editor’s letter:

I didn’t want this semester’s issue of The Burr to be a static magazine, something readers would pick up and say, “Huh, interesting” and then throw aside and forget. I wanted to cover issues that were alive, evolving and relevant. Most of all, I wanted this to be a resource for you — to show how you are affected by these stories every day.

Cary Smith and Randi Petrello explore the effects of poverty in the Portage County area and what that means for Kent State and the people of this community working through slow economic times.

We also take a look at students empowering themselves via roads less traveled. Josh Cribbs lets us peek at his life of football, marriage and fatherhood as a college junior, while Rachel Myers gives us a first-person account of her experiences in Afghanistan this summer.

The magazine is filled with stories about your college, county, country and world. I hope you not only enjoy them but also remember them.

Dana Curcio
Editor
The war debate
Everyone has an opinion. Not everyone knows why. See what Kent State student Brian Pearsall (right) and four other individuals have to say about war, conflict and what facts anchor their beliefs.

Close to home
Thirty years ago, the McElrath community in Ravenna Township was one of the most poverty-stricken neighborhoods in the nation. Today residents are still looking for hope from a center Kent State helped build.

Unarranged romance
Two Asian Indian women and their boyfriends tell their stories of defying tradition, dating in secrecy and finding love beyond culture and beliefs.

Risky business
Owners of small stores know what it takes to stay afloat as the presence of chains and big businesses grows in the Kent area.

Josh Cribbs
Although most know him as Kent State's star quarterback, Josh Cribbs plays a very different role at home when he trades the pigskin for a diaper bag.

Afghanistan
Rachel Myers shares stories of her three months in Afghanistan working for the media, visiting refugee camps and learning about humanity.

The real world Kent
Think MTV can show you what life is like? Read how one group of students cope with the real issues that arise when six people live together.

Leading ladies
See what obstacles still exist for college-aged women in executive positions and how they learn from those who have paved the way for them.

CyBurr exclusives
Check out stories about professor Owen Lovejoy, stem cells and predictions on music, fashion and technology.

www.burr.kent.edu
Lifting one community out of poverty is still a work in progress

A white porcelain kitchen sink stands out among the fall colors invading the inside of what was once a house — now only a pile of wood giving way to a cross section of rooms no longer inhabited. The roof has collapsed. Few walls are intact, but the structure remains. Of the surrounding houses left standing, most look as though they could topple any minute. Stripped cars litter yards. Speed limit signs are twisted and spray-painted with the word Crip. Windows are sealed with cardboard instead of glass.

And all 15 minutes from Kent State.

"This area used to be the third worst rural ghetto in the United States," says Sandra McKinney, director of the King-Kennedy Center in the McElrath community. "It's gotten better since then, but we can still use all the help we can get."

The King-Kennedy Center came to Ravenna Township's McElrath neighborhood, where there was no sewer system available until 1974, when a local church provided a building and financial help. The center was started by Kent State and the McElrath Improvement Corp. and has since been funded mostly by the United Way of Portage County. It is six miles from campus and works today to keep the area in a stable, livable condition.

McKinney says King-Kennedy began as a multi-faceted project, the first part being the center and the second a gym, which was never built. However, it currently has the only basketball court in the area. McKinney says it is the only center of its kind in the United States that students have built.

"You may not have been there for the first part," she says, "but you can be there for the second part."

McKinney says the area used to have no streetlights, no paved...
Sandra McKinney, King-Kennedy Center director, is in charge of one of the largest social projects ever created by students. Students can donate to the center by checking off a box on their tuition bills.

A sleeping bag lies on the floor of an empty house in the McElrath community. Streets and no running water. Houses were pieced together. People would dump their trash here.

"It's a lot better than what it was, but there's a great deal of improvement that can be done," McKinney says. "We're finally moving up to the 1960s — and it's 2003."

The bright personality of McKinney and the center mirror each other. The walls are lined with bright reds and yellows and pictures done by children who come every day after school. McKinney has been there 11 years and is proud of the center and what it has done for the community, but the center itself is always in need.

"We depend on the United Way for pretty much all of our funding," McKinney says. "The state keeps cutting the budget for our services, so what we get from them is all we can really depend on."

McKinney says the center gets $25,000 a year. Once, it received $35,000 a year, but if the United Way cannot meet its annual goal, institutions such as King-Kennedy suffer. Because the center runs on program-based funding, less money means fewer programs. She says a panel visits each year when the center reapplies for funding.

"They look at us in amazement that we can keep our doors open," says McKinney, who earns $460 every two weeks for her "Sunday-to-Sunday" job. "I just think it is by the grace of God we are maintaining."

Among the programs King-Kennedy provides is a food giveaway the last two Fridays of each month. A week's worth of food is passed out during the evening after people get off work.

"We're the only agency in Portage and Summit County open in the evening for food distribution," McKinney says. "Why hasn't anyone else seen this need?"

While much has improved in the community over the past 30 years, more than 300 people use services such as the food distribution every month, McKinney says. The 2000 census data says that 5.9 percent of families in Portage County were below the poverty line, but that percentage may be rising because of the recent economic downturn.

"We are seeing people come to us for help that we have never seen before," says Laurene Miller, director of Catholic Charities of Portage County. "A lot more people are losing their jobs and not being able to find work in the county."

Miller says her group has seen a surge in the amount of people who come to them for help on paying bills and getting jobs. The groups in the area can only do so much to help them.

"For some people it's a choice between paying the gas bill or buying groceries," Miller says. "We try our best to give them enough so that they can get by, but we're limited to what we can give them."

Miller says they can pay for about half of someone's utility bill once a year due to budget restraints, but she says groups in the community are working together to help people as much as they can. Groups such as the United Way and Family and Community Services of Portage County have worked together to help people pay their utilities, put food on their plates and, most importantly, get a job.

"We try and get people back into the work force as soon as we can," Miller says. "If they can't find a job, we try to make one for them."

Catholic Charities has a coffee shop next to its office for those in need of a job. The group hires people who need to log in hours to
"A lot more people are losing their jobs and not being able to find work in the county"

receive welfare benefits and provides training to help them get a steady job in the future. However, people cannot stay long because others are waiting for the position.

"I'd say most of the people who come to us for help already have a job," Miller says. "They just can't make enough to support their family. There just doesn't seem to be enough opportunity in the area."

First Call for Help of Portage County, a service of the United Way that directs people to appropriate aid organizations, has seen an influx of calls in recent months.

"Forty-two percent of the calls First Call for Help received last year were from people seeking basic human needs like food, shelter, clothing, utilities and transportation," says Erin Dunbar, director of First Call. "Many of the people need the help because they've just been laid off or are unable to work."

First Call is finding evidence of increased poverty in the county, similar to what Catholic Charities has noticed.

"It seems we are seeing a larger group of people contacting us as the economy is getting tighter," Dunbar says. "While we're getting more demand for our services, we are getting more of our funding cut by the state when we need it the most."

While the county's service groups are working together to help people more, they are somewhat in trouble themselves.

"As money gets tighter, it's more cost effective to have us all under one umbrella," Dunbar says. "It just makes more sense for everyone."

First Call for Help merged with United Way of Portage County during Dunbar's tenure there, and that has made the service more reliable and more effective than when it was operating on little funding, she says.

"It helps us out, and them out, if we combine our resources more when we need it the most," McKinney says.

A major source of funding for the Kennedy Center in the past has been the check-off box on the bottom of Kent State tuition forms for a $2 donation. The box has appeared since 1971. It helped the center get started and provide services to the community.

"We get about $1,000 to $1,200 a year now from the check-off box," McKinney says. "It seems to go down every year."

Students also play a hands-on role at the center through a group called Students for King-Kennedy, which spends time volunteering there.

McKinney has a vision of turning the center into a place run by students where they can learn skills that apply to their majors, including computer technology, education and business management.

"The students at Kent State helped start this center," McKinney says. "It'd be nice if they could help it even more now, when it needs it the most." *

—Cary Smith
Trina Taylor reaches into a brown paper bag, pulls out a piece of children’s clothing and sorts it into a pile. Her aunt and cousin do the same thing, folding and placing clothing in piles.

Taylor volunteers at the King-Kennedy Center as much as she can, usually cleaning, answering phones, making calls for donations and tutoring. But she doesn’t just go to the center to volunteer. She goes because she needs help.

Taylor, a 32-year-old wife with three children, has been coming to the community center all her life. Her mother, Sandra McKinney, is the center’s director.

“All my life she’s been one to help others,” Taylor says of her mother. “It’s all I’ve known of her.”

As a full-time manager at Wendy’s in Aurora, Taylor makes about $1,200 a month before taxes. This varies from month to month, depending on the number of hours she works. It is usually less than that, she says.

“It’s not too much,” she says. “I make enough that I can pay the bills and get food. We get by.”
Trina Taylor goes to the King-Kennedy Center to volunteer and to seek help for herself, her husband and her three children. A working bicycle leans on a wall inside the old Skeels Community Center near McElrath. The Skeels center has moved to another location. Overflowing bags of groceries wait to be claimed at King-Kennedy Center by area families.

Anually, Taylor makes about $14,400. This is $7,140 less than the income level the Department Of Health and Human Services lists as the poverty guideline for a family of five. This is also less than the level for a family of three in poverty, which is listed at $15,260.

"It's rough," she says. "I'm married. He's in college. It's hard being the only income."

McKinney says she tells her daughter to be proud of what she does. Although the amount of money she makes is "devastating," it is enough for her to take care of her family.

"It's kind of bad that all of the weight is put on her," McKinney says. "But it's good because she's been able to pull herself up by her bootstraps."

McKinney says Taylor has been able to get off government assistance and take care of her children. The family's financial situation is rough, though, Taylor says.

