

Kirksville lacks restaurant variety



Anna Meier

I'm all about people cooking for themselves. Buying exciting ingredients at the local Hy-Vee or Wal-Mart, and spending hours in the kitchen — it's a beautiful thing. But sometimes I don't want to cook or clean up a mess of dishes, pots and pans, and at those times, I take a good look at the barren wilderness of restaurant options lying across the 10 square miles of Kirksville.

Needless to say, I'm bothered by Washington Street Java Co shutting down and feel disappointed. Kirksville might be one of the only college towns in the country that lacks a coffee shop, unless you count Mug Shotz, which is nearly impossible to do because it doesn't actually offer anywhere to drink coffee. Not only are we now without this seemingly college town essential, Java Co was largely the only place in town that offered a menu with healthy food items. It was a place that didn't offer something deep-fried, nacho-related or ending in the word "rangoon." Say goodbye to a balanced lunch of chicken salad or quiche.

Before that, I was bothered when Il Spazio and Manhattan Café and Bakery shut down. These buildings are now sitting empty, which is a shame in the case of Il Spazio. Of all the buildings in town, it was really fantastic.

Now when I gear up to go out to eat, I realize my options are few, and I refuse to believe the palate of the people of Kirksville is really that limited. Surely people realize there is more out there than fast food and Chinese. Riddle me this: Kirksville is home to pretty much every fast food chain America has to offer (except for the good ones, Chick-fil-A and Arby's), including two McDonald's and two Pizza Huts, three Mexican restaurants with almost identical menus and five Chinese restaurants, each beholding their own buffet, because reading a menu and repeating the title of a dish off that menu is just too much trouble.

We're tricked into thinking bigger things are coming to Kirksville. Recently there was the painful Jimmy John's rumor, and who knows what will happen there? We'll have to wait another five years to find out. What is Pickler's Famous? It was supposed to open about two years ago. Instead of eating there, you can go online and read their 50-page construction diary, but that won't really cure a craving for hot dogs.

I don't understand people's resistance to bringing in a couple of really good restaurants. People argue, "We don't want to lose the small-town feel!" Trust me, bringing in a Quizno's is not going to cause people to mistake Kirksville for a cosmopolitan metropolis. But it might give people jobs, boosting the economy of this town. Better yet, bring in something that people literally race to when they go back to Kansas City or St. Louis: Chipotle. It would be a huge moneymaker, as would a Panera or a Starbucks. If we have every fast food franchise, why not any of the good food franchises?

As I wrap up my college career here at Truman, it always makes me sad to think of what prospective students see when they come look at this school. Truman is such a good school with so few things off campus to bring the caliber of students we want. Chipotle is like the field of dreams — if we build it, they will come ("they" being positive student assets to the University).

Kirksville really could be a great little town, but people have to eat, so I see no reason to let these buildings sit empty for years before putting in a new Chinese buffet. Maybe Java Co's closing is an opportunity for someone else to make a change that will really whet our appetites.

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Textbook alternatives benefit student education



143 eBooks sold for every 100 hardcover books on Amazon

according to NPR on July 20, 2010



Hannah Douglas

College students develop balance and flexibility during their time at a university. They learn to pull all-night study sessions, write long term papers and manage to make it to class on time. Now, they even write their own textbooks. I wish others in the academic realm would follow their example and use textbook writing to enhance the higher educational experience.

Whether professors or publishers like it, the way in which students are hitting the books is changing drastically. I'm not just talking about the revolution of the eBook either. I'm talking about the methods students use to study, research and ultimately learn. If that boring old textbook isn't getting its message across quickly and effectively enough, students tune out. They skim the chapters and sometimes give up and find the information they need online instead. Besides, the information available on the Internet is probably more current anyway.

The Legal Environment of Business class at Truman — the first Truman course to experiment with writing content for its own textbook editions — has offered two outstanding benefits.

The first improvement is decreased cost. Anyone who has come across a current college student knows textbooks don't cost what they used to. A new textbook for that business class would cost \$190 at the University Bookstore, but the student-made edition is \$25 at the same store or free when downloaded. Websites like half.com or chegg.com have started the trend of providing students with a place to rent or purchase textbooks at a lower cost than buying them new from a local bookstore, but they rarely come close to low prices like these.

The next equally important improvement is that this textbook, created by students for students, brings a more personal and conversational element to the classroom. This is powerful. Not only have they brought a textbook with fresh content into the classroom, but they've also introduced what was once just a reference point as a conversation piece. Besides, who really admires those tedious textbook writers anyway?

