

## ONE-ON-ONE

This week, two of our columnists debate each other. Their topic for this issue is:

# First semester versus last semester at Truman



Molly Skyles

## Freshman year brings countless revelations

Legally, once a person turns 18 he or she becomes an adult, in that he or she is allowed to vote and leave home. This is the age when most people go to college, and college, for me, symbolizes independence — I am now an adult.

However, my experience as a first-semester college student was a little different than I expected. My vision of college was a skewed one — everything from academics to social and residence hall life ended up being beyond the scope of my imagination.

When I entered college, I thought I would magically change into a different person. The Kirksville fairy would cast a spell, and as soon as I stepped foot on campus, I would suddenly become incredibly intelligent in every aspect of academia. No surprise, I was wrong. I learned that college is much different from high school. Here I have to work a lot harder to get good grades, which took some getting used to. You understand the dilemma: Picking up the U.S. history book and actually reading it versus staring aimlessly at Facebook for two hours. It's a wonder how much good actually reading and studying can do for a person's grade.

Other than academics,

an obvious new thing was adjusting to residence hall life and a roommate. Maybe I've seen too many college-based movies, but I envisioned my roommate and I becoming best friends and my floor-mates and I living like a giant happy family. In my case, the latter is true to some extent. My floor-mates have turned into some of my good friends, but the relationship between my roommate and me is a different story.

This past semester we said about five words to one another. In fact, she left one weekend and I never even knew she was gone until Sunday night when she walked in with her arms full of bags. But, we did not loathe one another by any means. We were civil, with the understanding that we had nothing in common. She ended up leaving Truman, but presumably not because of our lack of friendship. I suppose I was too optimistic about residence hall life.

My social life in college was another thing to get used to. In high school I had a curfew and had to call home to let my parents know where I was at all times. In college I can do anything I want at any time. I've real-

ized this newfound freedom can be a great thing, but also can get a person into lots of trouble if he or she isn't careful. I didn't go through rush like a lot of my peers did, but I have been to my fair share of fraternities and experienced the party scene at Truman. I am happy to say that despite it all, I've pulled through with a GPA to make Mommy and Daddy proud. It's all about balance.

I've learned more than just how to pull

off a respectable GPA this first semester. I've learned to work harder, be more open-minded toward others and adjust to differences. College does not equal total independence and adulthood like I thought it would. I live in a dorm and have a meal plan. Any bills I have are deferred until after I graduate, but my only source of income is a measly monthly check from the Index and an occasional \$20 when my parents are feeling generous. Although I did gain a lot of independence, I also realized that college is far from the real world.

Molly Skyles is a freshman communication major from St. Louis, Mo.



Jackie Gonzalez

## Graduation evokes nostalgia, fond memories

Tomorrow concludes the first week of my last semester at Truman. Although this week contained an unnecessary amount of stress and frustrations, I am determined that my final semester will be a good one. I am going to savor every free moment I have while utilizing campus resources and strengthening relationships with those closest to me.

Although I feel mentally ready to enter the graduate world and leave Truman, emotionally I am a complete wreck. I keep reminding myself to detach myself from this oasis, but I can't bring myself to get over the quirks of small-town living and the fruitful opportunities I have encountered since fall 2005.

Everyone who knows me knows that I adore this campus. It's silly to think that I ever doubted my decision to come here — I can't imagine being happier anywhere else. The benefits of attending a small school surpass any of the temptations I once had to stay in a big city near the coast. Small classes, smart people and fairly accessible professors are just a few of the things that I've come to really appreciate about Truman. But perhaps most important, we go to a university rich in opportunities for work experience and personal

advancement, which give us a real advantage in the long run.

During Winter Break, I was forced to endure a holiday party that was painstakingly reminiscent of a high school reunion. Speaking to old friends at other schools across the country, I realized that it's not the name of the school that matters but the skill set you've developed. Truman students are extremely marketable. I'm not going to lie and say that a degree from Harvard means nothing, but I know quite a few people from schools like Stanford and University of California, Berkeley who have yet to find jobs outside of the retail realm.

As many others frantically job-search, here I am sitting and waiting hopefully for a few fat envelopes to show up at my door in March — acceptance letters for graduate programs. It is daunting not to know where I will be living mere months from now.

Though I will miss almost everything about Truman, one of the sadder parts about leaving Kirksville is that I will probably never live in a town like this again. I guess you could say I'm

pretty attached. I feel like I've contributed to this community more than I ever have in my hometown, and I've grown very fond of it. I have always sensed this invisible divide between Kirksville residents and students, but I am glad I have ventured out and made my time here worthwhile. I've volunteered at Ray Miller Elementary, helped with Hope's Kitchen and worked at the local McDonald's. I am involved with the community theatre group. I attempt to support local businesses as much as I am financially capable and donate goods to local charities when I can. Feeling like a contributor to both the community and the University has been a very

rewarding experience.

I should stop acting like this whole college

thing is over. I have a whole semester left to transition out of this land of joyfulness, challenges and affordability. I might be miles away come fall, but I hope to remain attached to Truman and the area by any means possible after graduation.

Jackie Gonzalez is a senior communication and history major from San Diego, Calif.