Her husband, Christopher, is a full-time student majoring in business management in his first year at Cuyahoga Community College. He does not have time to work because of his classes, but he receives financial aid to pay for his schooling. After graduation he wants to own his own business.

Taylor says her husband doesn't mind her being the breadwinner for their family. Once he graduates he will be better able to help out the family financially.

"Right now it's a tough situation," Christopher says. "The way standards are, the man is the breadwinner. But we've been together for over 10 years. I know that going to school is going to better me. In the end it will be better."

He worked various jobs before he decided to go back to school, but to accomplish his goals, he says some sacrifices had to be made, such as an extra income. He will not be taking classes over the summer so he plans on getting a job then.

finding help

Taylor says the McElrath community, home of the King-Kennedy Center, was in worse shape years ago.
"It was bad," she says. "Drugs were a big part. But it's getting better. I close myself off from it. I'm at work or at home, or I'm [at the King-Kennedy Center]."

Taylor and her family live in a two-bedroom house they rent in Ravenna near the center. She and her husband have one car, so he has to drive her to work in the mornings and then get the children ready for school before he leaves for his classes. They were able to buy the car with cash, so they do not have a loan payment. She also does not have any credit cards and never has.

"I'm the type of person that, if I want it, I'd rather pay cash for it," she says.

Taylor tries to save as much money as she can without using government assistance.

"I've used assistance before," she says. "But I'm able to work. I pay my bills. I pay my rent. The people who just sit on [welfare] and not work, they don't need it," she says.

One helpful way she saves money is by going to the food giveaway at King-Kennedy. Every Monday she goes to Winfield Church in Ravenna for a warm, free meal. She can go to a free clothing store once a week to get clothes for her children.

She says her children don't feel any different than other children at school because everyone
is in the same situation. They see their cousins when they go to the church for a meal.

She says her children aren't greedy and don't ask for a lot. They only wish their mother could be home more often.

“They're kids,” she says. “They always want mom home.”

But she says they know she has to work.

Her children like helping at King-Kennedy as much as they can. Taylor says Josh, 15, is especially good with community work. Josh, Christopher, 7, and Sandra, 12, pack grocery bags for the food giveaway and help to pass them out.

When her children were young enough, she participated in the Women, Infants and Children program. Participants may use WIC only until their children are 5 years old. Taylor says the government should increase the age limit for the program.

“Why can't they raise [WIC]?” she asks. “They're growing. They still need milk. WIC helped out a lot.”

She hopes she can go back to school full time after Christopher graduates from college so she can study to become an X-ray technician and work in a local hospital.

In the meantime, she will continue working at King-Kennedy and encouraging others to give back to the center that has helped them.

“I volunteer to support the community,” Taylor says. “Even if it's just to sweep the floors — I want to help.”*

—Randi Petrello

(right) The area is an easy target for vandalism. Abandoned buildings, wooded areas and dimly lighted streets hasten such destruction.

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Many young women entering their 20s may fear the responsibility of sudden adulthood — ranging from what to do with those back issues of Seventeen magazine to finding a job in a lousy market.

Kanga, an Asian Indian, fears her uncle’s looming list.

“I’m technically the next girl on my dad’s side of my family to get married. So he’s already making up a list,” says Kanga, a Kent State nursing major whose family still follows the tradition of arranged marriage.

Not only is Kanga unable to muster the desire to marry someone she doesn’t know — she’s already in love, and she has been for almost two years. The problem is, she loves a white man her mom and dad don’t know exists. For this reason, a nickname is used instead of her real name in this story.

Kanga balances love for her boyfriend, Kenny Pritt, a Kent State nursing major, with love for her parents, even though they are adamantly against cross-cultural relationships.

“My family is very important to me, and [Kenny] knows that,” Kanga says. “The last thing he wants to do is tear me away. But this is something you can’t just stop. When you love somebody, you can’t just stop loving them.

“I know if my parents just put everything aside and got to know him, they would absolutely adore him and see how much he really does care for me. It doesn’t matter that he’s Caucasian. It doesn’t matter that he’s Christian. If we can put those differences aside and live our lives, then why can’t they?” Engaging in intimate, cross-cultural friendships goes back to biblical times — for example, Moses married someone from another tribe, psychology professor Stevan Hobfoll says.

Hobfoll also notes that it is usually more of a problem for the parents than the participants.

“Children, especially when you get second and third generations, they see themselves as Americans,” Hobfoll says.

Sara Lee, assistant professor of sociology, studies second generation immigrants. She, too, finds that parents can be a strong force in the equation.

“They say, ‘Well, my parents would probably disapprove very strongly, so I’m not even going to go there. I don’t have a problem with it per se, but society makes it too difficult for us.’ And I’m sure there’s some truth to that,” Lee says. “But it could be a nice way of saying, ‘It’s too much
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Unarranged romance

"Sometimes I feel like if anyone's going to be discriminatory, it's going to be people from my culture."

trouble. I don't need to cross those boundaries, so I just won't."

However, there are some who do feel the need to test larger dating pools, no matter the consequences. Shari, a Northeastern Ohio Universities College of Medicine student, and her boyfriend, who asked not to be included in this story, have also found happiness despite cultural roadblocks. For Kanga and Shari, both of Indian decent, expulsion from the family scrapbooks is not out of the question if these unions are exposed.

"I have to completely hide my relationship from my family," Shari, who also spoke under anonymity, says. "It is very difficult to do since he is such an important part of my life."

Both Shari and Kanga attempted to put up emotional blockades when they first had feelings for their Caucasian boyfriends. Both were unsuccessful. In the end, they were confident the joy of the relationship would balance out the discomfort of home life.

"I hear my family say things sometimes, and I'll come to Kenny crying because I've got to sit there," says Kanga, who relies on her parents for tuition. "I can't say anything because if I do, then I'm afraid they're going to think something's up. It's very difficult. I just feel torn, and I don't know what to do, don't know what to say. I feel like in the end, it's just going to be a really big mess."

A big mess maybe, but not an unforeseen one, says T. John Akamatsu, director of Kent State's psychological clinic. He sees this problem as not only common but inevitable. He points to factors as primal as fear and ego when explaining why recent American immigrants are adamantly against their children crossing cultures to date.

"Although we do live in a 'melting pot,' the individual components retain a level of individual identity, which may be threatened or diluted by cross-cultural dating," Akamatsu says. "As generations go by, the need for maintaining a separate identity diminishes, and cross-cultural relationships may be less threatening to ideas, people or cultures different from themselves."

a normal relationship

Shari says while keeping a large part of her life secret from her parents takes some getting used to, when she is secluded with her boyfriend, it's just like any other relationship. "Two people learning new things about each other and each other's background," she says.

Indian culture

Another view on dating

Jeet Mansharamani has dreams for his life in America. The computer science graduate student left his home in Bombay, India, last fall to study at Kent State. He wants a job at Microsoft and to move his family to America. He also wants a wife to share his life with.

He understands the story of Kanga and Shari but says his family's view on dating is a little different.

"It's not a big thing in India," he says. "Dating is having a good friend."

He says most marriages in Indian culture are arranged, but his parents had both a love marriage and an arranged marriage. This happens when two people fall in love and tell their families. The parents discuss whether this marriage would be good. If they agree, they arrange the marriage.

Mansharamani says he does not have a problem telling his family about women he is seeing. His family judges her on who she is not where she is from.

Mansharamani says men have more freedom than women in Indian culture. But he says the stories of Kanga and Shari could easily be those of girls with American parents. He says, some conservative white parents might forbid a daughter from dating him because of his ethnicity.

Mansharamani says his situation is not ideal, but he is glad he can date a woman and be able to tell his parents.

"My family is cool," he says.

— Dana Curcio
Kenny says his relationship with Kanga is unfazed by any sort of color or creed when they're together, but he feels he's missing out on culture that could prove interesting.

"He asks me questions, and I try to answer them the best I can," Kanga says. "I really wish he could experience it, but right now we just can't. Last night we watched *Bend It Like Beckham*. I thought it might be interesting for him to watch because there's little things in there that are pretty similar to my family."

The 2002 movie is about a girl of Indian origins who keeps her life of soccer and blossoming romance secret from her orthodox Sikh parents.

Besides experiencing Kanga's culture second hand through movies, the extent of Kenny's exposure has been through the cuisine.

"She's had me try some Indian food," he says. "But I'm not a big fan of spicy food, and the food is really spicy."

Kanga doubts he gave his taste buds a chance. "You didn't even try anything," she says with a chuckle.

a matter of faith

Shari says being raised in America has softened her Hindu beliefs.

"Religion only plays a big part because it is such a big deal to my parents that I should end up with a 'nice Hindu boy'" she says.

On the parental side of the problem, religious concerns may trump all else, professor Lee says, adding that the high rate of Korean immigrants marrying whites is because of religion. The second generation Korean Americans she has talked to in her research say their parents are such devout Christians that they don't care what race or ethnicity their children choose to end up with, so long as it's a Christian person.

Neither of these couples has experienced prejudice or discrimination of any kind. The nuances of hate they have encountered have come from a place one might find surprising.

"Sometimes I feel like if anyone's going to be discriminatory, it's going to be people from my culture," Kanga says. "Because [in their minds] you don't do it. I think my culture is very discriminatory in terms of our kind of relationship."

The Western side of these couples have been anything but disapproving.

"My parents absolutely love her," Kenny says. "My mom actually threatened me if I do anything to hurt her. My parents are almost as much in love with her as I am."

The feeling is mutual.

"I'm really grateful to have met such an incredible family," Kanga says. "Not just his parents, but his entire family: his aunt, his grandparents. His grandmother is so sweet. She let me
practice my injections on her. She takes insulin, so she let me give her insulin shot to her."

Though both couples feel inter-cultural dating can't help but become more accepted as time goes on and more immigrants make this land theirs, the professors are not so hopeful.

