

From the
desk
of the *Editor*

Give aid to those in need

Students at Truman State are no strangers to the effects of natural disasters. Missouri has been the site of many severe thunderstorms, devastating hail storms and deadly tornados. The state even has had earthquakes, but none of the same magnitude as the one that struck Nepal last weekend.

We, the editorial board, would like to ask all Truman students to open their hearts and minds to the situation in Nepal. We know as the semester winds down final exams and papers are of the utmost importance, but there is no reason not to reach out.

Truman has a sizable population of students from Nepal — students who currently are contacting their families and friends hoping they are not going to have to bury a loved one. With a death toll of more than 5,000 people and counting, the Nepalese earthquake has an international impact we as a student body cannot ignore.

Giving aid does not have to mean joining the Red Cross, going to Nepal or donating hundreds of dollars to aid organizations. We understand college students have tight budgets and sometimes even \$10 is too much to give. However, being kind and raising awareness is free.

The Nepalese students at Truman currently are more than 7,000 miles away from their homes, families and friends. Some may not even know if their families are safe or if their homes still are standing. They not only are concerned about their grades and final exams — they are frightened for their loved ones and their homeland.

We ask you show sensitivity and concern for your fellow classmates, friends and coworkers who might be in this situation. Ask what you can do to help them during this trying time. Offer support and comfort. Invite them to social events so they constantly are not left thinking about their loved ones. If they need to miss class, help them by offering notes and tutoring. Listen to them if they need to talk about how they are feeling. Now is when they are most in need of kindness. It's important the Truman community bands together and offers a helping hand to our fellow students.

Along with supporting classmates, we encourage you to stay informed regarding the situation in Nepal. The media eventually will move on to new topics but the Nepalese people will need help rebuilding for far longer. Once the media moves on, the flow of donations will slow down or stop completely when something new comes along. This is extremely dangerous for the Nepalese people.

The use of social media has allowed us to spread information faster and farther than many ever could have imagined. It is time to use our social media presence to raise more awareness as the situation progresses. By staying informed and sharing your information with others, you can help make sure Nepal will not be forgotten until the damage has been repaired. Social media sites such as Tumblr, Facebook and Twitter are great ways to get information across.

For those who do wish to donate to charities, we ask you to thoroughly research organizations before making a donation. There are many aid organizations in Nepal, and it's important to research which ones are best serving the interests of those in need of aid. Multiple aid agencies are working on helping the survivors, including the Red Cross, UNICEF and Oxfam.

Namaste Nepal, a Truman organization dedicated to Nepalese culture, also is hosting a fundraiser to help victims of the earthquake. Those who wish to donate to Namaste Nepal can visit the Center for International Students located in Baldwin Hall 129 or the Multicultural Affairs Center located at Adair House to leave donations in the form of cash or check. Keep a look out for further fundraisers hosted by Namaste Nepal and follow #PrayForNepal on Twitter to stay updated.

It is, perhaps, easy to turn a blind eye to disasters of this scale, especially at the end of the semester when students are so worried about their grades and futures — but human compassion never should be tossed to the side. We encourage you to give aid any way you can. Even the smallest act of kindness can have a positive impact on someone, whether it's a few dollars donated to an aid organization or a study session dedicated to helping a worried classmate stay on top of class work and offer a reprieve from the stress of the day.

Farewell from former Editor-in-Chief



Robert Overmann
Former Editor-in-Chief

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to seek out more accurate information. You always should ask yourself if the media organization has a history of political bias or if they might be writing from a point of conflicted interest. The reality is most national media have agendas and are selective tellers of the truth — the key is to read any story from multiple sources and with a shrewd eye.

Realize that journalists — or at least most of them — abide by a very strict code of ethics that dictates they report objectively, do not accept favors or gifts and always disclose conflicts of interest, real or perceived. In my experience, the more ethical, reliable national and international outlets are The Associated Press, BBC, CNBC, The New York Times and PBS. Local media often are more fair and balanced than national media because they have less powerful influences directing them. I avoid most network news, such as CNN, MSNBC, FOX and CBS, because their journalism — especially political journalism — almost always stinks of ulterior agendas.

