

## Students show spirit with action, not apparel



**Tyler Retherford**

School spirit is one of those terms used frequently but is never really defined. While the new "Purple Friday" movement throughout campus claims to promote school spirit, it does not mesh with what I consider the expression to mean.

"Purple Friday" certainly has been vocal, popping up on Facebook, the online school calendar, TruView and in student organization mailboxes, and I expect that it will be successful in persuading quite a few students to start wearing school colors once a week. But I doubt that wearing purple has any kind of influence on school spirit.

I went to a Catholic high school where we were required to wear uniform polo shirts with a school logo, but most of my graduating class had very little attachment to or investment in our school. We tended to show up to sporting events, but mostly just to see our friends play. We bought school hoodies, but mostly just because it was the cool thing to do. Once classes ended for the day, most students returned to their personal lives as quickly as they could. There's a difference between showing affiliation with an institution and being genuinely willing to dedicate time and effort to making it a better place.

Truman is a different matter entirely. The majority of students don't walk around wearing shirts that identify them as a part of the institution but their actions do. School spirit isn't the willingness to buy overpriced sweatshirts and show up to watch sporting events. It's about getting involved and invested

in the institution we are all a part of, whether we're students, faculty or staff. In this regard, Truman has an overabundance of school spirit.

Rather than looking at football game attendance or the color palette of apparel on the Quad, we should be looking at the work Student Senate is doing or how many students volunteer for the Big Event each year. The breadth and variety of student organizations is pretty staggering, and to me, a much better measure of the way students build a sense of community and belonging here. Seeing professors at sporting events doesn't really make me think they're somehow more attached to the University, but their overwhelming willingness to write letters of recommendation, critique

internship applications and even mentor special research projects is a huge credit to the University as a whole.

School spirit isn't something that can be improved with a trite action like giving out prizes to those wearing school colors. School spirit is about how connected someone is to their school, which in turn is based on the entirety of their daily interactions with that institution. The small class sizes and the small size of the student population in

general make it easy to get involved in whatever aspects of the University students might be interested in, and the Center for Student Involvement makes it easy to start up a new organization if an interest isn't already represented. It's that sort of

personal involvement and willingness to invest time and effort into the school community that makes school spirit.

There certainly isn't anything wrong with showing your support for Truman by wearing purple, but that's just a way to display school spirit, not build it. Truman isn't doing poorly when it comes to school spirit, we're just measuring it the wrong way. It takes a spirited student body to run two on-campus radio stations, a newspaper, a news channel and the Student Research Conference as well as several other topical research conferences. We should stop thinking of school spirit as something you show but instead as something you do.

*Tyler Retherford is a junior anthropology major from Springfield, Mo.*

### AROUND THE QUAD

What would you do if your scholarships were taken away?



**"I would have filled out the FAFSA and would have gotten a loan."**

*Jordan Jesse  
Junior*



**"There would be a long rant and a Facebook status."**

*Johanna Ross  
Freshman*



**"I would probably have to transfer to a community college."**

*Kirsten Patterson  
Sophomore*



**"Cry."**

*Nicole Boyer  
Sophomore*

## Media depicts false image of "healthy"



**Molly Skyles**

Hollywood tells us what music to listen to, what movies to watch and what clothes to wear. But Tinseltown should have no say in what size a person needs to be.

After the Academy Awards, during Howard Stern's radio show, it was announced that Gabourey Sidibe, star of the recent film "Precious," and nominee for best actress, would not go much further in Hollywood because of her weight. It's no secret that Sidibe is not a size two. However, her size did not affect her success in "Precious," and it should not affect her success later on. A low Body Mass Index is not a measurement of success.

The average woman is 140 pounds and wears a size 14 dress, but the woman portrayed by models, pageant queens and actresses weighs 100 pounds and is a size eight, according to fullandfabulous.org. This is obscene. Models are supposed to be modeling clothes for real people to wear. Pageant queens are supposed to be and represent real women. Actresses are supposed to play roles that depict real people. However, few real people are that bite-sized.