"I don't think it's going to happen naturally by just the fact of having different kinds of people here in the United States," Lee says. "African Americans and white Americans have co-existed in this country for how many decades and centuries now? But they're not necessarily intermarrying as much as they should if it was just up to natural forces and what not."

Couples such as these rarely keep both culture's practices for any long period of time, Hobfoll says.

"He keeps his Christmas tree, and she keeps her Hanukkah candles for a generation," he says. "Then they keep one, or they keep neither." The professor says this issue will forever be in contradiction with itself. "We all don't like racism, but we all agree tradition is a beautiful thing."

facing the future

Whether a case of naivete or blind love, Kenny doesn't see what all the fuss is about.

"Her culture is important to me," he says. "I haven't got to experience it. When I do, I'm sure our relationship will remain the same."

The marriage of true love and family values is not as simple from Kanga's view.

"It scares me to think about what might happen in terms of my family when they do find out," she says. "But I have too much invested in this relationship, and I do care about Kenny a lot. I'm not ready. I'm not willing to let go of that anymore."

According to professor Lee's studies of second generation immigrants, student's in Kanga's situation may not have to worry forever if they hold out long enough.

"What they tell me is that their parents are very much opposed to their intermarrying," Lee says. "They really emphasize that. But what a lot of these people are telling me is that if you delay your marriage for so long that your parents get so desperate that they just want you to get married, period, and they don't even care about who you marry anymore. They just say, 'Go get married. Just find a nice person and get married.'"

This would be ideal for Kenny and Kanga because marriage for the sake of marriage or for the sake of tradition doesn't fit into Kanga's plans.

"In our culture, marriage is something girls have to do," she says. "They go to school and get married. But we're in America, and I think things have to change."

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Risky Business

How the little guys survive the corporate competition

A small boy with gray sweatpants, a white T-shirt and unkempt hair timidly places two boxes of Yu-Gi-Oh cards on the glass counter. "I'm not really buying these anymore," explains Paul Burdick, owner of the game and card shop Spellbinders on West Main Street. "Nobody is really collecting these anymore. But if you want to look around, maybe we can trade."

Disheartened, the boy peruses the store's merchandise until he finds what he wants: Magic cards. Burdick strikes a deal with the boy — he offers 10 packs of Magic cards for the two boxes of Yu-Gi-Oh cards.

"I wanted to give the kid the best offer," Burdick says after the boy and his mother left the store with its cluttered, yet organized, crates and shelves.

Spellbinders, which has been in Kent for 18 years, is just one of the specialty shops in the Kent area, and Burdick says his shop and others survive because they have certain qualities that large corporations do not. Such qualities include finding the store's niche, offering special services and allowing the store's personality to reflect its owner's.

finding a niche

On Main Street, Einstein's Attic gives the feeling of traveling back through time. Bell-bottoms and hip-huggers hang on the clothes rack, and fedoras decorate the walls. Copies of Rolling Stone from the mid-1980s sit on the end table.

That's the atmosphere co-owner Gretchen Trout was going for — the feeling of stepping into a time warp.

"It's largely different than any other store," she says. "We're trying to fill a niche that no one else is filling."

That niche is catering to the retro tastes of Kent State students, who make up 70 percent of her business. She provides affordable clothing and items students can use
to personalize their dorms or apartments.

Becky Adams, junior visual journalism major, has a collection of goods from Einstein’s, including clothing, rugs and candles.

“It gives downtown Kent an even quirkier feel,” Adams says. “Their crazy retro furniture and funky lamps hanging in the front window seem to beckon to me while I’m walking down the street."

“The store has a warm atmosphere. It’s like walking into the living room or closet of a very hip aunt who is stuck in the ’70s.”

Although Trout says she normally gets most of her inventory from estate auctions, some community residents also have donated items. She and her business partner Sherry Dakes clean and sanitize all the items before selling them, which includes laundering the clothes and spraying furniture with detergents. The store is closed Sundays and Mondays so they can go to auctions and clean the furniture.

Trout says it’s sometimes difficult to make a profit, but she thinks the students appreciate it. She prefers the small businesses in town over large corporations.

“They don’t have an interest in Kent,” she says. “They have interest in the bottom line.”

Karen Barrett works on an appraisal for a customer at City Bank Antiques. Time-telling devices are a speciality at the antique shop. Brando Andexler mans the counter at Spin More Records.

**service with a smile**

Special services for the customer are a must for Kent Hardware on South Water Street. Manager Mike Davis says his business survives because it is tailored to the customers’ needs, including those of the university. One of those services is making woodworking kits for students in industrial technology classes.

“Professors will sometimes ask us to prepare kits for their students,” he says, running his hand over a piece of lumber.

Other services include cutting plywood to specific sizes and selling half sheets of plywood.

“It’s tough to find that at a Lowe’s or Home Depot,” Davis says. “We’re one of the last [hardware stores] around because we can offer services no one else can.”

Unlike other small stores and shops in the downtown area, a hardware store, Davis says, is “a place of necessity.”

“People come here because they need to,” he says, adding that the majority of his customers are Kent residents and landlords of students’ apartments and houses.

Davis understands the need for both corporate chains and local specialty stores. He says corporate stores bring new jobs and money to the local economy, but smaller businesses build a solid rapport with the customers.

“Most customers tell stories about how they dread those places,” he says, but he adds that most of them are employed in corporate stores.

**from cat to mouse**

Because of business rivalry and limited customer base, small businesses have needed to evolve to stay competitive. Rodney: The Compleat Bookshop is proof of this evolution.

The bookstore on South Water Street had to
begin selling on the Internet to survive, owner Ted Bliss says. His store makes nearly half of its sales through Internet marketplaces such as eBay and Amazon.com. The online market, he says, will keep him from going out of business almost indefinitely.

“It’s pretty near impossible unless the Internet goes down,” Bliss says. “Not as long as the Internet stays up and I stay healthy.”

He says the Internet sales keep his store in business because he doesn’t get the foot traffic he used to. So instead of waiting on customers, he spends his day online while his black-and-white kitten, Furball, sits in the storefront window. When customers enter the store, the kitten greets them by rubbing against their legs and purring softly.

“She just wants attention,” Bliss says and then begins clicking away on the computer where he sells books to customers across the country and overseas.

His store is in the middle of the downtown area, wedged between other small shops, but the location has a disadvantage.

“If you’re a small shop, you need to be near a Wal-Mart, Target, Kmart or plaza,” he says, explaining that people shopping at the larger store would become familiar with the smaller one. This lack of traffic is why the small stores downtown don’t have as big of an appeal, and they don’t attract as many potential customers, he says.

Down the street, City Bank Antiques is
"Record companies shot themselves in the foot. They should've kept prices down."

also beginning to sell items on the Internet.

"It's difficult because the marketplace has switched to the Internet," says owner Karen Barrett, who lists items for sale on eBay. "That is the marketplace."

Using the Internet is becoming popular because it can showcase many more items than one store can, Barrett says. And, she says, people are impatient.

"Hunting down the item isn't as much fun anymore," she says. "There are some people - I can count them on one hand - that are regulars.

Barrett says she isn't thrilled about selling on the Internet, but she understands that the marketplace is evolving.

While some are benefiting from the Internet, other businesses are losing money. Spin More Records owner Phil Peachock says his sales have been hurt by the Internet - specifically when people download songs.

"Record companies shot themselves in the foot. They should've kept prices down," he says. He has felt the trickle-down effect of this problem in his sales.

Despite this problem, Peachock's business has been around for 23 years because of a loyal customer base. His customers know he will go out of his way to find an item for them.

"You do that for 23 years, people tell people," he says. "The good ones stay. The bad ones don't."

Fusion
Kent State's newest publication.

coming out
this fall

Fusion Mission Statement:
The chosen title of the magazine best describes the magazine's purpose. According to Webster's Dictionary, "fusion is a merging of diverse elements into a unified whole." The founding editors believe that the university community is a composed of people with varying sexual identities constantly interacting in classrooms, dorms, or other settings. Fusion will address sexual minority issues within the general university population. The magazine will strive to unify people of different backgrounds through education and awareness.

when they don't stay

Dan Smith, executive director of Kent's Chamber of Commerce, says an average of three to four small businesses open every year. On average three to four close each year.

"The retail landscape is changing," he says, explaining small stores are "points of destination."

There are a variety of small shops downtown - everything from cell phone shops to bookstores. Most small clothing stores cannot
compete with the large chains ones, he says, and thrift shops are in and out of the marketplace because they have a high failure rate.

When needed, the shop owners can get free business counseling from Kent State's Small Business Development Centers.

The group's director, Linda Yost, says more than 80 percent of the nation's businesses, and 90 percent of Ohio's, are small ones. She says a small business is one that has fewer than 500 employees, she says.

She says the center primarily deals with crisis management. An example, Yost says, is the recent economic recession, which has hurt small businesses. Some of those owners have turned to the center for help creating a business plan.

Smith and Yost agree that small business owners open their shops as a sign of independence. “After corporations lay off people, people [become inspired] to start their own business,” Yost says.

**selling points**

Both real and plastic swords line the walls behind the counter. Nearby is a large box filled with dice in a variety of shapes and colors with a sign: “Sale: One scoop for $10.”

Boxes of paperback books are stacked on shelves with handwritten labels and price tags.

An orange and red plaid couch is in the middle of the floor.

Not exactly what you would find at a Borders, but that's part of the store's allure, Spellbinders' owner Paul Burdick says.

He says small shops have a very different appeal than stores like Wal-Mart because those stores focus primarily on convenience and speed, a concept Ravenna Wal-Mart store manager Brian Bradley agrees with.

“Our store's biggest advantage is having everything under one roof,” he says.

