technique and was ready to take on his friends in street hockey. Not only did he “blow by” his buddies who were playing on foot, he says it took less energy to go a lot faster and last a lot longer.

“At the time, there was no such thing as Rollerblade hockey. But as soon as I saw them, I thought ‘hockey,’” he says. “After it caught on, I saw the other fun activities you can do with them.”

One “fun activity” was immediately so popular that all of his friends bought in-line skates within the next month. “I tied a rope to the back of my pickup truck,” he says, “and my friends pulled me around that night on the back roads of Greentown.”

At 40 mph, Williams says land skating was a rush. Until he fell.

“I was wearing all the proper protective equipment, so I was unscathed,” he says with a mischievous grin. Still, he recommends that all beginning in-line skaters buy pads — because they will fall. Guaranteed.

He’s got the scars to prove it.

“They make me look kind of tough,” he says, pointing to pink scars lining his knuckles. “Like I punched somebody. But that’s not what I did . . . I was Rollerblading.”

Other students have found in-line skating to be more than just a fun pastime. Rich Bibighaus, a sophomore physics major, says he started blading a year ago after his roommate talked him into buying in-line skates. Since then, he has come to depend on them for the quickness and ease of getting from place to place on campus.

“I used to live in Glenmorris, and it was fantastic because you roll out of bed and blade to class,” says Bibighaus, who now lives in Brimfield.

Toting on his back his bookbag stuffed with books, folders and a pair of shoes, Bibighaus says he quickly became familiar with the best places to blade on campus as he rolled from class to class. Finding flat surfaces became a mission.

“You just find out where they are,” he says. “You know the places to avoid and the places to go.”

Bibighaus recommends sidewalks and well-paved roads, but he avoids — at all costs — wet or sandy areas, rough asphalt and mulch. “Watch out for the mulch,” he says. “Mulch plays hell with you.”

Williams says he, too, often blades to class because, “when you’re on Rollerblades, it only takes you five minutes to get from one side of the campus to the other.” But changing back into shoes after getting to the building can be a hassle, especially when running late. Williams admits he sometimes forgoes the building rules and skates to his

Sara Stockert skates through the Kent campus on a fall afternoon.
classrooms. And even though he has the wrath of his professor to deal with, he says he has learned a great thing: dry linoleum floors are excellent for blading.

“The best is starting at the McGilvrey end of Kent Hall,” he says, “and you’re sprinting all the way down. It’s got to be a quarter mile inside. That’s one of the best surfaces... Nobody can catch you!”

Rollerblade “Lightnings” are considered the most commonly sold brand of in-line skates at Play It Again Sports in Chapel Hill Mall. They range from $139 to $180, according to Bob Douce, a Kent State student and sales representative at the shop. But a pair of official roller hockey in-line skates can cost as much as $220.

“Rollerblades are our biggest seller this year, by far,” Douce says, adding that people buy them for a variety of reasons, including wanting a new way to exercise, playing hockey and doing stunts.

Bibighaus says in-line skates are worth the expense because they are long-lasting and the individual parts, such as the wheels and bearings, are replaceable on Rollerblade brand skates.

“You fork out 150 bucks, and you have them a long time,” he says. “The boot and bottoms are virtually indestructible... Once you buy the boot itself, it’s relatively cheap after that.”

Sara Stockert, a sophomore human movements major, says she began in-line skating over the summer, “inspired” by the students she saw skating across campus.

“I saw the start of it last year, and now you can look out the window and there’s always people Rollerblading,” she says. Despite the fact that she is a beginner and has only recently learned to stop and skate backward, Stockert says she is not afraid to face the most
glaring obstacle for any beginning in-line skater — hills.

“If you’re really going fast down a hill, you can’t just put your brake out,” she says. “You have to coast until you’re going slow enough to use your brake.”

And people who stand in her way, beware. “If someone comes, I have no way to stop,” she says. “I just yell, ‘Watch out! I’m coming through.’”

Having grown up in a small town, Stockert says she sometimes feels a little self-conscious skating at home because people look at her as if she’s “from the moon.” But she says in-line skating is here to stay, even if it takes a while to catch on.

In-line skating seems to have become a common hobby among health-conscious individuals. Because of their practicality, Williams says the trend will not be forgotten. “If it is (a fad),” he says, “it’s probably one of the biggest ones we’ve ever known.”

— Julie Ralston is a sophomore journalism major. This is her third contribution to The Burr.

In-line skating is becoming more than a recreational activity. Many students use the skates as a convenient mode of transportation.

Students from Kent Roosevelt High School play roller hockey at a local church.
Country music becomes the latest twang

By Elizabeth Mach and Dana Mastropieri

Frank Lattimore, a disc jockey for WKSR, says there is a big distinction between old and new country. "Today's country has a modern dance style," he says. "The older stuff was sit-back-drinking, tears-in-your-beer stuff."

Lattimore's interest in country line dancing and country music was sparked a few years ago. "I used to be a ballroom dancer," he says. "It was my forte. I wanted to learn this new dance I heard so much about, and in one visit I was hooked."

Lattimore was a DJ at the Diamond Armadillo, a Cleveland-area bar that is now closed. "Being a dancer myself, I would do a lot so the dance floor stayed alive," he says. "When I had the opportunity, I would jump down and dance, too."

Lattimore says people are becoming interested in country because of the interaction in country-western clubs. "They're different than Top 40 clubs," he says. "The people are nicer. People come together to have a good time."

Bob Tober, an owner of the Boot Scootin' Saloon, says he and the three other owners decided to open the club after noticing the uprisings of country music across the United States, which originated out West and has migrated to the East. The owners thought a country line dancing club would be successful in this region.

"People are tired of the music out now," Tober says. "Country is not what it used to be. Older people like the older music, but the newer music is like a boogie-woogie country. Mostly the change in music is the reason for the sudden interest."

Kent State also has caught on to the country trend. Senior English major Tracy Ropp provides country line dancing lessons on Tuesday and Thursday nights in the Gym Annex through the aerobic department of intramurals. "I know about 40 dances by heart and about 60 in general," says Ropp, who learned dances from her aunt and by watching others.

About 20 people attend the class regularly, says Patty Boyd, assistant director of the intramurals department. "It's amazing how big the class has gotten," Boyd says. "She (Ropp) works her butt off. The class goes out together to country-western bars. It's because of her it got so big."

Ropp says she has been exposed to country music all her life. "I went through my rock 'n' roll stage in high school, but when I came to college, I became obsessed with it (country)," she says. "To me, when we dance, I get energetic, hyped up. It's like a natural high. To me, it's a great stress reliever."

Ropp says she believes the recent popularity of country music is only temporary. Lattimore disagrees. "When country started to get popular, I thought it was going to be a fad, but line dancing started about six years ago," he says. "Now, it's gone past the fad and has become a culture."
Side by side, line dancers kick, turn and shuffle in unison.

The 3,500-square foot, hard-wood dance floor at the Boot Scootin' Saloon provides plenty of room for dancers to kick up their heels.

Packed dance floors are becoming common sights at many country bars.
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