

Sig Ep T-shirt crosses line into indecency



Daniel Glossenger

Just when I thought University students had hit the rock bottom of disrespect and had nowhere to go but up, they gave me a sucker punch to prove me wrong. I was hopeful that we had moved beyond misogynistic insults and ignorant attitudes toward those around us. I thought we might be on the road to the promised land of respecting women, appreciating decency and judging people not by the cup size of their bras but by the content of their character. I hoped upon hopes that we were getting better.

And then — and then — Sigma Phi Epsilon. Sigh. Where should I begin? I probably should start off with the admission that I am no angel. I'm hard-pressed to stop giggling when I watch someone slide on a patch of ice and fall on his bum. I cackled when I found out that my seven-year-old niece threw up all over the school bus, and they wouldn't let her back on it. I'm so bad that I thought it was hilarious when one of my closest (female) friends had a Freudian slip of sorts and called Hillary Clinton "the breast candidate" instead of "the best candidate" out there. But I think that's probably where I stop. Somewhere along the line, we all need to stop. Cheekiness is all well and good, but at a certain point, it's a slap in the face, and that's what the Sigma Phi Epsilon T-shirt comes down to. Let me be blunt. I think the rush shirt is absolutely, positively repugnant to common decency, and it impugns the good name of Greeks at Truman.

The rush shirt is absolutely, positively repugnant to common decency, and it impugns the good name of the Greek system at Truman.

Here's why: First, it depicts women as sex objects (I hope I'm not being too harsh by inferring that from the well-endowed stick-figure women). A little less than a year ago, the American Psychological Association released a report that summarized a whole boatload of findings about sexual objectification of women. Among them were that objectifying women has negative consequences for their cognitive performance and for their mental and physical well-being, and

that it even interferes with males' abilities to find appealing female partners and to fully enjoy intimacy with female partners. I don't want to bore you with the details, so read it or just a summary of it online at the APA Web site. The T-shirt also implies that women are shallow. After all, on the T-shirt, women flock to new Sig Ep members because they are Sig Eps. Although I won't deny that there are indeed shallow women out there, I'm just not sure they're at Truman, and I'm not sure there are any who are quite so shallow as the shirt depicts. Third, the shirt offends me as a non-affiliated male. Before you judge, here's my disclaimer: This isn't about the Greek system. I'm pretty apathetic toward the Greek system at Truman, to be perfectly honest. But when a group — any group — implies that I'd be better equipped to attract those who I am attracted to just by being a member of that group, then I just get pissed off.

That's right. I'm pissed off about your rush shirt, Sig Eps, and I'm not even one of the women that you slimed in your crudely drawn cartoon. I don't know who among you thought it was a funny idea — but it isn't. I'm tired of certain organizations giving Greeks a bad name and giving men at Truman a bad name. I just hope that a few other people are as sick of it as I am. If you're like me and you're a wee bit peeved by all this, realize that we need to make a change, and change starts with you. Recognizing and challenging inappropriate behavior and words can do wonders to stop them — by ignoring them or by hoping they'll stop when people grow up, we foster the idea that they're OK. In other words, don't be uncouth, harken back to when decency was the norm, and just plain be nice to each other. It's that simple, Dick. Daniel Glossenger is a senior history major from Nashville, Tenn.

Men's Resource Center would benefit all without harm to WRC



Alex Hayden

I'm going to come off sounding like a male chauvinist pig.

Heck, I'll put money on someone calling me one after they either hear about or read this column. But, I'll say it now and ask that you remember this: Talking about improving something for men does not translate into degrading something for women. Keep this in mind when I say the following:

We should have a Men's Resource Center. Now, this is not said out of sheer spite or of one those claims like, "Women already have more rights than men, so we should have everything they have." No, I say that we should have a Men's Resource Center because it would be a great addition to Truman's campus. Just like the Women's Resource Center (WRC), a Men's Resource Center (MRC) would be able to help with issues of gender and identity. But instead of focusing on women, there would, obviously enough, be more emphasis placed on men's issues.

Still, I know that one of you already is thinking, "Wait, doesn't the Women's Resource Center already do that with men?" And, to some extent, it does. As its Web site states, "The WRC tries to make all our programming and services, though primarily women-focused, beneficial to men as well." The focus, then, is primarily on women, as the WRC should be. So why not have a similar haven where men are allowed to discuss their own gender-bound issues?