Lower prices are also an advantage at chain stores. The combination is often a selling point for many students.

“I prefer larger [stores] because they’re more convenient,” junior psychology major Morgan Shanafelt says. “Plus, I know more about them.”

Students may not be aware of small shops, but Burdick says specialty shops have more charm.

“There's a certain kind of personality to a small shop,” Burdick says, explaining that his store is an extension of his personality.

“If people like my personality, I suspect they'll be back.”

It's this charm that creates competition between the two types of businesses.

“Competition is always good in retail,” Bradley says, “We're not trying to take customers away from [specialty shops].”

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more stuff. duh.
Josh Cribbs, Kent State's starting quarterback, makes dazzling plays and receives weekly national notoriety for his moves on the football field.

But that does not make Josh any different from the star football player at hundreds of other schools.

The fact that he has been married for close to a year and a half, and he has a 5-month-old daughter, does.

As Josh and his wife, Maria, sit in the trophy room of the Memorial Athletic and Convocation Center, they appear to be veteran parents as they handle their daughter, Kimorah.

"Where is her pacifier?" Maria asks.

"I thought you had it," Josh answers.

Eventually Josh finds it in Kimorah's baby carrier. He puts it in his mouth while he frees his hands so he can put Kimorah back in her carrier before the family heads home.

In addition to marriage and football, Josh is a junior business management major and has class and study time like any other student.

Josh's day begins at 5:30 a.m. when he prepares a bottle for Kimorah. By 6:30, he's on campus lifting for more than an hour before he heads right back home to take Maria to work. He then showers with Kimorah before he ever makes it to class.

(right) Kimorah is a handful on her own, so Josh holds her pacifier in his mouth. Despite his busy schedule, he is a devoted father, and he makes sure to spend as much time with her as possible.
"I go to school early and go to study tables," Josh says. "Then I study in the car when I wait for my wife at work. I study when Kimorah sleeps or Maria feeds her."

When Maria needs a break to visit her family and friends or is at her part-time job at Bank One, it's Josh's responsibility to stay home with Kimorah.

"When I leave here, I devote all of my spare time to [Kimorah]," Josh says. "I want to spend as much quality time with my baby as possible. That's the whole point to life, having a family and passing along your name. I am taking responsibility and overcoming challenges."

**tying the knot**

Josh and Maria met at the Renaissance Ball during Josh's freshman year. Despite Josh's publicity, he says Maria did not know who he was.

"I tried to use it as a pickup line," he says. "When she didn't know me, I was like, 'Do I even have a chance?'"

Maria tells the story a little differently. She won the best-dressed contest that night in November 2001. She says Josh denies following her around, but he appears in the background of all of her photos.

"Don't tell him that," Josh says from across the room.

A friend of Maria's knew Josh, so the pair offered him a ride at the end of the evening.

"He said, 'No,'" Maria says. "But then he walked to the car. He said we were supposed to ask twice."

The two met again in the winter at a basketball game, and Josh says they were together 24/7 after that point.

By the next summer, the couple wanted to marry. Josh says he did not even tell some of his close friends so they would not try to discourage him. But they could not keep their plans from
Josh says the marriage has had its rough spots, but he and Maria see them as more challenges to help them grow.

"It's made me more of a person," Josh says. "Every marriage has problems, but the greater the problems, the stronger it makes us. It gives me confidence in myself that I can step to the plate and stick with it."

"I wouldn't have it any other way," Maria says. "We have a lot of chemistry. We haven't been damaged in our lives, so I think it's a fresh love. I am kind of the backbone to him, and I push him."

**a team effort**

Josh says the support from coaches has been a big help to both him and his wife while he has been at Kent State.

"[The coaches] have numerous personal problems just like anybody else," Josh says. "They have been through it all, so they are sympathetic to personal issues. My wife can talk to their wives. It's a family that extends further than the players."

Maria agrees both the coaches, including head coach Dean Pees, and their wives go out of their way to help.

"Coach Pees came up to me at a cookout and told us if we needed anything to let him know," Maria says. "Kind of felt good that they are there for me and not just worried about Josh. I'm not just his girlfriend. I'm seen as his wife, and that's one thing I was worried about, being so young. I talk to a couple of the wives all of the time. They are always like, 'Do you need me to watch Kimorah,' or 'Do you need a ride to the game?'"}

During Josh's three years at the university, Pees has seen his quarterback grow first-hand.

"That's just maturity," Pees says. "When you get married and become a father and have a family, your life changes because of your new responsibilities. You understand other people better once you've been in their shoes. A lot of times as an athlete, you don't understand where a coach or adult is coming from, but once you have, you have a deeper respect for those people. In Josh's case, being a father, husband and provider has made him a better quarterback."

On the field, Josh has taken more of a lead-
ership role on the offense. During games this past season, he could be seen directing and coaching receivers on the field between plays.

"I feel more aggressive with my leadership," Josh says. "I sound real authoritative and feel more mature."

While Josh balances his family life with football, he also tries to find time with his teammates away from the field. Maria says she has no problems with Josh spending time with his teammates.

"Friends always ask him when he's going home, but he can stay out," Maria says. "I know there are probably other girls at his friends' houses, but I have faith in Josh. I trust him, so I'm not going to hold him back."

Darrell Dowery Jr., a junior justice studies major and Flashes' receiver, attended Dunbar High School in Washington, D.C., with Josh. He then accompanied the quarterback to Kent State. He says he and his teammates enjoy hassling Josh about leaving his wife and child alone at home.

But Josh fires right back.

"He tells us we should get in a relationship to see what he goes through," Dowery says.

But Darrell says Josh does not bring his problems to the team. Josh, instead, is the one giving the advice.

"He's never burdened us with his problems," Dowery says. "But we make him talk a lot because he can help us out a lot when we are in a relationship."

Josh says he recently tried to help a teammate who had been contemplating marriage with his longtime girlfriend.

"I wanted to give him advice to lead him to make the right choice," Josh says. "I told him it's going to get rough, but if you truly love that girl, you should marry her."

kimorah

On July 1, the couple reached another milestone as Maria gave birth to Kimorah. Maria says she saw a change in Josh during her pregnancy.

"He is definitely more responsible," Maria says. "He is more attentive to my needs. When I first met him, he was playing video games all of the time.

"He still does play video games. But now, he was making time for everything. He was making time for me, family and football. When I am at work, he is always taking care of Kimorah. I listen to some of my friends who have had children, and they aren't getting the kind of help I am getting. It's really surprised me how he's taken a lot of the work in the house."

Maria says Kimorah helps strengthen her relationship with Josh. She says patience comes whenever the couple struggles with raising Kimorah.

"Kimorah smiling makes us forget our problems," she says. "When she's frustrating us, we can't just put her away. We have to stick through it. Then when we get frustrated with each other, we know we're not going anywhere. We might as well work through it."

hopes and dreams

Along with evolving personally, Josh has also been forced to make a transition on the field. When Kent State hired Doug Martin as the Flashes' offensive coordinator in the spring, Josh's primary goal was to become a better pass-
er and more complete quarterback under this new teacher. Over the summer Josh had to balance learning the offense and spending time with his newborn.

"Coach Martin came in, and the offense was easy to grasp," Josh says. "But having a family made it harder because it's hard to do everything to the max."

Two of Martin's recent students at East Carolina University have played professionally: Marcus Crandell in the Canadian Football League and David Garrard with the Jacksonville Jaguars of the NFL.

Josh hopes he'll be next.

"I feel obligated and duty-bound to play in the NFL," Josh says, referring to his hope to provide for his wife and child. "But it has always been a dream."

Josh remembers his seventh-grade teacher giving him statistics on how many people earn scholarships to play football. Then he was given numbers on how many people make it to the NFL.

"The number got smaller and smaller," Josh says. "I want to go back and show her I did it."

Not to prove her wrong, but as a celebration. "That would be the peak of my life athletically and top my life off."

This season had been especially trying as the Flashes were desperately looking for respect. With each win, Josh gained the glory, but with each loss, Josh shouldered the responsibility.

He says he wants to succeed for his family but also knows through the marriage, fatherhood and football, his family will always remain behind him.

"As an athlete, you can accept losing. I used to just sleep it off," Josh says. "But now I have to face my family. It adds more stress because I feel like I let my family down."

"But they ease the pain. There's a lot of love in my life. [Maria and Kimorah] give me lots of hugs. They are like a pill I can take."

{left} Josh does not want his wedding ring to be lost or damaged in game, so he replaces it with a band of tape. {below} Marriage has allowed Josh to become an even better quarterback. Now he plays for his family.
Why would you walk into a raging fire?" someone asked me just before I left for Afghanistan. “I guess for the same reason firemen do," I replied after some thought. “To help put it out.”

In June, Glenn Luther, another Kent State student who had been in Kabul teaching photojournalism since February, recommended me for a position as an English editor for a non-governmental organization called AINA.

Three weeks later, I was on the first of many flights that would take me to another world — and another perspective.

arrival

When the plane descended over the Kabul International Airport, an airplane graveyard appeared through the dust cloud. Mangled metal and flight equipment lay scattered on either side of the lone dirt runway.

The heat was intense and the shock immediate upon entering the airport. A mild panic crept over me as I realized I couldn’t understand a word being said to me.

As I looked around at all the brown faces framed with dark hair, I developed an uneasy self-awareness. With pale skin and red hair, I felt as if every eye in the terminal was fixed on me.

But I was never more terrified than during the ride from the airport to our guest house in Karte Se on the west side of the city.

There are no traffic laws in Kabul. There are no speed limits. There are no streetlights or painted lines on paved roads. There is no designated side of the road on which to drive, and the steering wheel can be found on either side of the vehicle. The roads are congested with taxis, bicycles, beggars, pedestrians, fruit vendors, stray children and goat herds. The only rule: Don’t hit anything.

