



SPRING 2025

BURR

THE REALITY OF DEI
ROLLBACKS

PG 10

WHICH 'LOVE ISLAND USA' CHARACTER
ARE YOU?

PG 17

THE ART OF
PROTEST

PG 18



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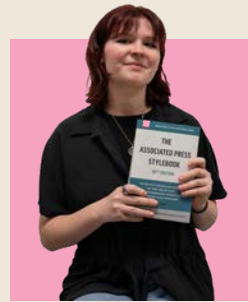
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THE BURR MAGAZINE

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers,

This semester's print issue is focused on change, whether that be the niche interests of students or the institutional changes that will affect the rest of our lives. As students, we cannot ignore what is going on in the world because soon enough, it will be affecting us — if it's not already. This issue is for the students who recognize these changes, good or bad, and want to learn more. It is our job as students to be educated, and sometimes that means we have to educate ourselves. Students, use your voice and remember that no one can take that away from you. Of course, it's not all serious, and we most definitely have our share of fun stories in here — a 'Love Island USA' personality quiz, trending coffee recipes and more.

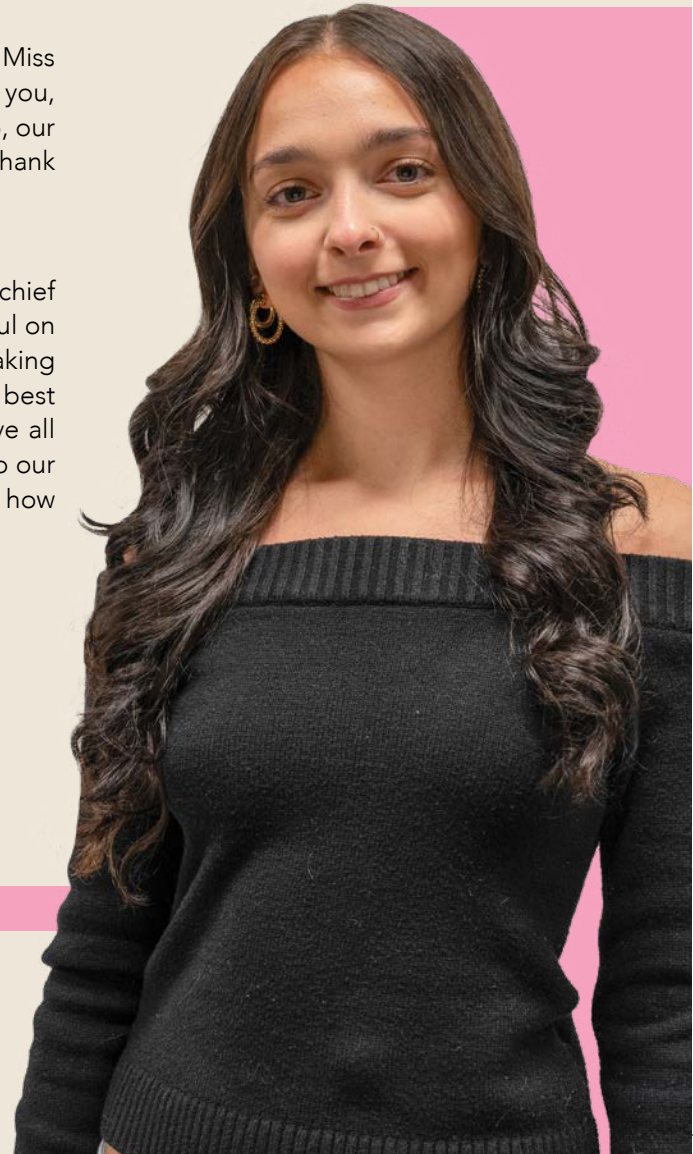
I would like to give a special thanks to my managing editor, Miss Chloe Robertson — I couldn't have done any of this without you, and I am so lucky to have you by my side. To Jacqueline Marino, our adviser, I know this has been a huge learning journey for me — thank you for always helping me along the way.

It has truly been a learning journey being The Burr's editor-in-chief for the past year. I have never had an experience be so impactful on my life. I have learned that I am good at being a leader and taking initiative, will always be a lifelong learner and how to be the best editor I can to my staff. My staff has been so amazing, as we've all been learning, and really put in the work for this issue. Finally, to our readers, thank you for picking up The Burr and letting us know how much you love it. It's appreciated more than you know.

With love,



Genna Sobiech



COVER AND STAFF PHOTOS BY **NATALIA GRIFFITHS**

Mirror of Perception

THE WAY MEDIA AFFECTS OUR SELF-IMAGE

WRITTEN BY **MADELINE GANTZER**
DESIGNED BY **CLARA BUTCHER**

PHOTOS BY **ZACHARY BRUNOTTS**
MODELED BY **GANNON HOLLER AND SKYLER HINES**

Facebook came out in 2004. Twitter followed with its release in 2006. Instagram and Snapchat came out in 2010, and TikTok made waves in the social media world when it emerged in 2017.

For Generation Z, life through a screen can have a variety of both positive and negative effects, especially on a young adult's self-esteem.

THE REALITY OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is constantly within reach of its users, and too much exposure to the internet can become equally as harmful as it is entertaining.

Influencers like Alix Earle, known for her beautiful face and funny persona, and Tara Yummy, known for her edgy style and flirtatious content, are just two of the popular faces littering screens. Their content perpetuates the "perfect life" ideology, making it very easy for viewers to compare themselves to people who seem to have it all.