It all comes down to what society views as beautiful, and apparently, anorexia is the sexy look these days. This wasn't always the case. At one point in history, an overweight woman was more respected than a thin woman because her weight showed that she was wealthy enough to eat well. Our ideals have since changed. Later during history, a woman wearing a corset made of whalebone and a steel frame was thought of as beautiful because of the immense discipline and rigor it took to tolerate the hunk of metal restricting her waist.

At the end of the day, the true test of a person's beauty and ability to succeed should be based on his or her personality and determination, not the size of his or her pants.

Much to the dismay of people like Howard Stern, Gabourey Sidibe is being judged, by some at least, on more than just her weight. Sidibe is overweight, but her talent and confidence have already landed her a role in a new independent film and 13 episodes of a Showtime TV series.

Hollywood, and the media in general, need to lower their expectations for women in today's society. Take the late actress Brittany Murphy, for example. Despite what caused her death, Murphy started her career as an average-sized woman. Later, her weight dramatically decreased, her breasts magically grew, and her hips became plumper. Murphy suffered from an eating disorder as well.

One cannot say that Hollywood's expectations were the sole cause of Murphy's death, but I would argue that, at the very least, Hollywood's pressure for celebrities to be a certain size was a major contributor to the weight struggles Murphy faced during her shortened life.

Also, look at singers like Kelly Clarkson. She began her career as average or even bordering on a plus size. Yet as her fame grew, her weight plummeted. This cannot be healthy.

If any celebrity, or any person in general, loses weight for a health reason and does so in a safe manner, then good for them. But no one, not even Hollywood, should measure a person's worth based on their weight. And no one, not even Hollywood, should make someone feel the need to be a certain size so badly that they resort to unhealthy ways of doing so. Case in point: Brittany Murphy.

In a perfect world, no one would be limited because of his or her size, but that doesn't always happen. So in this size-14 world, the Hollywood brainwashing needs to stop. People need to see their worth despite what the scale says and be viewed as more than just a size.

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

## Buying local increases town revenue



**Jessica Catron**

Amazing, freshly baked bread rubbed with tomato pesto sauce sounds dreamy at any given moment. However, it's a dream that died with the closing of Manhattan's Bakery a few weeks ago. The owners of the restaurant, who served some of the most amazing chicken strips and wonderfully decadent cinnamon rolls I've ever had, cited lack of customers and revenue for the closure. When they closed, I complained to many Facebook friends, only to find out just how few Truman students actually ate at the restaurant. It started to frame the real problem — Truman makes up a large portion of Kirksville's population, and that portion wasn't shopping primarily for pleasure, but for familiarity.

The majority of students I spoke to prefer food from Taco Bell than from La Pachanga, and Pizza Hut to Pagliai's. The familiarity and dependability of food and service you can get in your hometown has reigned supreme, and the chain restaurants know it. Branching out of the value meal comfort zone might seem inconvenient to many, but it's worth it.

In the end, your food will be better; it will help out the local economy and most likely will introduce you to new foods and services.

A study done by the U.S. Department of Labor last month indicated that if 50 percent of the nation's employed population spent an additional \$50 a month at local businesses, it would generate an additional \$42.6 billion in revenue. This amount would be amazingly beneficial in today's economy. Stimulus packages, refunds and tax incentives are great to discuss in the halls of Congress, but the beginning of our recovery needs to start with purchasing candy from Kirlin's on the Square instead of Wal-Mart or going on a date to Il Spazio instead of Ruby Tuesday. Simple changes and steps outside of your comfort zone will lead to a better economy.

These changes also will help locally-owned family businesses remain operational. Hardworking people who serve up great customer service and healthier food than chain restaurants are losing their livelihoods because of our comfort zones, and that's heartbreaking.

That is to also say, don't hesitate to change your patronage from a place in your hometown to Kirksville. Your hometown company will understand the convenience and ease of the switch. Many businesses in Kirksville offer discounts or coupons just for students.

College students also need jobs. Bolstering local business will create

more jobs for students. Local businesses are more likely to understand your need to take a test and take a few days off than a large corporation that can replace you in a matter of minutes. Local bosses also are most likely going to remember you more clearly and positively, which can come in handy when you are in need of job and graduate school recommendations. Local jobs foster connections with real people, unlike the human resources department of a conglomerate. They build relationships that give you real world experiences, and you are more likely to get a job that is helpful to your major, such as a clerical job in a local physician's office, a filing job at a local law firm or substitute teaching position for a biology class. These jobs mean something more.