Interestingly enough, the WRC's Web site also answers the question of why there is not an MRC while discussing the WRC's own conception: "The WRC was brought about because of a widely expressed need and student-driven initiative to create a women's center. As of yet, there has not been a similar demand for a men's

AROUND THE QUAD

What would you think of a Men's Resource Center?

 Nichole Reiling Senior	<p>"I think it'd be great, especially since the WRC does so much."</p>	 Jacob Ratliff Junior	<p>"Since we don't have one it doesn't seem like there's much of a need, but I'd check it out."</p>
 Joey Risch Senior	<p>"As a privileged white male, I can't believe Truman doesn't have a resource center to cater to my needs!"</p>	 Torin Brenner Junior	<p>"I don't know if it'd be used much, and I don't know what services it'd offer."</p>

resource center on campus, which should not be taken as the fault of the WRC." It is this last sentence that I wholeheartedly agree with — both that there has not been a student-driven demand for an MRC and that the WRC is not to be considered at fault for this. The WRC should be focusing on women's issues, as it was established to do.

However, I do not feel that an MRC ever will be established if we must wait for a student-driven initiative, especially if it involves a men's movement. The reasoning behind this is twofold.

First, as I preempted at the beginning of this article, most men's movements are translated as being chauvinist in nature. As such, an MRC initiative might be misunderstood. Second, an ideal of machismo pervades and endures both in our culture and on our campus. Anything not macho is considered feminine — a quality that most men will try to stay away from.

A move to create an MRC might be read as "gay" (which is, unfortunately, still considered an insult) and would be, to put it nicely, discouraged.

Of course, the ironic part is that a Men's Resource Center might help eliminate such mentalities as machismo and chauvinism being inherently male, but unfortunately, an MRC will have to wait for these mentalities to dissipate (and that's assuming that they will dissipate) before it will have student-driven support.

Until then, men on Truman's campus will just have to struggle with questions of identity without the help of a male-oriented center. Questions like, "What does it mean to be a hetero/homo/bisexual man?" or, even more simply, "What does it mean to 'be a man?'" either will have to be explored alone or with the help of a center that is primarily focused on women. In either case, I fear that allotting resources exclusively to men on campus will not happen for many years to come. At least by then, though, I won't have come off sounding like a chauvinist pig.

Alex Hayden is a senior communication and philosophy and religion major from Jefferson City, Mo.

Safe Rides should go forward in spite of concerns about liabilities



Phil Jarrett

A year ago, after spending the night in the drunk tank, a friend of mine vowed to return one year later to do drunken cartwheels on the Quad.

This friend, who I will call Brent, was a junior, and it was his first time being drunk at college. Clearly, Brent was not a stereotypical booze-soaked college student. On the contrary, he was a clean-cut video game enthusiast just a few weeks shy of 21 who could enjoy the company of friends without the aid of alcohol. But on this particular night, he drank. And you know what? He had a pretty good time.

That was, of course, until he met DPS just a few yards away from his residence hall. Brent's strange trot clued in the officers to his inebriation, and he subsequently was carted to a local holding cell, where he shared the night with a shirtless, raving lunatic dragged in for a domestic disturbance.

Meanwhile, the rest of his friends back at the residence halls passed the hours making frantic phone calls, trying to locate him. By sunrise, all were expecting news of death or alien abduction, but not the drunk tank. It was perhaps the best of all possible outcomes, but even Brent's father would express surprise about campus policy when his son phoned in his confession.

What kind of school throws kids in the slammer for being drunk and mild-mannered?

Brent since has moved off campus. And although the cartwheels never happened, it only seems appropriate that Truman is celebrating his incarceration's one-year anniversary by slowing down the development of the Safe Rides program, a free taxi service for Truman Students around Kirksville that will, in all likelihood, primarily be used by sloshed individuals.

The objections to alcohol consumption are many — health issues, safety issues and a plethora of other society issues. But the fact remains that a substantial number of Truman students admit to driving under the influence of alcohol. And although the bad behavior of students hardly is getting endorsed by this University, there is need for the implementation of practical policy that acknowledges college students' affinity for alcohol rather than ignoring it.

Logistical snags with the Safe Rides program have ended the trial run of the service set to begin at the end of this month. And although the University's demand for some logistical clarifications are warranted, a list of explicit criteria needs to be issued so the program can overcome this indefinite tangle with bureaucracy. For starters, the dean of Student Affairs is requesting all drivers to undergo training before getting behind the wheel. A good idea, but trained by whom and for how long? Issues of insurance and oversight also have been brought up, but suspending all rights to continue without much valuable feedback is like asking for a magic password.