Society has created unrealistic standards and expectations for people to follow. These standards include possessing certain body figures, unrealistic facial features, perfect wardrobes, perfect self-confidence and more. Especially for women, it can feel impossible to constantly try to meet the expectations that society holds, leading to self-doubt and unrealistic

expectations. Influencers only show a portion of their lives and filter their content strictly to what they want their followers to see. Additionally, influencers tend to edit their photos to look a certain way.

It's important to recognize influencers that are using their platform to combat these societal norms surrounding body image. In spreading awareness on topics like these, they can truly make a difference in the social media space.

Samyra Miller is a plus-sized influencer who uses her platform to talk about the lack of plus-sized friendly clothing that common stores supply. Miller has brought light to companies that perpetuate norms like these, including Brandy Melville, a store that is notorious for making clothes to fit one specific body type.

Spencer Barbosa is another popular creator who promotes self-confidence and body positivity.

Her goal is to make young people feel confident in their own bodies by highlighting all of the imperfections that hide behind the cameras. She recently worked as a model for the brand Hollister, in hopes that young girls will see her as a good example for what healthy bodies look like.

As viewers see these public figures every day, it can be challenging to not fall into the deep holes of negative self-talk.



Many students have explained that it's interesting to see the significant impact media has in everyday life. "Sometimes social media does have a negative impact on my self-esteem," emerging sophomore media and technology major Kalayah Bradley said. "Depending on the day and how I feel, it can definitely affect me overall. If I see a girl who's so pretty with an amazing body, that's when it can have negative effects."

Junior computer science major Annika Morgan does not use social media, and her perception of self-confidence is drastically different from Bradley's.

"It doesn't really affect me if I think about it," Morgan said. "I don't really look at what other people are doing. I don't see anything from others online, so it doesn't impact my self-esteem."

HOW IS THIS AFFECTING STUDENTS?

Many studies have been conducted to further explain why social media has such a significant impact on young adults.

A study from a family-owned German hospital company, Schoen Clinic Group, performed a study revealing that the rise of social media platforms has increased the awareness of eating disorders. However, it has also increased the number of young adults and teens obtaining disordered eating habits.

Additionally, The National Library of Medicine (NLM) conducted a study titled, "The Impact of Social Media on Eating Disorder Risk and Self-Esteem Among Adolescents and Young Adults: A Psychosocial Analysis in Individuals Aged 16–25." "The results reveal that young people, particularly

males, exhibited heightened susceptibility to EDs," the study explained. "Furthermore, the study highlighted the significant influence of social media on body image perceptions. Men and high school students exhibit greater dissatisfaction with their own body appearance, whereas women and college students are more inclined to compare their body shape with images of others."

Media has a way of glamorizing the specifics. As if there's a specific body type that people are supposed to have, while still having curves, a specific skin texture and other features that society tells us we must have in order to be in the beauty race.



CHANGING THE NARRATIVE

As the media can have negative effects on one's self-esteem, there are ways to combat these feelings.

A recent trend on TikTok involved putting a childhood image of yourself on your everyday mirror in hopes that what you say to yourself is something that you would say to little you. The purpose of this trend was to promote positive self-talk, ensuring that you think before you talk down to yourself.

It's also important to remember that not everything we see in the media is truthful. The societal standard that looks are the most important feature of a person is one that lacks truth.

As hard as it can be, it's crucial for students to remind themselves that the kind of person they are is much more important than what they look like. **B**

FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS

REVEAL THE POWER OF EDUCATION AND IMPORTANCE OF BREAKING THE CYCLE OF INACCESSIBILITY

WRITTEN BY **ARI COLLINS**

DESIGNED BY **STEPHEN MCHALE**

First-generation students, those who are the first in their families to pursue higher education, face unique challenges and experiences within their academic journey. These students often navigate the complexities of college life without the frame of reference many others have: the guidance of immediate relatives who have been through the process themselves.

As these students adapt to new academic, social and financial situations, their unique backgrounds may shape their educational paths more than the average student. Through their stories, we can gain a deeper understanding of the transformative power of education and the importance of breaking generational barriers.

Here at Kent State, first-generation students are recognized and appreciated, as their journeys are unique to many others.

In February, a new scholarship was created by alums John Elliot and his wife Fonda, called The Elliot Scholars program. The Elliot's created this by donating \$1 million to the university to provide financial support to first generation students in any major or program that needed it.

Additionally, the university has an "I Am First" program to engage with and create more awareness around campus about first-generation students. The program also works to promote resources and programs to support these students' success.


Freshman psychology major Karmyn Allen is one of many first-generation students here at Kent State. She explained that she feels the workforce has become a place in which a bachelor's or master's degree is a necessity.

"That's kind of part of what made me pursue [higher education], but it also didn't really feel like a choice to me," Allen said.

"My parents didn't go, and they kind of made it like, 'you can't not go,'" she said. "It's just not an option to not go to school. They, of course, support me. They check in on me; they kind of tell me to stay focused. There's kind of a lot of pressure there, but I'm trying to balance it."

One of the most significant challenges for first-generation students is the lack of firsthand knowledge and guidance from family. This can lead to feelings of isolation or confusion, especially when students encounter academic or social obstacles that their parents may not fully know how to address.

THE BURR MAGAZINE



Freshman fashion design major Diamond Kennison feels that adjusting to college as a first-generation student is exceptionally harder. "Nobody in my family knows how to do anything that would help me in college. I had to figure it all out on my own."

In addition, the rigor and expectations of college-level coursework can feel daunting, especially when there is added pressure of being the first one in the family to do so. Students may lack the academic preparation or studying skills that their peers who have college-educated parents may already possess.