The group that rejects media because of the depressing events they report on frustrates me most. Humanity's great conflicts never can be solved by the uninformed. Perhaps you dislike hearing about dark events, but think about an alternative universe where this information isn't disseminated — the Holocaust likely would not have been stopped if information about it were not released. Surely Martin Luther King Jr. never could have succeeded in the fight for African-American civil rights if people never learned about his efforts. We destroy any possibility that we can effect great movements or dire changes when we shut ourselves off from the world. Furthermore, there are so many great things in the world the media reports on — new medicines save lives thought unsalvageable even a decade ago, people change one another's lives for the better and just last week I learned about an Indian man who planted a 1,360 acre forest to save his homeland.

As liberal arts students, you always should ask how your field intersects with other disciplines. And the reality is we never could have amassed the knowledge we now have of all these different disciplines without media. Scientific discoveries would fail to improve our world without communicators, and the humanities exist exclusively to explore how we interact with each other. These disciplines would be crippled without media as both an explanatory and influential factor.

Secondly, it has taken me 22 years — and counting — to learn how to properly balance

work and pleasure. Throughout much of my high school career, I erred on the side of play and immediate gratification. I stayed out late, delayed getting a job, spent too much time with friends and did not care to think about my adult life.

I made a promise to myself entering college that I would buckle down, study hard and make a future for myself. And I did, especially during the latter half of college. But, in my youthful exuberance to reform, I overshot my mark — I landed squarely on the side of workaholics and the unhappy, red-eyed, white-collar crowd. I saw nothing but a path to success, and forsook friendships, fun and laughter for the dreary conquests of résumé lines and high grades.

I realize — after the melancholy excesses of each — I was no closer during either period to finding the merry middle ground that bestowed both success and enjoyment. In each case, I had one without the other. I had fun and enjoyment before much of college, but lacked any real success. During the latter half of college, I surely found success and crafted an impressive résumé — but I have few close friends and rarely enjoy my days.

I am indignant with myself at the end of college that the liberal arts beckoned me toward the path of moderation all along — just as I learned from many fields without too securely attaching myself to any one, I ought to have let myself taste immediate gratification and mediate gratification without becoming too mired in either.

