

# Urinator in elevators need to learn respect



**Kelsey Landhuis**

Here is a piece of advice I never dreamed of having to give to college students: Don't pee in the elevator. It's common sense, really. The occasional 5-year-old boy might need a reminder, but even most of them — with the possible exception of Adam Sandler's charge in "Big Daddy" — know that public urination generally is frowned upon. So why can't supposedly intelligent adults figure this out? I don't know what message peeing prowlers like the one in Centennial Hall last weekend are trying to

send, but I'm pretty sure it's not working. Unless their goal is to make themselves look like jerks, in which case, congratulations, jerks: Mission accomplished. Urine in the elevators is just one symptom of a much bigger problem — a lack of respect for the University buildings students use and share every day. Examples of neglect, mistreatment and flat-out vandalism are scattered throughout campus. Sticking gum on the undersides of desks and scrawling graffiti in bathroom stalls and study cubicles are examples of behavior I would expect to see at a middle school, not a university. These actions reveal a disregard for University facilities and by extension, a lack of respect for the University itself and everyone associated with it, from the custodian who has to scrape that gum off the desk to the students who chose to enroll here. If you need a way to occupy your

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time during a bathroom break or a study break, there are better options than inciting inter-fraternity animosity with inflammatory graffiti — like reading the Index, for example. But hey, at least the people who doodle in the bathrooms actually are using them. The elevator urinators, for some reason, have chosen a different location to relieve themselves, creating much larger problems than used chewing gum and graffiti. Peeing in elevators is unsanitary. It is revolting. Most of all, it is unnecessary. No matter what statement you are trying to make, there probably is a better way to do it than taking a leak in a Centennial Hall lift.

One of the most puzzling aspects of the pee problem is that this is not an isolated incident. It happened last semester in Missouri Hall, causing a temporary shut-down of the south elevator. It happened in the spring of 2006 in Centennial Hall, according to an article in the April 6, 2006 issue of the Index. It had been a recurring problem in Missouri Hall prior to that time, according to the same article. Is peeing in the elevator some kind of college rite of passage, like wearing the same T-shirt and jeans for five days in a row or eating cold pizza for breakfast? Defacing University property causes frustration, inconvenience and low morale, but students also are affected in a more tangible way. According to the Residence Life Handbook's policy on damage and vandalism, if no culprit is identified and the problem persists, "the inevitable result may be charges applied to the entire community, group

discipline, or an increase in room and board charges." If my housing fees are going to go up, I want it to be because of improvements to the residence halls, not because some joker decided to write "[Insert random Greek organization name] sucks!" in a community bathroom stall. Enough is enough. By defacing University property, you are not sticking it to The Man. You are sticking it to your fellow students and the hard-working custodial staff, who must not only live in the places where the vandalism is occurring, but are forced to pick up the tab for cleaning up or are forced to repair it. Fortunately, the vandalism problem has an extremely simple solution: Just stop.

*Kelsey Landhuis is a junior English and French major from Cedar Rapids, Iowa*

### AROUND THE QUAD

What do you think about people urinating in residence hall elevators?



**"That's pretty immature and disgusting, and it makes Truman look bad."**

*Sharon Scherffius  
Sophomore*



**"It's inconvenient for people with disabilities because they have to shut it down."**

*Regina Rodgers  
Junior*



**"I would say it's no good. Of course, if you really have to go, then I don't know."**

*Ray Bopp  
Freshman*



**"I'm just happy I'm in Dobson where there are no elevators."**

*Jennifer Darlington  
Freshman*

# \$50 add-drop fee discourages students from exploring courses



**Andrew Kindiger**

When you sit down to peruse the open course list on TruView to build a schedule for a future semester, what do you think about? Some might be trying to finish up their last LSP requirements, trying to tie up a major or simply taking a shot in the dark to become a full-time student. When choosing classes off of a Web site with only a title and a brief description to go by, there is a possibility that the class you select might not be a good fit. So you might decide to drop the class, and as long as you do it by the end of the first week, there shouldn't be a problem. But is the first week of class a strong indicator of whether a student should stay in a course? Tuesday and Thursday classes only meet twice a week, so a student would have to evaluate quickly if he or she did want to incur a \$50 drop fee. I think this deadline should at least be pushed back a week or so in order to give students time to evaluate their situation. Whether or not a student wants to drop a