These students may also experience feelings of inadequacy, sometimes called "imposter syndrome." Allen and Kennison both say they have had these feelings. They may feel like they don't belong in higher education, or that they are not as capable. These feelings oftentimes stem from high societal pressures to succeed, or a belief that they aren't as prepared as other students.

Kennison says that she doesn't feel like she belongs because everyone else seems like they know exactly what to do. "Like it's just weird to talk to people here and they just don't seem like they're struggling."

**"IT'S SO HARD BE-
CAUSE YOU FEEL
LIKE YOU'RE GONNA
LET EVERYBODY
DOWN."**

"I feel like people are so not self-aware about it, so it's weird to talk about," Kennison continued. "It's like this academic privilege, and it definitely didn't help coming from a very low educated high school."

"Staying motivated as a first-gen student is probably the hardest thing ever," Allen said. "It's so hard because you feel like you're gonna let everybody down."

"They tell us over and over again 'you're not gonna let us down, just do two years,' but it's just like a lot of pressure to make up what I'm going to do."

Despite these challenges, first-generation students often exhibit remarkable strength and determination. Many are driven by the desire to break the cycle of limited educational opportunity in their families. They see education as a pathway, not just an opportunity.

Kennison says breaking the cycle was part of what initially motivated her to pursue higher education, and it's still part of her motivation today.

"I grew up sort of in poverty and I come from a family of nothing, especially in the town I grew up in. That's what motivated me to go to college, to try to be something more than everyone in my family has been," Kennison said.

Without the luxury of relying on family for advice, first-generation students can learn to become adept and resourceful.

"Luckily, networking is kind of easier for me," Allen said. "I went to a high school where you could join any club you wanted to, but getting to the top of those clubs would take so much hard work. Luckily for me, I kind of know where those connections lie."

Allen continued to explain that it's harder to embrace new experiences at college when you don't let yourself.

"What I would say to first-gen students is, remember you're doing it for yourself," Allen said. "You're not doing it for anyone else, do something you enjoy. Don't let the weight of being a first-gen student topple you over because that's when you break." **B**

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WHAT MAKES YOU NOSTALGIC?

WRITTEN BY **CLAIRE DUBER**

DESIGNED BY **MYKAL BROWN**

PHOTO BY **ZACHARY BRUNOTTS**

MODELED BY **GANNON HOLLER**


Kraft Mac & Cheese

Music from 2020- "Say So" by Doja Cat, "High Fashion" by Roddy Ricch, "Roxanne" by Arizona Zervas

Eggo Waffles



DVD



CD's from the early 2000s
- Christina Aguilera,
NSYNC, LeAnn Rimes

Eminem, T.I.
and Rihanna

The old
Barbie
movies

Birds chirping

The smell of
a bonfire

Bloonies

Mr. Sketch
smelly
markers

DEI IS MORE THAN A DIVERSITY REQUIREMENT

WRITTEN BY GENNA SOBIECH

DESIGNED BY MYKAL BROWN

DEI rollbacks – you’ve heard about them taking place at Amazon and Target – but they go far beyond your next shopping trip.

President Donald Trump signed an executive order on Jan. 21 removing DEI offices and initiatives across the federal workforce, and three weeks later applied this to education across the country. On Feb. 14, the “Dear Colleague” letter was sent out by the Department of Education to educational institutions that receive federal funding, with the intent to eliminate race-based preferencing in all levels of education.

The letter indicated that initiatives to increase diversity, equity and inclusion have created race-based preferences to these groups. It essentially said that DEI has created obstacles for white people. In addition, Ohio legislators resurrected Senate Bill 1 from Senate Bill 83 created in 2023, ending diversity efforts. SB 1 passed on March 19.

“Students are critical thinkers, they are not blank slates in which adults write their stories on.”

— AMOABA GOODEN, VICE PRESIDENT
OF PEOPLE CULTURE AND BELONGING

PHOTO BY
LAUREN WYATT
MODELED BY
AARIAHN CURLS



WHAT IS CURRENTLY HAPPENING?

As a result of the executive order and "Dear Colleague" letter, colleges across the country have been forced to remove DEI initiatives if they want to retain federal funding, which most universities need in order to operate.

Here at Kent State, both administrative and student leaders are doing what they can to attempt to ensure that the university remains accessible.

One of those leaders, Amoaba Gooden, who is currently the vice president for the Division of People, Culture and Belonging, elaborated on what DEI means to the university.

"What we've done as a university

is examine barriers for all people, and worked to decrease those barriers for all people," Gooden said. "There are times when a member of one group might face more barriers than another; there's this idea that the work of DEI is illegally discriminating against one group of people over the other, and that's just not what we do."

Gooden continued to explain that if SB 1 passes, and it has, the university's initiatives, programs and scholarships have to be rethought and reconstructed. Ohio Governor Mike DeWine signed the bill into law on March 28. In Best Colleges' 2023 College Choice and Admissions Survey, the report found that 55% of students say they would

consider transferring colleges if their university was to abolish DEI initiatives.

Gooden's biggest concern regarding the removal of these offices and initiatives is the negative impact it creates regarding access for students.

"There's just a negative impact in terms of access, which means that you're then impacting the life trajectory of that individual, and that individual's family and community, their earnings," Dr. Gooden said. "It's not just an individual impact, but a community and long-term impact."

THE ORIGIN OF DEI

The creation of diversity, equity and inclusion efforts dates back to 1964 during President Lyndon B. Johnson's term. During that same year, Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act, making discrimination against employees due to race, gender, religion or national origin, illegal.