Safe Rides should be allowed to begin its trial run at the end of February if the issues of training, oversight and insurance are tackled before that time. This can be done by the adoption of policy from the Safe Ride Programs United, a coalition of programs such as Mizzou's STRIPES designated-driving program. Creating competency tests for the Safe Ride emergency policies and establishing set manage-

ment procedures that mimic pre-existing programs' easily could expedite this whole process.

Certainly a Truman program will run into its own unique snags, but it does not have to worry about starting from scratch. The policies of other universities' programs have proven effective. Immediate implementation of these borrowed policies could help get this program going and get more drunk drivers out from behind the wheel.

There is no doubt in my mind that the dean of Student Affairs and Truman bureaucracy at large have the best of intentions in trying to work out the kinks in this program. But continued fear of liability from the inevitably stupid actions of its student populace has created an environment where stupid actions become dangerous ones.

Indefinitely stalling the Safe Rides program is sending out the wrong message — that student disorganization is somehow worse than a sizable number of Truman students drinking and driving. In the same sense, throwing non-violent drunk students into a holding tank is a total waste of resources, and it sends the subliminal message that on-campus drinking students should not come home at all.

This University needs to start taking a practical stance on alcohol safety, one that recognizes that negative reinforcement only goes so far. The Safe Rides program is not an endorsement of irresponsible behavior. It is just savvy enough to know that irresponsibility happens in college and that responsible action can undermine potential damage and make this campus a better one.

Phil Jarrett is a senior communication and philosophy and religion major from Chesterfield, Mo.

McCain is best hope for GOP victory



Nathan Atkinson

Lately I've been hearing on cable news and from friends that John McCain isn't conservative enough. Deep down, however, people actually are saying it's simply not extreme enough. Although I'm liberal and admit I might not have the best perspective to judge this issue, I'm still pretty sure McCain is a conservative. I also believe he is the Republicans' only chance to unite their party and win the White House.

By saying he's not conservative enough, are people saying he's not militant enough to overturn Roe v. Wade, put forward a constitutional amendment to ban gay marriage or deport millions of Mexicans? If so, then many Republicans have unreasonable expectations of their candidates — 'cause none of that is happening anytime soon.

To those extremist Republicans, I am truly sorry that not everything is going to go your way — many others in this country disagree with you, and we still live in a republic.

McCain is the only one who will be able to unite the party. He might not be the most conservative of the candidates, but saying he's not conservative at all is undue. After all, McCain is pro-life, pro-Iraq war, anti-gay marriage (although not for a Constitutional amendment), and he also is for lower taxes. He clearly has many, many conservative views.

So why do people say he is not conservative enough? My guess (and it's just a guess because I'm a liberal) is that it's his immigration policies, his willingness to work with Democrats and his lack of overtly religious-political overtones.

But his immigration policy, for one, actually is reasonable, unlike many other Republican plans, and does not simply call for exporting millions of people. I also do not think that he should forfeit his conservative label simply because he is willing to work with people who have views that are different from his. Lastly, from my liberal perspective, McCain does not scare me as much as the other candidates because he does not constantly try to fuse religion and politics.

This does not mean he is not conservative. It simply means he is more into dealing with the issues at hand than pandering to people's religious convictions to get votes.

McCain does deviate at times from voting strictly Republican on certain issues and has thus been labeled as a maverick, but he still votes nearly 90 percent along party lines, which is more consistent than, for example, Senator McCaskill is with the Democrats and hardly worth mentioning in an argument claiming that he is not conservative enough.

McCain also is the Republican who is most likely to bring the widest range of people to his camp. Republicans should stop this silly argument about whether McCain is conservative enough and support their only-hope candidate. It even looks like McCain at least has a fairly good shot at beating either Clinton or Obama.

Honestly, I must commend the Republicans on this because I assumed six months ago that they did not stand a chance, but I was wrong. Republicans can, and probably will, still bicker about whether McCain is conservative enough.

This is fine, but they're only hurting themselves in the long run. I encourage them to go ahead and plug on for Huckabee — I'd prefer him as the nominee, actually. After all, Huckabee versus Obama? Don't make me laugh.

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WEB POLL

Did your favorite candidate win in the primary or caucus of your state?

My state hasn't yet voted. (10% — 5 votes)

No, but he or she got some delegates. (20% — 10 votes)