course will become apparent only once the student is able to understand what the course is going to be like. Even though professors usually give out a syllabus on the first day, it is going to take more than a tentative schedule for a student to realize the demands of a particular class. The University registrar Web site indicates that these fees exist in order to compensate for losses the University absorbs in terms of a student-to-seat availability ratio. This affects faculty salaries, teaching loads and course availability. It also is mentioned on the Web site that an instructor's time spent grading the work of a student who dropped a course then is lost. To me, that does not seem like an adequate reason for a fee. Students pay a flat fee for tuition whether they are taking 12 or 17 credit hours, so their financial contribution to the University should remain the same as long as they take at least 12 credit hours. The more compelling reason for the fee seems to be to deter students from shopping around, as the Web site states. A student may arbitrarily take a course with the intention of dropping if it is not what he or she expected. Wait a minute — is that a bad thing, or is it completely normal when you select a class off a Web site with no prior insight as to what the course is going to entail? And isn't Truman, as a liberal arts school, sort of in the business of encouraging students to take classes outside of

their comfort zones? So although this mandate still exists, students at the same time are discouraged to alter their decisions? That doesn't make sense to me. As long as students are paying tuition, they should have the freedom to manipulate schedules in order to secure paths of academic study that are truly suitable to them. Even if a fee was completely absent, there still would be that looming "W" on one's transcript acting as a deterrent from withdrawing from a course past a particular deadline. Students should be in no way discouraged to drop a course if it is not a good fit. Even if Truman begins to have a substantial problem with students shopping around, there should be a longer grace period for a student to make a comprehensive decision on whether or not to drop the course. The only way to fully understand the demands of a class and if it will truly work for you is to take it. The seat-to-student ratio simply is a causality of the necessity for students to have the freedom to alter their schedules. And honestly, if cost becomes that big of an issue in relation to dropping a course, the cost of tuition should be reevaluated, not the right of students to alter their schedules.

*Andrew Kindiger is a freshman English major from Liberty, Mo.*

# Internationalizing campus ought to be much higher of a priority



**Nathan Atkinson**

I frankly have become bored with our liberal arts education — it seems to be missing something. We are a liberal arts institution in name, but I think we are lacking in actual practice of this mission statement. One solution would be increased attention on international studies. When I say that we need attention on international studies, I am not saying that the University does not do well with its current program. I just think it could be better. I am not the only one who thinks Truman should work on internationalizing itself. The first I heard of this was when Steven Reschly, associate professor of history, pointed me toward a curriculum position paper titled "Running Head: Internationalizing Truman," which he coauthored with senior Becky Hadley and Jay Self, assistant professor of communication. The paper can be found on the provost Web site. One improvement would be making the International Studies office larger and more prominent on campus. Currently, the University only offers a minor in International Studies, which

is a fine program but a far cry from my ideal department that truly could bring intercultural experiences to every student. Although it is better than nothing, I have not thought that my minor in international studies has really exposed me to foreign cultures on any meaningful level. The department should be expanded if the University wishes to show it cares about giving its students a beneficial introduction to of other cultures. Another change that really could improve Truman is to expand our study abroad program. Eventually the University should require students to either participate in at least a three-week interim study abroad program or require students to take on more international studies coursework. Requiring one of these things would force students to learn more about other cultures and better prepare them for an increasingly interconnected world. To achieve this, the University must make studying abroad more affordable. Many Truman students study abroad, but many more are unable to because of cost. The University has good scholarships and loans specifically for study abroad experiences, but not enough to make studying abroad accessible to everyone. Aid sometimes falls short of the total cost. The University's cultural loan program tops out at \$5,000, which is fine for interim programs but is only a fraction of the cost of semester-long programs. Students do have options for aid at the state and federal level, but Truman

should invest more heavily in making studying abroad more affordable. Another way to improve would be requiring more foreign language courses. Other courses that could be stressed more include the Intercultural Perspective of the LSP. Students might complain about extra requirements now, but I do not think it would be a major problem once they were implemented and an expected part of the curriculum. Many other colleges and universities across the country have implemented such programs, which have served only to enrich their students' learning. Internationalizing Truman would make our school more reflective of our mission statement. Students chose to attend Truman for a reason, and a real liberal arts education should be delivered to them. "Running Head: Internationalizing Truman" references Tzetvan Todorov, who illustrated that familiarity of different cultures is "a core mission of liberal arts education." And as the paper states, "It is impossible to be a true liberal arts university without a global perspective." These quotations reflect my opinion exactly: In order for Truman to consider itself a liberal arts institution, the University must internationalize and give a global perspective to the students who choose to attend.