According to the Civil Rights Act, this was done so in an effort to acknowledge and reduce the racial discrimination and seg-

regation that had been taking place in "public accommodations, public education and federally assisted programs." The bill was created and adjusted to accommodate the views held by both Democrats and Republicans.

As time has gone on, the recognition of the lack of diversity in public institutions and universities has been seen regarding women's rights through the

1960s and 1970s, and LGBTQ+ rights through the 1980s.

Since then, leaders at these institutions have spoken out about the lack of equity, and in the early 2000s, training programs for diversity were put in place more and more. As time has gone on, social movements and organizations have been put in place to create fair opportunities for all.



HOW STUDENTS ARE TAKING ACTION

Zachary Graves, the vice president of Undergraduate Student Government, went with a few of his fellow student leaders to the Ohio Statehouse in Columbus on Feb. 26, to learn more about what this means for students. USG's goal of this visit was to meet with as many representatives as possible to discuss what SB 1 means, and to voice the impact this bill has on students in Ohio as a whole, not just Kent State.

"It was a good experience overall; the representatives that we did talk to were open to listening," Graves said. "In the past, we've had some that were hard to talk to and not wanting to hear our concerns."

Graves further explained that, as the bill would likely pass, USG

did as much damage control as they could. They worked with the LGBTQ+ Center, Women's Center and other organizations across campus to create resistance to what was inevitably happening.

Within a few days of the "Dear Colleague" letter, both The Ohio State University and the University of Cincinnati removed their DEI initiatives and offices. The University of Pennsylvania rewrote their initiatives in order to comply with the letter.

Across the country, students have been posting about their disappointment and frustration in these decisions.

The presence of DEI has been an ongoing debate between the Democratic and Republican parties since Trump's first term.

His Sept. 22, 2020 executive order on addressing race and sex stereotyping was rescinded by Joe Biden his first day in office on Jan. 20, 2021.

"We had one Republican that we talked to, and he was astonishingly opposed to the bill - which is good to hear," Graves said. "He understood how it really will impact colleges because he went to college himself."

Graves and his fellow leaders are continuing to inform students as much as they can. He explained that it is hard to get concrete information on what exactly the bill will do if it passes, so being prepared for any outcome is their biggest goal.

WHAT CAN STUDENTS DO?

The elimination of DEI initiatives and offices, especially in higher education, will result in less enrollment for many students, especially those in minority groups. Scholarships and programs that directly address the importance of diversity and inclusion will be removed, making higher education less accessible.

The best thing that students can do is use their voices, as history has shown that the power of a student's voice is one that cannot be silenced.

Gooden encourages students to let the state legislature and government officials know how they feel and the kind of changes they would like to see.

"Students have a very powerful voice and if we think of the Civil Rights Movement, [Atlanta] Student Movement, the Anti-War Movement - that was really led by students who understood what was at risk," Gooden said. "Students are critical thinkers, they are not blank slates in which adults write their stories on." **B**

HOT TAKES

2.0!

WRITTEN BY **MADELINE GATZNER**

DESIGNED BY **NATALIA GRIFFITHS**

"The movie 'Perks of Being a Wallflower' sucks."

SAM THOMAS,
Sophomore
Psychology Major

"The Simon Architecture cafe is the best place to eat on campus."

JOSHUA LIGHTLE, Freshman
Architecture Major

"Water does have a taste, and the taste of it is gross."

ANNABEL DUFEK,
Sophomore Theatre
and ASL Major

"Tuition should cover dining."

ETHAN HUNT,
Freshman
Architecture
Major

"Just because it's designer doesn't mean that it's cute and stylish."

MACEY ENOCHS,
Sophomore Fashion
Merchandising Major

"Scooters are objectively the best way to get around the campus."

JUDAH STEWART, Sophomore
Peace and Conflict
Studies and
Psychology Major

"Pajama pants are not appropriate to wear to class."

ELLIE KNOX,
Sophomore Fashion
Merchandising Major

"SpongeBob is not funny and the jokes are very very overused."

BAILEY MARGRAVE,
Freshman
Studio Art Major

"Out of all of the different Spiderman versions, Andrew Garfield is the best."

DAE'ONII ROBINSON, Freshman
Political Science Major

"The Campus Loop bus shouldn't wait ten minutes at the Kent gateway stop."

ANGELO RUGGIO, Freshman
Architecture Major

SPRING 2025





Back to Basics

HOW MINIMALISTIC FASHION WILL
INEVITABLY MAKE A COMEBACK

WRITTEN BY
CHLOE ROBERTSON

PHOTOS BY
ZACHARY BRUNOTTS

MODELED BY
ELEANOR BARTLEY

DESIGNED BY
CLARA BUCHTER

Cargo pants, bomber jackets, cardigans, metallics, crochet and animal prints. At every store I walk into, these styles scream at me. They tell us bigger is better and excess is favored.

This is the beginning of the overconsumption mania that litters the fashion industry today.

A trend is a change to what was previously known as popular. These fashion trends begin when a color, pattern, silhouette, product, material or style becomes popular in a specific period of time.

Trends today go through five phases of a fashion cycle: introduction, rise, peak, decline and obsolescence. Using this model allows the fashion industry and brands to craft a collection of style decisions that satisfy consumers.

The 1920s brought the "flapper" look, featuring short, loose dresses with fringe and sparkles, bobbed hair and cloche hats. The 1940s embraced practicality, functionality and simplicity due to wartime austerity. The 1960s portrayed liberation with bold colors, mini skirts, structured silhouettes, playful patterns and go-go boots. The 1970s took inspiration from '60s trends by combining hippie chic and disco glamour.