It is time to stop begging the government to make change for us. It is our job as citizens to take the responsibility. When a simple hair salon change can help fix this vast problem, we need to do that instead of writing to the Secretary of the Treasury asking for help and handouts. It is not the government's job to bail everyone out, but everyone's job to bail ourselves out.

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## Money provides cheap gains on both ends of spectrum



**John Hitzel**

There comes a time in every American's life when he or she must choose between taking a crummy job that pays the bills or sweating it out in poverty but living in much greater fulfillment. Money is the key to the kingdom, and that kingdom is America. If we acquire enough, then we're free to do the stuff we really want to do instead of spending most of our time trying to gain money — the brief span of time we have to be alive can become our own again.

However, earning money often involves ignoring our inner hedonist and whimsical nature. Some days, I just don't want to do the same thing I did for the last month, no matter the rewards. Why be tortured in the name of cash? I would rather suffer from

lack of money while seeking fulfillment than to suffer in the pursuit of money at the expense of fulfillment. Forget money — it's the root of all evil, and the freedom it offers is conditional upon possessing lots of it. Money keeps us distracted from what's really important and ultimately more satisfying: being human.

I think bluesman John Lee Hooker's "I Need Some Money" illustrates how pervasive money's influence is upon our reality. "The best thing in life is free / but you can give it to the birds and bees / I need some money."

Director Luis Bunuel has grappled with this too. "To hell with the kinda work you have to do to make a living. ... All it does is fill the bellies of the pigs who exploit us. ... I may live badly, but at least I don't have to work to do it."

Philosophically, it's a question of how to balance freedom and security. Each of us chooses how much and what we want to have.

Once you land a job, you're in the kingdom. But what does this kingdom offer? Are you really just "Tradin' your hours for a handful of dimes," as Jim

Morrison phrased the wage earner's plight? I've felt like this at a number of my bill-paying jobs, thinking things like, "Why do I do this to myself? Time drags like molasses, and I work hard for the compensation I receive. I'm just a replaceable cog in a machine that probably will survive longer than I will, and the only reason I'm playing this role is because outside of this job I am also a conduit through which money has to flow within an even larger machine. I feel less than human."

Cash is both the keys and the fetters. I always will need money to survive, unless I get really lucky and can somehow acquire food and shelter without having to fork over any cash, and that's just if I don't ever get sick or hurt or old. Until we consciously choose to reject materialism, we are slaves to money and to the game society has constructed around it.

I don't harbor delusions of grandeur about my economic buoyancy. My generation's upward mobility was limited even before the recession hit simply because of the existing number of people my age compared to the

number of really good jobs out there. I have come to terms with it, but we all need to prepare to be poor and economically insecure in the current desolate job market.

But, there is hope, and it lies in perception. I can allow the soul-shattering implications of the working-class condition to dominate my decision-making only if I assign myself value based upon my job, title, status, DVD collection, net worth, car, income, etc. You know, materialism: Money is the path to good things, and owning good things means a good life. That's the type of mammon-worshipping, industrialized philosophy various forces coerce us into accepting as satisfying — until we recognize it and are then able to choose to reject it.

To seek detachment from the material world is startlingly revolutionary. The goal here is to stop depending on objects for fulfillment. It might not be good for the economy, but walking a path of one's own choosing (the Dream) sounds better to me than suffering so that my bank account might grow by a few more zeroes.

What a strange thing anyway, capital. Other than the arbitrary value we assign it, it has no practical purpose. Yet we sacrifice so much to get it, just so that later, we can give it away.

If circumstances won't allow you such a radical departure from the norm, you can still pursue your own American Dream from within the context of a un-dream job, by hobbyizing your dream. Such a compromise might be practical, but ultimately is not fulfilling when compared to actually attaining the Dream. I value freedom over security any day. A little chaos can be refreshing, especially after so much time spent supporting the order. I feel most alive when my fate is in my own hands.

And if you do land a job you come to dislike, quit. It's really exhilarating.

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