So here is this new model open for critique and examination. The one element I just can't wrap my head around is that it's still so completely under-explored. Why are these students — the ones who haven't yet entered the "real world" — the only ones beginning to tap into this

resource that is the Internet? Yes, I know it's not convenient for those who come up with course curriculum to redevelop their standard system. I know it's going to take some serious time and effort. But folks, the tides have turned, and they've turned that old-fashioned printed page into something shapeable, moveable and worthy of our attention. If we in the academic world want to get ahead, we need to embrace this shift in information-gathering and incorporate it into the coursework.

Now I'm not suggesting that every student should begin typing a new edition of their textbook for next semester. I don't think that would be a progressive effort. Yet, a combination of the old and new would be to our academic advantage. Generally speaking, instructors know how to research and gather information from credible sources in their own fields and students know how to navigate their way through ever-changing technology depending on their own interests. So, why not use this to our own advantage? We owe it to ourselves to get the conversation started on this topic. That's what each and every course being offered this semester and all those following semesters can do. The students wouldn't mind it either. They're flexible, remember?

Hannah Douglas is a senior communication major from Springfield, Il.

AROUND THE QUAD

What restaurants would you like to see in Kirksville?



"Denny's: breakfast is the most important meal of the day, and we could use a nicer breakfast joint."

Nana Owusu junior



"Buffalo Wild Wings: it has good food and is a fun place to hang out and socialize."

Josh Luther freshman



"Chipotle: it is a delicious and healthy alternative to Mexican food and you get a lot for pretty cheap."

Becky Alexander freshman



"O'Charley's or Steak n' Shake: Kirksville needs a place with good food and late hours."

Nikki Kwarta junior

Firearms need stricter purchasing requirements



Bryce Osman

Three weeks ago, Jared Loughner was just another face in the crowd, known by a small contingent of friends, family members and teachers. Today, he is a household name in America, associated with the killing of 13 people and injuring another 13, including a United States Congresswoman, with his Glock 19 pistol outside of a Tucson, Ariz., shopping center.

This is merely another incident of gun-related violence in America that we have become somewhat accustomed to seeing. Questions stemming from this incident will be asked for months. What were the gunman's motives and did he have a previous history of violence or mental instability? However, the more interesting question is how Loughner received his firearm and should the process of purchasing firearms be stricter following these tragic events?

There are many groups advocating for stricter restrictions on gun control and the process of purchasing firearms.

Loughner purchased his weapon legally and passed the federally mandated background check that is associated with purchasing a firearm. This background check simply requires the person's name and social security number. This information

then is called into the National Instant Background Check System (NICS) which checks the purchaser's name and criminal history for any offenses or confinement to a mental institution. While Loughner had a previous charge of having a controlled substance in 2008, NICS states that persons convicted of controlled substances cannot purchase a firearm for a period of only one year. Therefore, Loughner was able to purchase his pistol after this mandate expired.

While owning firearms in this country is a right preserved by the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution, something must be done to make it more difficult for firearms to fall into the wrong hands.

First off, the background checks need to be written in a simpler and more concrete fashion. Many of the checks, which can be

found on the FBI's website, are written in terms that are confusing and difficult to define. The checks also do a poor job stopping persons with violent behavior from obtaining a firearm. While a person who is sentenced to more than one year in prison cannot obtain a firearm, all those who are sentenced for less than one year are still eligible. This means if a person is sentenced to a lesser degree assault charge and jailed for 90 days, they still are able to pursue ownership of a weapon after release.

The bigger flaw within the background checks regards firearm sales to those who have been deemed mentally ill or unstable. The problem is the lack of documented records the FBI database has on people who are mentally ill, though. The shooter in the Virginia Tech Massacre, Seung-Hui Cho, was able to purchase a firearm even though a court found

him to be a danger to himself in 2005. Many would argue that Loughner would fit the profile of a person who was mentally unstable based on his drug abuse in 2007, yet he still was able to purchase a weapon.

While there has been legislation passed to try and keep records more updated and keep guns out of the wrong hands, these checks are lacking.

The only appropriate solution is to have rigorous background checks and to have the most updated records possible. There also must be a concentrated effort by the FBI to have fewer cracks for illegal buyers to slip through. If these efforts are not made, then these types of tragic events are going to continue to occur.

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