*Nathan Atkinson is a senior political science major from Glasgow, Mo.*

# Clinton's comments denigrate youth who truly need insurance



**Daniel Glossenger**

Besides this ditty of an introduction, this column is going to be a little different. Rather than launch into a tirade about guns, abortion or peeing in lifts, I'm going to take a back seat to somebody else for a change (shocking, I know). I didn't watch the debate last night between Sen. Hillary Clinton and Sen. Barack Obama. I should have, but I doubt that very many of you decided that watching a couple of hours of MSNBC was worth your time, either. A few weeks ago I tried making it through a CNN debate but ended up zonked out on my couch after 25 minutes, so I can't blame you.

Yes, Missouri already voted, and Clinton won our district, and Obama won the state. But it's important that we know what these two candidates say because one of these two will be the next president of the United States (no offense to John McCain supporters, but I'm a dyed-in-the-wool liberal Democrat). I tracked down a transcript of last night's debate, so here's a chunk of it, unedited and with a few (clearly marked) interjections. I'm going to start about 20 minutes in, after a long discussion about health insurance.

SEN. CLINTON: About 20 percent of — about 20 percent of the people who are uninsured have the means to buy insurance. They're often young people —

MODERATOR: Senator —

SEN. CLINTON: - who think they're immortal —

ME: Did you catch that? Let me put it back together — "They're often young people who think they're immortal." Sen. Clinton not only thinks there's a decent chance that I do have the means to buy insurance and, like a ninny, I don't, but also thinks that I think I'm immortal as an explanation. In other words, I (and some of you) just got blamed for not buying insurance, and I need her to mandate my purchase of insurance by garnishing wages I don't have. Back to the transcript.

SEN. OBAMA: Which is why I cover them.

SEN. CLINTON: — except when the illness or the accident strikes. And what Senator Obama has said, that

then, once you get to the hospital, you'll be forced to buy insurance. I don't think that's a good idea. We ought to plan for it —

ME: All Obama is saying is that if you show up at the hospital with a broken arm and you haven't yet opted-in to one of several plans, you'll have to do so at that time. Back to the show.

SEN. OBAMA: With respect —

SEN. CLINTON: — and we ought to make sure we cover everyone. That is the only way to get to universal health care coverage.

SEN. OBAMA: With respect —

SEN. CLINTON: That is what I've worked for for 15 years —

SEN. OBAMA: With respect —

SEN. CLINTON: — and I believe that we can achieve it. But if we don't even have a plan to get there, and we start out by leaving people, you'll never ever control costs, improve quality and cover everyone.

SEN. OBAMA: With respect to the young people, my plan specifically says that up until the age of 25, you will be able to be covered under your parents' insurance plan, so that cohort that Senator Clinton is talking about will, in fact, have coverage.

ME: Earlier in the debate, Obama explained his plan, which basically says that if you can't afford insurance, you'll get a subsidy to pay for it so you can enroll in a government-provided health care plan, including families who are paying out the yin-yang to private insurers for keeping young people on their plans.

I voted for Barack Obama in the primary, but my heart wasn't necessarily in it. I bought a couple of campaign buttons because I'm a history major. But I'd have been OK if I had had to vote for Clinton in the general election this November.

I'm not OK with that option anymore. I'm not OK with politicians manipulating people into blaming victims, whether they're victims of an economy or any other sort. I'm a college student, I pay my taxes and next year I'll be interning as a schoolteacher, earning a stipend that won't be enough to pay all the bills.

I'd rather vote for a Republican who I can trust to blame people for not working hard enough for a full dinner pail than a Democrat who's disguising that belief. I'm not OK with being called someone who thinks he's immortal, Sen. Hillary Clinton, and I'm not OK with you being president of the United States.

I hope none of you are, either.

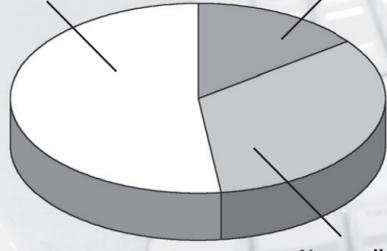
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### WEB POLL

Is the University community doing enough to protect the student body?

**There's always something that can be done.**  
(52% — 14 votes)

**Yes.**  
(15% — 4 votes)



**Not at all.**  
(33% — 9 votes)

**This week's question:**  
Should professors excuse athletes on scholarships for missing class for games?  
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