Bold colors and patterns continued to influence the fashion of the 1980s, with the integration of sportswear and preppy looks.

Grunge started the 20-year cycle of the 1990s and the two decades ended with low-rise jeans and crop tops. These years would be the last stages of fashion without social media's influence.

Social media began to take hold on fashion trends during the 2010 decade as hipster fashion and boho chic emerged through the presentation of Coachella outfits. Celebrity input became more popular and apps like Pinterest and Tumblr began controlling fashion trends.

2020 brought a culmination of all the aesthetics, trends and styles we have seen in previous decades. It became a blend of nostalgia, comfort and maximalism with one goal in mind: obtaining the most unique sense of style.

The creation of TikTok combined with the human obsession of social media and chronic onlineness, has led to the rise of fast fashion and shorter trend cycles.

Within the fashion world, there is always a constant pressure to be ahead of the next big trend. This race has created a never-ending cycle of consumption and disposal that encourages a lack of inspiration and original style.

The most powerful trendsetter of this generation is social media, allowing consumers to have a constant connection with influencers and celebrities who perpetuate new trends at a record speed. Fast fashion is a \$150.82 billion industry that has grown by 10.4% since 2024, and is estimated to reach \$291.1 billion by 2032.

Since the ready-to-wear fashion industry has become more interested in speed than creativity, brands are working to



accommodate social media trends instead of focusing on quality and sustainability.

Since we have entered a digital age that is engulfed by social media, these trends do not have enough time in existence to fully experience every phase of the fashion cycle. Instead of specific decades being popular, a multitude of styles become popular at once, creating a frenzy of overconsumption to keep up with the everchanging trends.

Before social media, it was common that fashion trends would circle back every two decades. This 20-year cycle gave trends enough time to rise to popularity, fade away long enough to be forgotten by consumers and then eventually return again with a modern twist.

Without this 20-year cycle, trends rise and fall rapidly, which ultimately leads to clothing waste.

Since the immersion of TikTok, I have worked to stay grounded in my own personal style without drifting to what is popular at the time. But this mindset does not come naturally and takes work to achieve. Keeping up with fashion trends that are changing weekly becomes an exhausting chore that encourages consumerism over personal style.

This fatigue will ultimately lead to the reliance on minimalistic

fashion and basic pieces. Clean lines, neutral colors and simple silhouettes have always been fashion brands' safety nets because these designs will never go out of style. Looking back at the different generations of trends and fashion cycles, it is evident that one thing reigns true: *simplicity*.

Whether people transform an outfit using a minimalistic silhouette and maximalist accessorization, or they build their style off of neutral colors with interesting shapes, simplicity has remained the perfect backdrop to finding personal style.

For the past five years, we have watched as trends fall and rise, leaving many people with an excessive amount of clothing that no longer fits the current fashion movement. It's fatiguing to continue the cycle of buying, wearing, donating and buying again all within the span of one year.

Fashion is meant to be a way to express oneself with clothing pieces that have personal meaning to each wearer. By embracing the basic styles that built the fashion industry into what we know today, fashion-goers are able to express themselves and appreciate the garments they purchased. **B**



Which 'LOVE ♥ ISLAND USA' Character are You?

Season 6 Edition WRITTEN BY GENNA SOBIECH
DESIGNED AND ILLUSTRATED BY CLARA BUCHTER

As summer approaches, so does a new season of "Love Island USA." Last season was a hit, with a very lively and entertaining cast. Let's see which cast member you are!



JANA CRAIG

♥ Bubbly, Charismatic,
Down to earth

"I feel like one of those cartoon scenes where they're both pulling and tugging on the toy — not that I'm a toy, I'm a queen."



SERENA PAGE

♥ Blunt, Independent,
Guarded

"You made your choice.
You made your bed.
Hump in it."



LEAH KATE

♥ Sassy, Quirky, Animal
lover

"Whatever you've heard
about me, times it by a
million, and if you think it's
bad, make it worse!"



KAYLOR MARTIN

♥ Emotional, Sweet,
Gullible

"F*** Aaron!!"



MIGUEL HARICHI

♥ Honest, Silly, Ex-f***boy

"Let's say this — everything I
did, I said I did. It's just that
seeing it is not nice.
It looks bad."



ROB RAUSCH

♥ Monotone, Snake lover,
Easy on the eyes

"I'm leaving. You got rid of
three tonight, good job."



KENNY RODRIGUEZ

♥ Cute, Intelligent, Knows
how to treat a woman

"I want you. I need you."



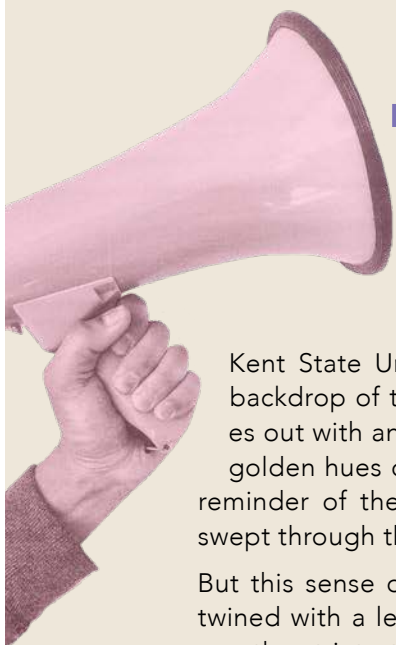
KORDELL BECKHAM

♥ Lover-boy, Funny, Stylish

"Cheez-Its. I can't get
enough of Cheez-Its."
[his long-term
sponsorship goals]

SPRING 2025





THE ART OF PROTEST

KENT STATE'S LEGACY OF ACTIVISM

WRITTEN BY
PAYTON BERTRAND
DESIGNED BY **JENNA FADER**

Kent State University is nestled against the backdrop of the Cuyahoga River and stretches out with an inviting expanse of green. The golden hues of spring blanket the campus, a reminder of the seasons of change that have swept through these grounds.