By the time we got to Karte Se, my eyes were wide and my knuckles were white.

“What the hell am I doing?” I thought.

Rachel Myers talks with children at a refugee camp in Kabul. Children in Kabul often must work to feed themselves, and most own nothing more than the clothes they wear.
A small Afghan girl crawls off of a bullet-torn taxi that rests in front of her home in west Kabul. Children often play on vehicles and in buildings that have been disabled by war, landmines and bullets. Undetonated rockets can still be found all over Kabul and throughout Afghanistan. The explosives remain inert until someone stumbles across them.

**one month later**

I stirred at 3 a.m. when the Muslim call to prayer resonated over loudspeakers throughout the city. I tossed for a few minutes before slipping back into dreams.

At 4:10 a.m., tremors from a small earthquake rattled light items on the shelf, and briefly woke me again.

A rooster began its squawking at 4:30 a.m. and continued through the early morning as I held the pillow tightly over my ears.

Traffic horns began blaring at 5:45 a.m.

At 6:15 a.m., the sun shone through my frosted window from over the mountains.

When my watch alarm sounded at 6:30 a.m., I awoke groggy but alert.

I filled the blue plastic bucket in the tiled bathroom with tepid water from the low-pressure faucet. I heard a mild explosion echoing from the east side of the city, but I continued to allow the water to run.

As I poured the water over my head from a plastic cup, I heard another weak explosion in the distance. From the sound of it, I assumed NATO was deactivating another series of land mines.

After I dried and dressed, I padded down the cold marble steps to the table, only a few inches off the ground. My colleagues greeted me in three languages.

“Good morning! Salaam! Bonjour!” resounded in the large room.

As I ate dry bread and drank green tea, the routine never once struck me as odd.

**aina**

This was the scenario nearly every morning except Friday, the Muslim holy day. During the rest of the week, I worked 10-hour days beginning at 8:30 a.m.

The word AINA means “mirror” in Dari, one of the languages spoken in Afghanistan. The French organization was founded two years ago on the principle that a democracy will crumble without independent media.

During its reign, the Taliban forbade education for women and free press for all its citizens. The women had received no journalism instruction. I created a workbook for them outlining the basics.

In August, I began editing for Malalai, the first magazine of its kind in Afghanistan. Its purpose was the advancement of women—a monumental concept in a society dominated by men.

During its reign, the Taliban forbade education for women and free press for all its citizens. The writers had received no journalism instruction. I created a workbook for them outlining the basics.

In a place where just two years earlier women had been killed for speaking too loudly in public, these women were making certain their voices were heard.

With the country remaining in a constant state of instability, the women were keenly aware of potential consequences to their safety.

And still they wrote.
my reality

Passion for my work generated a deep need for understanding. And slowly, almost without my knowing, Kabul became my reality.

Yet, there were some things I never fully adjusted to.

Being American in a Middle-Eastern Islamic country is difficult. Being an American woman in the same situation is life-altering.

Whenever I stepped outside the guest house gates, I wore a chador, a scarf-like head covering. I also concealed my arms, midriff and legs with a long shirt and pants. I viewed the garments as symbols of cultural respect, and the only time they bothered me was when the heat spiked to 120 degrees.

In public, I was stared at constantly. Some of the attention could be attributed to innocent curiosity. But I was often taunted and even groped.

Some Afghan men stereotype Western women as promiscuous. The majority of the men are respectful, but it was prevalent enough that I, and anyone with me, was incessantly watching for stray hands. I learned enough Dari to tell off my aggressors, but I had to choose my battles. Drawing more attention to myself than I already garnered could have been dangerous.

While it was a nuisance, unwanted interest was not the most trying aspect about my position in Afghan society — it was my loss of freedom. I could not drive a car or ride a bicycle. I couldn’t speak whenever I felt like it. I had a strict dress code to follow. I couldn’t go anywhere alone or without permission.

I understood it all to be precautionary safety measures, but being stripped of choices was extremely frustrating.

After a while, though, Afghanistan has a way of forcing you to look outside of yourself.

life after war

A 7-year-old orphan boy hobbled on crutches down the chaotic streets. An active land mine had blown off his left leg three years earlier. His face was smudged with dirt, his clothes were in rags, his hair was matted and his belly growled with chronic emptiness. He was desperate as he extended his unfilled hand to those he passed. He begged for small currency and pieces of bread. Something. Anything.

After two decades of unrelenting civil war, poverty is an epidemic in Afghanistan. It is difficult to believe it even when you see it.
Most Americans think the work in Afghanistan is finished. But bullet-scarred buildings still teeter on every block in Kabul. Reconstruction is slow, and the only real work taking place is on the part of small businesses, which subsidize themselves.

Despite two years of marginal peace, Afghans remain on edge. There is a thick tension in the city that won’t pass with the introduction of yet another government.

The Taliban’s brutality spawned one of the largest refugee crises in world history. Millions of Afghans fled their homeland to countries such as Pakistan and Iran. Millions have since returned to Afghanistan after host countries made it clear their presence was unwelcome.

But for many, the homecoming has been joyless. They find their homes destroyed, schools demolished and employment opportunities non-existent.

Education is considered a privilege for most Afghans. Many have no choice but to work in the streets, begging or selling everything from sponges to blessings.

Thousands have found their only option is to stick together. They form camps of 10 to 50 families in patches of open land or amid ruins.

I was told before I went to a camp to prepare myself because the conditions were squalid. I listened to the warnings, but nothing could have prepared me.

When Glenn, two student photographers and I pulled up alongside the edge of a camp on Kabul’s east side, we saw small tents and adobe structures crammed together and stray dogs and chickens roaming on the grounds. Children played with sticks amid rusted artillery. Garbage was everywhere, and the smell was nauseating.

A small boy, about 8 years old, pleaded with us to come to where his family stayed. I followed behind three others as we were ushered into a plastic tent about the size of my studio apartment in Kent. A family of 13 was living there.

I nearly jumped at the first thing I saw. A very sick infant lay unresponsive in a broken crib. Its naked body was wrapped in a sheer cloth and covered with flies.

I took a deep breath.

The mother of the family wanted to speak to me. I listened through the words of a translator.

Her name was Zaitoon, which means “olive.” She was 35 years old, but a life of hardship had aged her delicate features.

“Each morning I wake up and wish myself dead,” she said, cradling her 3-year-old daughter on her hip. “Every person has a dream for their life. I’m still waiting for mine to come true.”

She told me of her crippled husband, her family’s flight to Pakistan, the pain of hunger and being unable to care for her sick baby and the tears she sheds for her children’s future.

As she spoke, her eldest daughter set down a tray of orange juice for us. We refused, but she insisted.

“You are guests in my home,” Zaitoon said.

Tears began to sting my eyes, and Zaitoon smiled knowingly as she reached for me in a warm embrace. Across lines of language, ethnicity, age, circumstance and nationality, we were just two women lost in a moment.

As we walked around the rest of the camp, it became personal knowing that each pair of dark eyes held their own story. I prayed that at least some would have a happy ending.
Myers walks with three companions (the men in the foreground). Her appearance draws a crowd of curious admirers. She stands out because about 75 percent of women in Kabul still wear a burka.

**reflections**

Two years after the fall of the Taliban, happy endings still seem like foolish dreams. I wish I could tell you it's getting better and everyone will live blissfully ever after. But that's not real.

Afghanistan is not the picture of beauty and freedom we saw on glossy magazine covers when the women lifted their burkas to show their bare faces to the sun.

There is beauty, but it's passing. There is freedom, but it's volatile — and Afghans wrestle for every inch of it.

I like to think I made a difference, but I know it touched me even more.

I used to believe America could do no wrong, until I listened to a woman whose home was reduced to smoking ash and ruins after the American-led bombings.

I used to believe everything happens for a reason, until I met a 2-year-old girl who was too hungry to speak.

I used to believe in fighting for what you believe, until I lived in the remnants of war.

I used to believe in hope. Thankfully, I still do.*

*From the book 'The Hurt' by Jenny Jones

"Each morning I wake up and wish myself dead. Every person has a dream for their life. I'm still waiting for mine to come true"
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Here The Burr brings you the voices of five individuals with radically different opinions. For, against or neutral — each has its rightful place in ...

**the WAR DEBATE**

**Political science professor Thom Yantek** compares much of what he sees with the Iraq situation to public opinion and politics during the Vietnam conflict.

"Go back 30 years to Vietnam. American troops were being spit upon," Yantek says. "We’ve had a lot of time to reflect. Now we want to support our troops."

Yantek says it took several years for opposition to Vietnam to become mainstream. But now, opposition to the occupation in Iraq has grown more quickly. It is "interesting that already opinion is softening" in favor of the Iraqi point of view, he says.

"What is really troubling to a number of critics," he says, "is that we might have been misled. At least the immediacy of the situation has been exaggerated this time."

The political environment now has changed as Americans, and others, are doubting the true motives behind invading Iraq, he says. Americans may be taking a closer look at the current situation because of Vietnam’s impact.

"This time there are more arguments," Yantek says. "The U.S. unilaterally invaded a sovereign nation. It broke international law."

Yantek says America has a "moral center" that allows us to look at the world as though we have a moral sanctity over other nations, which makes us feel justified in wielding power against other nations.

A primary issue of concern to the United Nations, and others, is pre-emptive war, Yantek says.

"Once we permit any kind of pre-emptive strike, we can imagine any number of countries attacking one another. It’s a prescription for worldwide disaster," Yantek says. "Frankly, we’re the only ones who can pull it off, and critics say that’s the downside."

**America’s responsibility**

Tony Cox, sophomore classical humanities major and College Republicans president, says America is seen as a superpower that has sought to get involved and help other countries.