### College does not equal total independence and adulthood.

### It's silly to think I doubted my decision to come here.

## Art and porn are more different than some might think



Whitney Fay

As I strolled with my mom through the Columbia Mall post-New Year's during break, I pointed out a poster to her. It was hanging in a little kiosk in the middle of the breezeway, and I told my mom that she should buy it for me for my birthday. It was a portrait of a nude woman, tastefully done and rather stylized, reclining on blue tiles. I think it was a Matisse print. My mom went apoplectic with indignation.

"You can't buy that! It's indecent! You don't want people to think you buy pornography!" She tried to yank me away from the offending painting, but I stood my ground.

"But mom, it's not pornography — it's art! Look, she's not having sex or anything, she's just lying there, basking in the adoration of the artist." She tried to yank me away again, but I couldn't tell whether she was huffy about my desire for the painting or at my reference to sex. As we finally walked away, I tried convincing her that the painting was not pornography, but art. The woman in the painting was nude, not nekkid. As I tried to articulate the difference between porn and art, I realized that sometimes it's kind of hard to do. I mean, what do you, dear readers, think the difference is?

Nude drawings have a long history — some examples date all the way back to cave drawings and ancient Egyptian paintings. Of course, just about every Greek work of art contained some example of nudity. Later, with the emergence of the Church and its

patronage, nudity was frowned upon, but some Biblical characters lent themselves to nude portrayals (Adam and Eve, King David, Jesus on the Cross). Mythological personalities often were portrayed nude as well. This went on and on through the centuries up until the modern era, when the nude form swiftly was deemed taboo. I would like to think that this had something to do with the invention of the camera. Suddenly the nude form was not the sole province of idealistic artists — anyone who knew how to use a camera could capture any kind of nude event that they wanted to.

Even in ancient nude art, there has been distinction between the sacred and the profane: some depictions are purely for storytelling or artistic purposes and some are clearly for sexual incitement, and this is no different today. In general, I think the distinction between art and pornography lies somewhere in the fuzzy in-between

of nudity for the sake of exploring the beauty of the human form and nakedness on display for sexual pleasure. Art majors of the world, feel free to comment online and tell me what the party line on nudity is. But what I'm trying to get at here is that I think we, as Americans, generally disapprove of nudity in art, and I don't think that we need to feel this way. Throw off your Puritan chains, people! Live a little! And by all means, learn to admire the naked human body for what it is — short, tall, many-colored, skinny, fat — and stop relegating it to online porn. The human body is amazing, and it's about time we showed it some respect.

Whitney Fay is a senior communication major from Shaw, Mo.

### AROUND THE QUAD

What was the highlight of your Winter Break?

 <b>"I attended an APO convention in Boston."</b> <i>Garrett Bremer senior</i>	 <b>"I was asked to be in my neighbor's wedding."</b> <i>Jessica Flieg freshman</i>
 <b>"I became addicted to Nintendo Wii."</b> <i>Jonathan Arnold sophomore</i>	 <b>"I went to an Iowa Chops hockey game."</b> <i>Amity Downing freshman</i>

## Art of film is lost in a flurry of blockbusters, award shows



Tyler Retherford

I have to remind myself every now and again that despite the slew of comic-book adaptations, the rebirth of 3-D, and the continuations of movie franchises like "Saw," "Rocky," and "Not Another (choose a genre) Movie," film is a form of art. This year's Golden Globes both reaffirmed and brought the possibility of threatening this fact. The award show was, in a way, a microcosm of the problems confronting the film industry, threatening to corrupt what should be a powerful and wide-reaching art form to turn it into a dumbed-down money-making practice.

The surprise wins for "The Wrestler" and "Slumdog Millionaire" were a victory over the usual Hollywood approach of inundating us with every sort of advertisement available, be it trailers, commercials, billboards or anything else a massive budget can procure to build hype. At a certain point, after I've seen enough commercials or posters

proclaiming a film to be "this year's biggest," a certain part of me starts to assume that it is true that most people genuinely liked the film regardless of what I thought about it. Although building hype might be profitable, and to some degree necessary, in order to bring in an audience, once it reaches a certain point it begins to deteriorate the ability to look at a film and analyze its value as art.

Certainly not every film has to convey an important message. I admit that every now and then I'd rather just watch a movie that is fun and that I don't have to think too hard about, but I think film awards should fill the role of an art critic. Consequently, I was very excited to see that even in categories like animated feature film and comedies, films such as "Wall-E" and "In Bruges" that did have a strong message and lots of nuance won awards.

Another potential pitfall of award shows like the Golden Globes became apparent in the arguments over Heath Ledger's award. Clearly there should be recognition of the death of someone involved in the film community, and I wouldn't have

any problem with a whole slew of remembrance ceremonies and other events celebrating Ledger's career and life. However, there's a real risk that the objectivity required in critiquing films can be jeopardized if awards are given to actors, directors or projects primarily because of their merits outside of their actual role or contribution to the piece. In other words,

a film should be examined separately from any cloud of sorrow resulting from the death of an actor

involved in the project (read: pity vote). This might not have been the case with Ledger's win, given that his role was by most accounts a relatively strong one, and the competition for best supporting actor was somewhat overwhelming. However, it does point to the possibility that award shows could corrupt their role as art critics and turn the judging and analysis into a mere popularity contest or an extension of the red carpet affair outside, reducing art to spectacle.

Tyler Retherford is a sophomore anthropology major from Springfield, Mo.

### Award shows could turn judging and analysis into a mere popularity contest.