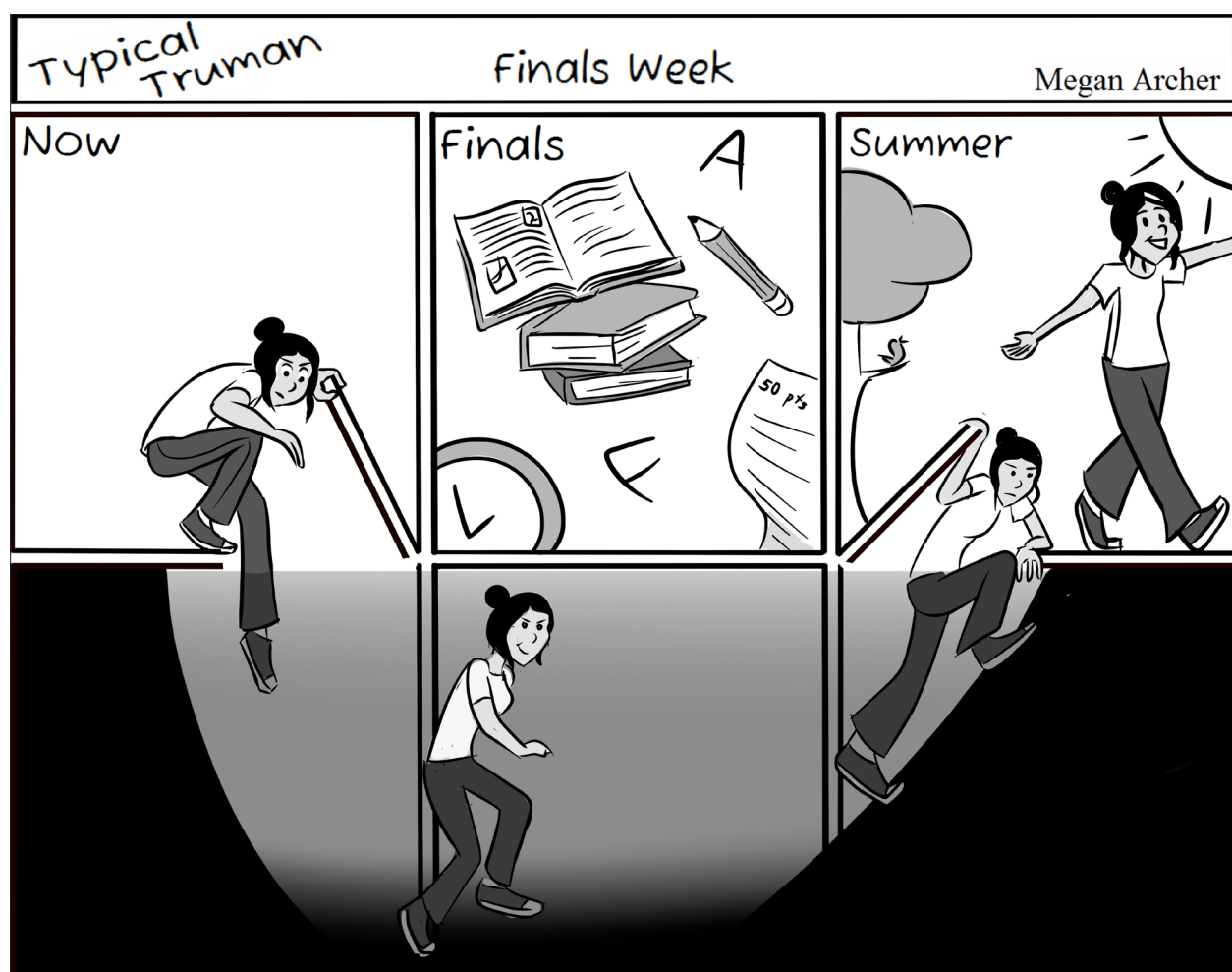
This is a struggle too many people I know engage in — I have friends who dropped out of college because they couldn't bring themselves to work hard. Likewise, I have friends who dropped out of college because they couldn't bring themselves to do anything but work hard. Sometimes I am surprised I never bowed to the crushing pressures of either extreme.

When last year's Editor-In-Chief finished her tenure, she said to me she learned a lot about herself — far more than she thought she would. And I think there is a certain expectation that Editors-in-Chief will grow while in this role. No, I don't think any 20-22 year old truly ever is prepared to manage a staff of 65 people and produce a product with significant influence over the campus community. I can't say I've used the newspaper solely for my own gain and education — sometimes I think I've let it use me — but it's been the best learning experience of college.

I can't possibly show you what this journey was like for me, but I do know how you can be the best student, person and citizen you can be. Take time every day to know the world you live in through media. Slackers — get to work before you regret it, and workaholics — go out and party.

Scratch that, everyone go out and party — we've conquered another year, and for that we all deserve to celebrate.

Robert Overmann is a senior English major from Cape Girardeau, Mo.



Editorial Policy

The Index is published Thursdays during the academic year by students at Truman State University, Kirksville, MO 63501. The first copy is free, and additional copies cost 50 cents each. The production offices are located in Barnett Hall. We can be reached by phone at 660-785-4449. The Index is a designated public forum, and content of the Index is the responsibility of the Index staff. The editor-in-chief consults with the staff and adviser but ultimately is responsible for all decisions. Opinions of Index columnists are not necessarily representative of the opinions of the staff or the newspaper. Our View editorials represent the view of the Editorial Board through a majority vote. The Editorial Board consists of the editor-in-chief, managing editor and opinions editor. The Index reserves the right to edit submitted material because of space limitations, repetitive subject matter, libelous content or any other reason the editor-in-chief deems appropriate. Submitted material includes advertisements and letters to the editor.

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