"The whole world looks to us, as much as everyone hates it, to help fix the problem. It’s our duty as the world’s only superpower," Cox says of American intervention in Iraq. "We can’t just sit by and let genocide happen."

Cox says he thinks the Cold War left America economically and militarily superior to other nations. He says he believes responsibility comes with that.

Saddam Hussein’s regime was hostile and posed a threat, he says, and there are no reasons to think the president didn’t believe there were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

"We have an opportunity to do a good thing in a place with a very bad history," Cox says. "Anyone trying to hold us back is doing a disservice to us and Iraq."

"I just hope they understand our motives," he says of Iraqis. "That’s when things will take a turn for the better."

Yantek says a lot of Iraqis must feel they’re better off without Saddam, but there is much left to be desired.

"There’s a lot they don’t have, including their own government," Yantek says. "They’re a proud people from a culture that goes back..."
"We can't just sit by and let genocide happen"

Tony Cox

much further than the U.S. We have deemed them not ready for that. Try to put yourself in that situation — you're not mature enough to govern yourself."

He says many anti-war protesters are using the war with Iraq as a means to express a vendetta against President George W. Bush. Cox says he would not agree with a war just because a leader does. He believes some forms of war would not be legitimate.

"I would draw the line if I thought the war with Iraq was imperialistic in nature. But the U.S. is not an imperialistic country."

Cox says he also sees some parallels between the Iraq conflict and Vietnam. However, he says supporters of the anti-war movement see themselves as noble idealists and would like the general public to see more similarities than really exist.

"I think the work we're doing against terror in Iraq is good work, noble work," Cox says.

A just war, he says, is one that includes a "threat to life and liberty against us or people in general, really."

"I hope that peace and freedom will ultimately prevail," he says. But, "there is always going to be a fight."

However, Cox was upset by the behavior of those who agreed to fight. The media showed many soldiers who were disappointed by their extended time in Iraq.

"They knew at the recruitment office what could happen," Cox says. "We have a system that allows us, thank God, a volunteer military."

a volunteer military man

Todd Lee was in the Marines for four years, with a total service of eight years.

Lee is hesitant to give a concrete opinion of the war with Iraq, or other wars.

"I would never, ever oppose a war while I'm in the military. I may not agree why I'm over there or why they're over there," he says, but "I would keep my personal opinion to myself."

"I don't think our nation would ever ask you to do anything morally wrong."

When Lee hears people opposed to the war, he tries explain the perspective of the many soldiers overseas trying to help. After being stationed in Kosovo and Afghanistan, Lee knows what a stressful situation it can be.

Lee says he spent more than 48 days in Kosovo at Camp Casablanca and Camp Able Sentry doing border control and humanitarian aid.

"Being in the military, you don't really have a say. You're doing it because you're told to. You don't know why it's going on," Lee says. "You see children come up to you, grown men come up to you asking for help. [The soldiers] go there to help."

While on border control, Lee says he met all different people. Many were tired, some were malnourished.

"The little kids loved to play sports," he says. "They were very intrigued by everything about us. It didn't feel any different than playing with any other kid."

Once Lee and his unit were back at camp in Kosovo, things were safer. He says it was easier to relax there, or try to relax. Sometimes his unit would be shot at, but because of the rules of engagement, no one could shoot back.

"My mother was more scared for me than I
was. I knew there would be some kind of conflict," Lee says. "Everybody has a chance, and anybody who says they aren't nervous is lying."

The best way to deal with the nervousness is to be well prepared and listen to those who rank above you, he says.

"It is very intense," Lee says. "I guess you never think of it as something you have to do. Your job is your life. You always take it seriously.

"Iraq is a tough situation. You can't take your personal beliefs with you. People are still going to die, and sooner or later they're going to ask for our help."

Lee says it is up to people to have their own opinions, although it can be frustrating to hear some talk negatively about the military.

"Does that mean I make a scene, get irate? You know, I can't change them," he says. "I try to tell another side of the story."

He talked to some anti-war protesters in the spring about the hunger strike the Kent State Anti-War Committee set up.

"Just sitting there — what does that do for the Iraqi people? Nothing. By sitting there you might get yourself on TV," Lee says. "If they're so worried, why don't they come up with a plan, put a little effort into it?

"American life may not be great, but it's a hell of a lot better than other places."

the opposition

Senior English major Claudia Cortese began opposing war when, in elementary school, a video arcade offered Gulf War-related prizes such as toy soldiers and tanks in exchange for tickets.

"I looked at the toys and said I thought it was gross that people were making money off of a war," Cortese says. "It just seemed so wrong I could get a toy. It's a path I was on since I started thinking."

Cortese says she was involved with the Kent State Anti-War Committee since day one, which was within three weeks of Sept. 11.

Cortese says she may have been naïve, but she really thought the war with Iraq would not happen — not without U.N. support. She found it particularly depressing because the invasion of Iraq showed the sweeping scope of America's worldwide power.

"The U.S.," she says, "has a blank check to do anything they want, wherever."

That power crushed a lot of protesters' spirits, she says.

Brian Pearsall, sophomore integrated social studies education major, says instead of looking at the reasons against the war, people should look at the lack of reasons for a war.

"All the reasons Bush gave, like weapons of mass destruction," Pearsall says, "Where are they? They played up a connection between al-Qaida and Osama (bin Laden) and Iraq, which is ridiculous."

Pearsall says, in theory, liberating the Iraqi people isn't necessarily a bad idea, and he stresses he in no way supports Saddam Hussein's regime.

"There's a lot of bad stuff all over the world. We only want to liberate people in our interest," Pearsall says.

Pearsall says Americans look at war differently than the rest of the world.

"Other countries feel the horrors of war.
"We only want to liberate people in our interest"  

Brian Pearsall

You see pictures of bombs dropping over Baghdad, but you can't feel that. Can you imagine bombs over D.C.?”

Cortese says she has been very involved in protests because, while protests may not stop wars, it is important to show the world that not all Americans believe what the American government is doing is right.

Pearsall agrees, and says opposition to war does not make one a radical.

“Yes, I think there are just wars,” Cortese says. “I just don’t think the U.S. can be in one.”

anti-Americanism & media

Pearsall and Cortese say they think anti-Americanism is a problem around the globe.

“Anti-Americanism is getting worse and worse,” Cortese says. “Do I think it’s unfounded? No, and I’m an American. I’m an American but not by choice. I’m a human being.”

Cortese says if she were a Palestinian or Iraqi, having been through what they have, she would understand why they might hate us.

“The U.S. really, in a very simple way, appears to be a big bully with big toys and lots of money,” Cortese says.

Pearsall agrees.

“People see us as very arrogant and all about money greed and power,” Pearsall says. “Personally, I think our patriotism is much closer to nationalism.”

Cortese says there are a variety of reasons Americans are so removed from world events, and a lot of that deals with the U.S. media.

She says she thinks the coverage of the Iraq conflict, which was supposed to be more extensive than the coverage of any past conflict, basically stuck to what the government wanted us to hear.

Pearsall says he watches the news, but he doesn’t necessarily think that makes a person completely informed.

“I watch CNN a lot – I’m not going to say I’m better than that,” Pearsall says. “But I don’t think watching a 20 second blurb on what’s going on in Iraq is going to give you a clear picture.”

Cortese says she knew a student from Italy who spent a year in Chicago, and he was surprised about the lack of political knowledge among American students. She says he knew more about American foreign and domestic policy than they did.

Cortese says this is cause for concern.

“There’s so much emphasis on pop culture,” she says. “People know more about J.Lo and Ben Affleck than the Iraqi population. "In other countries people talk about it. It’s OK to want to discuss what is going on in the world."
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how it all began

Six friends — Jen, Rachel, Lisa, Emily, Matt and Brian — moved into a house on Crain Avenue. All are architecture majors, except Brian.

In the fall, another architecture major, Megan, took Lisa's place in the house.

Megan says it was difficult adjusting to everyone's patterns. She felt like the odd person out at first because everyone was already settled in together.

"I had to jump in and go with it," Megan says. "I'm still in the process of adjusting. The first week or two was hard, but it keeps getting better."

Emily says the rest of the group did not have to do much adapting to one another, because everyone connected in the architecture studio and during the program's trip to Italy in the spring.

"It's a relief to live with people who you like and can relate to," she says. "For the first two years of college, we spent more time together than with our roommates."
Megan says people in the house know how to push each other’s buttons.

Men are the hot topic because everyone in the house knows all the same men and there is always something that can be said to stir up trouble.

“It’s hard being with girls because sometimes there’s tension,” Megan says. “I like being home, but it’s overwhelming sometimes because there are so many people, and it feels like you cannot escape.”

Brian says he likes living with women because they are not as egotistical as men. The first month or two was just getting to know each other and learning what everyone likes to do.

“There’s a lot of girl talk when we go out, like, ‘This boy looked at me,’” Brian says. “I give the male side of the story.

“I usually play the devil’s advocate because sometimes I stand back and see things from a different perspective.”

Brian often finds he is the only male in the house because Matt spends a majority of his time at his girlfriend’s place. Matt says he would like to spend more time with his roommates, but he values the time he spends with his girlfriend and is often caught between two worlds. He misses the little things, such as spontaneous hangout moments after class and bonding over Friends, Scrubs and Will & Grace on Thursday nights. These moments are the glue of the group.

Megan says despite differences, it’s nice to come home to friends she can talk to about her day, classes, homework and favorite TV shows.

Jen says her adjustment period went well, but she thinks the boys were initially pretty nervous.

“They would stay in the basement and didn’t feel comfortable coming upstairs and hanging out,” Jen says.

The group meshes well together because everyone has different perspectives on life and relationships, she says. The roommates don’t mind being honest with their opinions and letting each other know exactly how they feel.