But this sense of peace has always been intertwined with a legacy of resistance. That legacy was thrust into the national spotlight on May 4, 1970, when the Ohio National Guard fired into a crowd of students protesting the U.S. invasion of Cambodia, killing four and wounding nine. The gunfire shattered more than just the calm, it cemented Kent State as a symbol of student activism and forever altered the course of American history.

**"IF ANYTHING, STUDENTS TODAY ARE
MORE POLITICALLY ACTIVE THAN EVER.
THE FIGHT FOR SOCIAL CHANGE,
FOR EQUALITY,
HAS ONLY GROWN STRONGER."**

Though the smoke of that day has long since cleared, its impact lingers in the very landscape of Kent State. The May 4 Visitors Center stands as a testament to this history, a place where the past is not just remembered but felt, urging students to carry forward the legacy of activism.

THE FLAME OF ACTIVISM TODAY

The May 4 Visitors Center stands as an enduring symbol of this legacy. Surrounded by towering oak trees, the center's clean lines and modern architecture juxtapose the historical weight it carries.

Inside, the cool air is heavy with the stories of those who stood here before, their voices echo-

ing through the museum's rooms.

Freshman Eden Sarnoff, a fashion design major, stands near the center of the museum, her voice tinged with the same resolve that has defined student activism for decades.

"We still see protests on college campuses all the time," Sarnoff said. "If anything, students today are more politically active than ever. The fight for social change, for equality, has only grown stronger."

She stands on the cusp of that legacy. For Sarnoff, Kent State isn't just an institution, it is a battleground for ideas, a place where her voice is amplified in the fight for justice.

The winds that rustle through the trees surrounding the center carry with them the whispers of past struggles but also the promise of change.

"We may not be protesting the Vietnam War anymore, but we're still fighting for justice, for racial equality, gender rights and so much more," Sarnoff said. "The causes we fight for are just as critical."

LESSONS FROM THE PAST

For sophomore Carylanne Bender, a zoology major, the memorial's quiet reverence is a constant reminder of the high price of activism. As she walks through the center, the words of the students who lost their lives heavily resonate with her.

The somber tone of the space is balanced by the unwavering strength it evokes. The walls honor the past while demanding that the struggles of today continue with the same fervor.

"Kent State has embraced the events of May 4 as part of our identity," Bender said, "May 4 reminds us that activism is never safe, but it is necessary. The cost of political conflict is real and the lessons from 1970 are just as

relevant now.”

As she speaks, the quiet hum of campus envelops her. Birds chirp in the branches above and the low murmur of student conversations drift through the air. Yet, in Bender’s words, there is a deep and unwavering truth.

EVOLVING METHODS, ENDURING SPIRIT

“We don’t organize the same way they did in the 60s and 70s, we have social media now, a tool that has changed how we organize,” said freshman Jay Crausman, a biology major with a concentration in animal ecology. “We’re online, raising awareness, signing petitions and using platforms to bring attention to issues.”

The methods may have changed, but the fire that fueled Crausman’s activism is no different than that of the students who stood here in 1970.

“Activism is still dangerous,” Crausman said. “We may not face gunfire from the National Guard, but we still face the possibility of police violence, public backlash, and being silenced by those in power. The spirit of May 4 reminds us that activism is never without its cost.”

The torch has been passed on, and the struggle continues with the same urgency.

VOICES FROM THE PAST

Alumna Sally Neidus attended the university from 1968 to 1972, and she still remembers the electricity in the air as if it were yesterday.

“Activism wasn’t just something that happened in the background, it was at the forefront of everything we did,” Neidus said, words heavy with nostalgia and pride. “Kent State was a hub of political energy. We weren’t just students, we were activists.” Neidus looks around at the leaves scattered across the walkways as she remembers the history made several years ago. “I remember the fear, the anger, and the heartbreak that followed May 4,” she said. “But we didn’t let it break us. If anything, it fueled us to keep fighting.”

Her pride in Kent State is palpable, as she recalls how the university continues to honor its history of activism.

“The May 4 Memorial Visitors Center is a crucial part of that legacy,” she said. “It honors those who lost their lives, but it also challenges us to ask, ‘What are we doing to make a difference today?’”

CONTINUING THE LEGACY

The legacy of May 4 is not one of sorrow alone. It is a testament to the strength of the human spirit, the resilience of youth and the unwavering belief that change is possible, even in the face of immense adversity.

Kent State’s students today continue to rise in the name of justice, as seen in the pro-Palestine rally on May 4, 2024, marking the 54th anniversary of the shootings. Students once again demanded change, calling for the university to divest from weapons manufacturers. This protest reflects the enduring spirit of activism at the university. The campus that once stood silent now vibrates with the voices of those who refuse to accept the status quo.