“Brian tells us what he thinks about everyone,” Jen says. “He reminds me of my brother. He watches us and makes sure nothing bad happens to us when we’re out.”

She also says having siblings and a large group of close friends helped pave the way for a smooth adjustment into the house that may not have been possible otherwise.

“You’re more used to the annoying stuff people do because you grew up with it,” she says. “I have a big group of high school friends, too, which helped because I’ve always been around large groups of people.”

**The stress hits the fan**

The stress sometimes gets hard to handle, but the roommates find comfort in one another.

“We come home and bitch about it to each
other," Megan says of architecture. "Even though we have different professors, we have the same problems."

She says architecture students are the only people who can completely understand the daily problems involved in the program. The roommates are not only her classmates but also her friends.

"I don't really know anyone outside of architecture, which can be good and bad," Megan says. "They are people who I can vent to. We complain about professors and some of the things they make us do."

She says sometimes there is tension with schoolwork and relationships with other people in architecture. It is one big soap opera with cliques within the program, and sometimes she gets sick of the drama.

Rachel says she likes that her roommates know what she is going through and can sympathize with her because they are dealing with similar situations and issues.

Although the roommates sometimes procrastinate together, they also lean on each other for support and show encouragement when projects get hard and someone needs a lift, she adds.

"We know each person is under stress, and we know to not take it personally," Rachel says. "Sometimes it's nice to yell at someone and know they understand you're just stressed out."

She remembers one time when everyone in the house was under the gun. They started a big pillow fight in the middle of the living room, and the roommates had a chance to forget their problems and have a good time, she says.

Matt says the group's playful pillow fight was one of his best memories in the house.

"It wasn't anything that we planned, and it happened at the spur of the moment," he says. "Nothing was broken, and no one got hurt. It was just something we all did together as a group to have fun."

Matt says being in the same major is both good and bad for the house. The roommates get annoyed with each other because they are together on such a regular basis, but at the same time it sometimes makes life less difficult, he says.

"You know what they are going through," Matt says, "and you know what to avoid doing or how to help them. We help each other study for tests and answer questions."

Jen says she thinks having the same major helps them interact as a group. Everyone has a lot of work to finish, and there is no point in making the situation harder by fighting with each other, she says.

"We flat out say, 'What's wrong?' because we know when people are upset," Jen says. "We can then try to cheer them up. We've all known each other for four or five years, and it's easy enough to know when someone is mad or upset."

Brian says he does not let himself get stressed but knows the times in the semester when his roommates are under a lot of pressure. Sometimes he goes in the studio and listens to them bicker and complain at each other, he says. Then he can see what incident spurred a conflict between two people and try to correct the situation.

"I can be an observant third party and help mend some of the bad blood between people when something happens," Brian says.

**good times on crain**

When nothing is on television, and the people in the house are in need of some good entertainment, they do what any group of roommates might do: They play pranks on each other.

During finals week last year, Emily spent much of her time at her boyfriend Ryan's

**Jen Hammond**

**Age:** 23
**Religion:** Catholic. She usually tries to go to church every other week.
**Pet Peeve:** People leaving stuff everywhere.
**Most annoying habit:** Procrastination
"I procrastinate and get everyone else to procrastinate with me."

**Brian Koval**

**Age:** 22
**Hometown:** North Canton
**Majors:** Psychology, Sociology, Nursing
**Pet peeve:** When people leave food in the sink drain and it just sits there. He says his second would be smoking, but the house decided against smoking.

**Emily Steiner**

**Age:** 23
**Food she loves:** Peas and Campbell's cheese and broccoli soup
**Boyfriend:** Ryan
**Siblings:** Only child
**Annoying habit:** She leaves half empty glasses all over. Have you ever seen Signs?

**Megan Hutton**

**Age:** 22
**Siblings:** Ashley, 19, Kent State freshman and half brothers Sean, 30, and Scott, 32, and half sister Kim, 27.
**Pet peeves:** When the cover on the couch falls off and when the cushions are off the couch.

**Matt Schoening**

**Age:** 22
**Nickname:** Coach
**Girlfriend:** Stephanie
**Best word to describe the house:** friendly; He says it is a welcoming atmosphere
**Biggest pet peeve:** Being awakened from a nap.

**Rachel Yarger**

**Age:** 22
**Hometown:** Mansfield or "Hicksville U.S.A.," as her roommates like to refer to it. "She lives across the street from a pig farm," Jen says, "to the right of the silo."
**Most annoying habit:** She gets annoyed when people are drunk around her.
house, so the group thought of a way they could play a joke on her when she came home. They scanned a missing persons flier, then used photo editing software to put Emily’s picture in place of the missing person.

“I knew she would get the mail when she came home, so I put some more mail in the box and stuck the flier on top,” Rachel says.

When she came home, she began reading the flier out loud. Then she realized it was her face on the flier.

“She said, ‘Oh, it’s me,’” Rachel recalls. “‘Have you seen — me?’”

Although the roommates do not play favorites with whom they prank, it seems Jen is involved in most of the practical jokes.

Brian says he and Matt are on Team Face, a softball team, and bought some jerseys and hats together. A couple of the women thought it would be humorous to take their jerseys and hide them because they are on an opposing team that Team Face beat. They noticed the jerseys were gone and scoured the house looking for the stolen attire.

“It only took me like 30 seconds to find them,” Brian says. “I brought myself to her level and thought like her. Some were in the hall closet and some were in the lazy Susan in the kitchen.”

He did not let the women know when he found the jerseys and waited a few days to exact his revenge. Not until Jen got out of the shower did she realize all of the bras and panties had been abducted from her drawers. Brian says she had just washed clothes, so there were no dirty clothes in her room to wear.

“I just thought it was a way to get her back,” Brian says, “and it doesn’t get much better than that.”

Jen says she knew it was Brian and Matt and began her counterstrike.

“I stole all of their socks and boxers,” she says. “But they came home and found all of it, and I still didn’t have my stuff.”

Brian says he and Matt came home and toyed with her for while, making her do stuff around the house to get her underwear back. At 4 p.m., Jen finally put her foot down. She had to go to studio and did not want to go without her underwear. The roommates finally had mercy on their bra-less buddy.

who cleans all the mess?

In a house with six busy people, there is bound to be some clutter. Megan says the mess bothered her at first, but now she has adjusted to it and just works to do her part in the cleaning.

“The first day I came and scrubbed the whole bathroom upstairs,” Megan says.

the real deal

A Landlord’s viewpoint

Being a landlord is sort of like being a father, Robert Garrison says. “Be fair, but firm.”

Garrison, a Kent landlord, says it’s important to establish a good relationship with tenants. He does not own the house on Crain Avenue, but he does own 28 properties, all of which are in Ohio except for one in Key West, Fla. Garrison says he has been in the real estate business since 1991. “My wife had been in the business for many, many years and owned the company,” he says. “I did this after I retired.”

Garrison says there is definitely a difference between college tenants and others. “They’re more apt to be up late,” he says, “more apt to make more noise. When you [rent to] college students, you get some that are very quiet,” he says. “And then you get others, they are fine, good kids, but they’re kids. They’re having a ball. And when that ball gets too big, we have to tell them to calm down.”

Garrison recalls only one major incident caused by some of his student tenants. He says about 16 years ago, some of his tenants caused about $4,000 damage to carpeting and doors at one of his properties. But since then, he has had only minor incidents.

Garrison says all of his tenants sign the same lease. He says he requires the same conduct from all of his tenants.

“We’re not out to get them,” he says with a chuckle.

— Katie Hilbert

(above) A tired Emily waits for her boyfriend, Ryan, to join her and her roommates for a Thursday night of Friends and Will & Grace, while Elvis looks over her shoulder from a photo on the table. Emily jokes that her boyfriend is jealous of her Elvis memorabilia, including a giant Elvis cutout.
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Attic

The female roommates do cleaning when they are procrastinating, Brian says.

"Jen cleans the most because she procrastinates the most," he adds. "They are the ones that usually have clutter because I keep most of my stuff in the basement."

Brian says he and Matt buy the toilet paper and the cleaning supplies for the basement, and everyone else takes care of themselves.

"I bring lots of Chipotle napkins home when I eat there, so there's napkins most of the time," Brian says. "We all just buy tissues and paper towels as we need them."

Emily said she is the person in the house who "tidies" everything. She dislikes stuff scattered all over the house and tries to put everything back in its own place — and if that fails, she at least makes piles out of the clutter.

Everyone hand washes his or her own dishes because there is no dishwasher in the house. Megan says dishes sometimes pile up for a couple days, but everyone tries to do his or her part in cleaning dirty dishes.

They try to wash their own dishes, but sometimes they have to remind people to clean their mess, Rachel says.

"It never gets too bad because if they pile up, we just wash them," Rachel says. "If the sink is full, we just do it because we've all washed each other's dishes before."

Brian says he usually keeps a day's worth of dishes downstairs in his room. He brings up his dirty dishes at the end of the day and cleans everything at the same time.

Jen says Emily has the biggest problem leaving her dishes all over the house.

"The cups are the main thing because she doesn't take them to the kitchen," she says jokingly. "The rest of the dishes make it to the kitchen but not to the soap."

Emily says people leave dishes when they are too busy to wash them.

"Whoever left them probably didn't have time to do it," she says. "But for the most part, I try to leave mine in my room, so I'm the only person who has to deal with them."

**the gas bill is due**

Although most people in the house have their names on a bill for one of the utilities, Brian is the person in charge of collecting everyone's money and paying the bills.

"It makes sense that the busiest person of all takes care of everything," Brian says jokingly.

He is not very strict about people paying him, and he will be fine as long as he gets the money by the time everyone moves out, he says.

His roommates give him money on time and usually pay a large lump sum in advance so they are caught up for a month or so, he says.