The May 4 Memorial Visitors Center is more a tribute to the past and a call to action, urging today’s students to honor the sacrifices of those who came before them. Activism is a living, breathing force here at Kent that continues to shape the world. Students are driven by the powerful legacy of those who stood here, who fought, who died and who ignited a movement that will never be extinguished. **B**



PHOTO BY **REBEKAH HILES**



POP-PUNK AND DOC MARTENS

ATTIC ALLY

WRITTEN BY **ARI COLLINS**
DESIGNED BY **JENNA FADER**

Attic Ally is a spirited, female-fronted band from North Canton, Ohio, that blends the catchy and strong rhythms of pop with the hard-edged sounds of punk.

The band has four members, bassist Makayla Mountain, rhythm guitarist Steven Teppert, lead guitarist and vocalist Cate Katigbak and Paul Sullivan, "the sweaty drummer."

Teppert's fiery energy and eagerness helps him as the band's motivator and initiator.

"I asked Cate if she wanted to do music together, because I knew her through friends of friends," Teppert said. "From then on we decided to take

PHOTOS BY
ARI COLLINS

it really seriously and look for other members. That's how we ended up with Makayla and then we eventually got Paul."

"BEING ABLE TO REACH THAT COLLEGE AUDIENCE AROUND KENT, IT'S PROBABLY A GOOD INFLUENCE ON US, IT PUSHES US IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION."

Teppert kicks off the night with a roaring strum on his guitar, laughing into the space. The band's personality shines when each member locks eyes to begin a song. Their raw sound fills the room, passion and energy buzzing in the air as they practice methodically.

The group says being in Northeast Ohio may influence their music because they can be closer with their audience.

"I've been around Kent for five billion years it feels like," Sullivan said. "Being able to reach that college audience around Kent, it's probably a good influence on us, it pushes us in the right direction."

The band's references consist of a long list of voices. Each member has slightly different taste in music, but they all see eye-to-eye on the "vibes" of Attic Ally. They describe their group's

sound as early 2010s pop-punk, and have released two original singles – "Grocery Gal" and "Back on the Shelf" – and an EP.

"My favorite part personally is when we do write stuff, it's funny to me when it comes together and it's a song I really like, because we all come from different musical backgrounds," Teppert said. "Especially Cate and I, I listen to a lot of old punk and she listens to a lot of newer alternative."

Katigbak says her favorite part of being in the group is the bonding that happens behind the scenes.

"Steven usually has lyric ideas and he'll send some to me and then he'll whistle a riff and is like, 'can you make this a guitar riff?' and then we try to go from there," Katigbak said. "Sometimes it's more complete ideas and other times it kind of trickles together."

The group has some upcoming singles and says that there might be a new music video in the works. They played their first show in September 2024 at The Rialto Theatre in Akron, and hope to play more venues in Kent in the near future.

Attic Ally can be found on both Apple Music and Spotify. **B**

MAKAYLA
MOUNTAIN

STEVEN
TEPERT

CATE
KATIGBAK

PAUL SULLIVAN



SPRING 2025

21



KENT STATE REIMAGINED: TRANSFORMATION 2028

WRITTEN BY **CLAIRE DUBER**
DESIGNED BY **STEPHEN MCHALE**
PHOTOS BY **STEPHEN MCHALE**

Transformation 2028 (T28) was proposed as a pivotal reconfiguration here at Kent State. Its purpose is to better prepare students for their future career endeavors and reconceptualize current education, while reducing the cost of academic affairs. The T28 initiative has been a work in progress since 2024 and has gone through multiple rounds of configuration possibilities with faculty and staff, including sending out nine different reconfigurations for consultation.

The Gold+ model was endorsed by Faculty Senate on Feb. 1. The provost and the president made changes to that model, and it became the final recommended model. It reduced 10 degree-granting colleges to nine and reconfigures those colleges into three groupings that share administrative resources.

Melody Tankersley, the executive vice president and provost at Kent State University, provided a look at what the T28 proposal's true purpose is, what it means for students and clarified misconceptions about the initiative.

"T28 is an initiative to accomplish two things," Tankersley said. "One, is to reduce the administrative cost of our academic colleges that grant degrees, and second, it is to enhance the opportunity for programs to work together."

To break down each of the goals that are implemented into T28, Tankersley explained the reasoning behind reducing expenses.

"In terms of reducing some of the redundancies, I'm hoping that it will make things easier to do, make things easier to find, reduce some of the complexity of the work that we do and streamline it," Tankersley said.

She continued to explain that T28 will help the university see its future better, in addition to helping create the best plan for academic programs.

"While we're reducing those costs, there's so many opportunities that we can make sure we're set for the future," Tankersley said. "We're offering the most in-demand degree programs for our students, making sure that we're finding opportunities for disciplines to work together, to share resources, and in that way, will really help students learn about collaborating and working together at the university, like they will in their careers."

THE IMPACT ON STUDENTS

Tankersley addressed how the proposal would affect students, as well as her understanding of reservations students may have regarding T28.

"It's hard because I don't think everybody gets it right now because we're working with kind of an idea, and we haven't started putting that idea into place," she said.

With multiple schools and departments sharing administrative leadership in the final recommended model of T28, Tankersley explained what would happen to a student who is majoring in an affected department.

"It's not going to change where students receive their instruction, it's not going to change their degrees or their courses," Tankersley said. "What it changes is the organizational structure of how we manage all of that work to get to the courses and the degrees. I don't think students will notice a lot of changes on a day-to-day basis."

However, here is an example of how an affected program might look.

"Instead of having a department chair for philosophy and a department chair for history, they will have one department chair who manages and administers both of those departments," Tankersley continued. "The faculty will be the same, their courses will be the same, the degrees, the programs they offer will be the same, the same in history. But there will be one department chair over the two."