Last year there was a checking account opened for the house utilities, and everyone would deposit money to it every month and keep track of the amount they owed. He says this system worked well until their old roommate, Lisa, wrote a check for the amount that was in the account instead of the amount of the utility and overdrew the account.

"I think it is a little smoother now," he says. "I use my personal checking account, and people give me extra money, and I pay the bills."

**ksu v. mtv**

Although the real world is very different than the *Real World*, the group sees some similarities between the two.

The women gossip and argue about getting different versions of the same story from people, Megan says.

"It's hard not to gossip because it's the nature of girls and architecture," she says. "But Rachel is like the mom of the house and always..."
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Just because you live here does not mean you’re always welcome, Jen proves as she jokingly pushes Matt away with the door. The roommates love to goof around with one another. keeps everything under control.”

But Megan says she does not think people’s lives are so exciting, and MTV edits the video-tapes specifically to find the fights.

“I’m sure there’s a lot more of nothing going on, like watching TV, than they actually show,” she says.

Matt says people on the Real World act differently than people in real life because they are always in front of the cameras and never show their true colors while on tape.

One major similarity exists. As on television, Jen says, by the end of their time living together, everyone in the house became really close friends with everyone else.

Rachel says both groups also have to deal with the minute issues that annoy them. The difference is the MTV roommates have to vent to a camera and millions of viewers. She and her Crain Avenue roommates don’t need to air their dirty laundry. Sometimes the small issues are better left unsaid.

Some major differences Brian and Rachel notice are their lives are not quite as risqué as on television, and people aren’t engaging in rampant sexual escapades.

“No one is changing bedrooms overnight,” Rachel says. “They don’t have school in there either, where we go to class.”

It would be difficult for her and her roommates to find time for such things, anyway.

“We are not hardcore partners,” Jen says. “We all have a lot of work to do. Sometimes we stay up all night, but it’s to get a project done for school.”

Emily says in real life there is still a great deal of drama, but it’s the drama of paying the bills and going to school, not the sordid scandals often portrayed on television.

“I do realize the episodes they show on television are supposed to make people think things,” Emily says. “We do go out and have fun together, but we’re not having threesomes in a hot tub or making out with each other.”

Obligations of tenant

(A) A tenant who is party to a rental agreement shall do all of the following:

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3. Keep all plumbing fixtures in the dwelling unit or used by him as clean as their condition permits;
4. Use and operate all electrical and plumbing fixtures properly;
5. Comply with the requirements imposed on tenants by all applicable state and local housing, health and safety codes;
6. Personally refrain, and forbid any other person who is on the premises with his permission, from intentionally or negligently destroying, defacing, damaging, or removing any fixture, appliance, or other part of the premises;
7. Maintain in good working order and condition any range, refrigerator, washer, dryer, dishwasher, or other appliances supplied and required to be maintained under a written rental agreement;
8. Conduct himself and require persons on the premises with his consent to conduct themselves in a manner that will not disturb his neighbors’ peaceful enjoyment of the premises;
9. Conduct himself, and require persons in his household and persons on the premises with his consent to conduct themselves so as not to violate the prohibitions contained in Chapters 2925 and 3719 of the Revised Code, or any municipal ordinances that are substantially similar to either of those chapters which relate to controlled substances.

(B) The tenant shall not unreasonably withhold consent for the landlord to enter into the dwelling unit.

Source: Ohio revised code 5321
LEADING LADIES

Women are seizing new opportunities to run the show on campus, but some obstacles still hinder their ascent

Amber Samuelson and Doug Tayek both ran for Undergraduate Student Senate in spring 2003. Both put themselves in the public spotlight and ran their campaigns hoping voters would judge them on their intents to be on the senate.

That's how Tayek's campaign turned out. Samuelson's was a different story. In addition to being judged on her intents, she says voters also judged her on her appearance, especially her hair and clothes.

Her classroom wardrobe suddenly became a target. Sometimes critics said her pants were too tight. Other times the neckline of her shirt was brought into question.

She recalls one shirt that she wore to an open forum was called inappropriate, even though she considered it conservative.

Such is the battle of many women emerging in the next generation of leaders. Most are grateful for the foundations laid by their mothers' generation, making it easier to learn leadership skills.

But there are some problems that have yet to be conquered.

one of the boys?

Three other women also ran for senate, and Samuelson says they received the same criticism. Tayek says he never heard criticism of his appearance during the campaign period.

Samuelson is the only woman elected to USS and says she has adjusted to being the lone female voice out of the nine senators.

"It was a big concern of mine before. It was something that was a little difficult to adjust to," Samuelson says, over the laughter of all the men in the USS office. "I guess I'm one of the boys now."

Tayek says the others senators have adjusted to having Samuelson around. He then takes the opportunity to make a joke with another senator about Samuelson's outfit, which showed a little bit of midriff.

"See, this is what I have to deal with every day," Samuelson says. "They say I'm like a little sister, I don't know if I want eight brothers, but I make fun of them, too."

Miranda Williams, president of Kent Interhall Council, says she considers USS, KIC and the All-Campus Programming Board to be the major organizations on campus. All have women on their executive boards.

"We are seeing an emergence of women as leaders," Williams says.

Conni Dubick, an associate director of student financial aid, says women coming to Kent State tend to have more experience in high school, making it easier for them to attain leadership positions.

"In college, students are able to take steps beyond [what they did in high school]," Dubick says. "College women are at an age where they can take the next step in leadership into volunteer and maybe paid positions."

Dubick helps coordinate the Women's Leadership Initiative, which works to bring accomplished women in leadership positions to speak at Kent State, targeting those students who may not have had leadership experience in high school.

"The more experience women get at KSU on campus, the more likely they are to be active and see the opportunities and preparation it takes [beyond graduation]," Dubick says.

Along with being involved in USS,
Amber Samuelson has been scrutinized in ways her male counterparts will never experience. She is bombarded by criticism and forced to answer questions like, "How should a woman run her campaign?"

Samuelson is the president of Students of Scholarship, is on the Honors College Policy Council and is the Inter-Greek Programming Board chair for Delta Gamma sorority.

"Women can bring a lot to leadership positions," Samuelson says. "Women are known for being good communicators and good listeners."

Williams agrees women do differ from men as leaders but says some of the stereotypes can prevent a woman from holding authority. Although men receive respect when they aggressively run a meeting, she says, women are expected to be compassionate, not assertive.

"When a woman is assertive," Williams says, "it comes across as more threatening. It's hard to balance an assertive quality."

Williams says when she associates with people on a daily basis, she tries to be warm, bubbly and personable.

When she runs meetings, however, she says she likes to get down to business. Because of this, she says, sometimes people are intimidated by her.

**campaigning pains**

While women are leaping ahead in many fields, they remain behind in areas of the political arena.

"In the university, there are more females," Samuelson says. "It's kind of odd that in the USS office, I'm the only one."

A reason for this, Samuelson says, is the nature of the campaigning period where the candidates put themselves up for public scrutiny and have stereotypes attached to them.

An open forum was held during the campaign, where audience members were able to question the candidates. Questions given to other candidates concerned fiscal policy, party affiliation and choices in politics.

Samuelson, however, was offended when she heard her question: How should a woman run her campaign?

"How should a woman run her campaign?" Samuelson says. "Well, exactly like a man should."

The question had been written anonymously and chosen by the election board specifically for Samuelson. She and her campaign advis-
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er then filed a complaint against the board for its question.

"I thought I handled [the question] very well," Samuelson says, adding that these types of questions only further stereotypes.

But Dubick says women do not seem to have much interest in running for USS. Only four women campaigned for the last election.

Kent State President Carol Cartwright says she would like to see more women run.

"It begins with interested women willing to step forth and indicate that they are interested in the position," Cartwright says. "You can't elect them if they are not willing to get nominated or put themselves forward."

Williams says what is happening in terms of gender differences in USS is a microcosm of a trend in state, local and national politics.

"It's a pretty accurate reflection on politics in general," Williams says. "It's not just what you look like or what you say. You have to add a catchy slogan in order to catch people's attention."

times have changed

During Cartwright's path to presidency, she says she had many role models.

They were all men.

"The path I took was typical, except there are not many women who are able to pursue it," Cartwright says. "There are very few women across the nation who have managed to take that final step into the presidency of a very large public institution."

When Cartwright was in school, she was unable to pursue a degree in chemical engineering, partially from lack of support from her family but also because it was a field dominated by males.

"There was a very chilly environment for women when I was going to college," Cartwright says. "That led me to a different career that has been very fulfilling."

Having predominantly female campuses now, Cartwright says, is a national trend.

"People all over the country are trying to figure out why it's tilting this way," she says.

She says the trend is probably caused by a combination of more opportunities for women to advance and more willingness to pursue those new areas.

Kent State's mix of academic programming also contributes to the number of women on campus. Cartwright says Kent State lacks a college of engineering, a program that is predominantly male.

The number of women in leadership positions in the future depends on the efforts of those who hold the positions now.
“Spotting talent, being an advocate for programs, be a role model, be a mentor — these are ways that women can support other women in terms of leadership development,” she says.

Dubick says she hopes to have a mentorship program available to help women assume leadership positions in the future.

“Sometimes it’s so helpful when you are knowing there are going to be challenges,” Dubick says. “If you have women helping you who have had experience, it makes things easier.”

Samuelson’s strongest mentors have been those in her family, especially her mother and grandmother.

She says her grandmother was a materials handler at a time when women usually did not hold that type of industrial position and won an award from a women’s organization. Her mother is a speech pathologist and has had three books published.

“She’s always been a working mother,” Samuelson says. “She showed me it’s OK not to be a housewife.”

(right) Williams takes a phone call in the KIC office. KIC is the governing body of and for Kent State students who live in the residence halls and is a major source of campus programming.

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