She further explained that this is how the university is meeting the reduction of administration and management.

With this specific proposal, the other eight regional Kent State campuses will not be affected, as the other campuses have already implemented their own centralization strategies.

A PROFESSOR'S PERSPECTIVE

While one of the main focuses of T28 has been about better preparing students for their future, professors and staff will also be adjusting to the new structure.

Cristin Compton, an associate professor in the School of Communication Studies, Compton says the change will require a new way of thinking about how higher education is delivered. "We are going to have to rethink how we do higher education," Compton said. "It will require us to think through change and how to build bridges in ways that maybe we haven't had to do before. It's a good thing at the end of the day, it serves our students."

Compton explained that faculty and staff were given a lot of opportunities to give voice to the provost's office and Academic Affairs.

"This proposal is about reimagining how we can provide the best educational experiences with limited resources, not about cutting programs or harming faculty," Compton said.

The last step of the T28 planning process occurred on March 19. The Board of Trustees voted, and approved on, the most recent reconfiguration of T28. This was the final approval needed for the chosen structure. The transition of the new plan will begin in the fall of 2025 and will carry out its phases with an expected conclusion in 2028. **B**





KICKSTART THE MORNING WITH THESE COFFEE RECIPES

WRITTEN BY **CHLOE ROBERTSON**
DESIGNED BY **KATIA MZEHEM**

TEDDY GRAHAM LATTE

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 1/2 TBSP HONEY
- 2 SHOTS ESPRESSO
- 1 DASH OF CINNAMON
- 1 CUP OF MILK
- ICE CUBES
- TEDDY GRAHAMS



Instructions: Mix 1 tbsp of honey and cinnamon in a cup to brew espresso over. Brew espresso and pour mixture over ice and milk. Garnish with a Teddy Graham or two!

BROWN SUGAR & VANILLA ICED COFFEE

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 CUP ICED COFFEE OR COLD BREW
- 1 TBSP BROWN SUGAR
- 1 TBSP VANILLA CREAMER
- ICE CUBES

Instructions: Whisk together brown sugar and vanilla creamer. Pour mixture into iced coffee with ice cubes and enjoy!





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10x15	\$130 /mo	\$160 /mo
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10x30	\$245 /mo	\$330 /mo
12x30	\$290 /mo	---
10x40	\$315 /mo	---

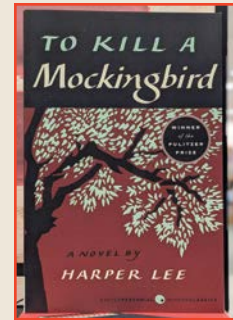
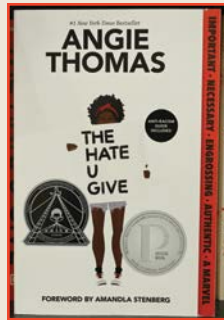


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BANNED BOOKS

WRITTEN BY
REESE URBACH
DESIGNED BY
NATALIA GRIFFITHS



Historically, books have taken a lot of time and effort to produce, making physical copies of them precious and very rare. The banning of books dates all the way back to 1637, when Thomas Morton's "New English Canaan" was banned by the Puritan government due to its harsh and heretical critiques of Puritan beliefs and power structures.

This was the beginning of banning books. After their creation and release into society, government officials would decide what books to ban.

Those chosen books would often be burned publicly, destroying the already limited availability of them. This practice dates back as far as the Middle Ages, the most notable moment in history being the Nazi book burning of 1933.

While burning books is not as common today, there are still ways that books are restricted from public access. Book banning is used as a form of censorship to shield younger audiences from obtaining books that depict information that is deemed inappropriate.

When a book is banned today, it is removed from libraries and schools, making it inaccessible to the public. Individual schools, districts, libraries, communities

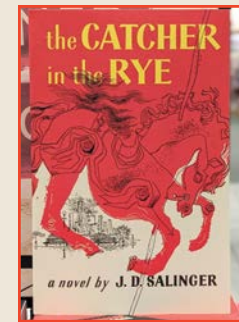
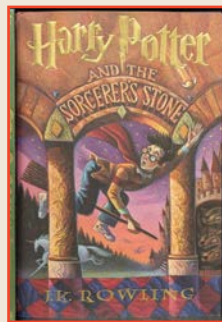
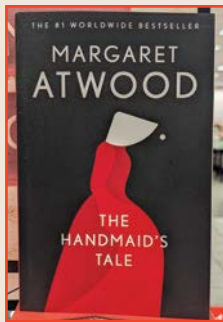
"BUT TO OUTRIGHT **BAN** THEM
AND REMOVE THEM FROM
LIBRARIES IS A DANGEROUS STEP
TOWARDS **CENSORSHIP**
AND A **THREAT** TO FREE
SPEECH."

and politicians can challenge books, and ultimately ban them.

Books have been banned for containing subjects like strong religious, political or moral messages, sex, inappropriate language, violence, drugs, LGBTQ+ themes, race and more.

As mentioned before, book bannings have been occurring for decades. But, the modern conversation surrounding the banning of books sparked when Art Spiegelman's graphic novel "Maus" was banned from Tennessee County's 8th grade curriculum.

"Maus" illustrates a true story written by a Holocaust survivor about his experience in concentration camps. The book was banned for its depiction of violence and strong language, but the novel remained on the bestseller list in spite of its shocking ban from the classroom.



"Certainly age appropriateness should be considered when deciding which books should be made available to kids in school and at what age and grade," Kent State English professor, Matthew Shank. "But to outright ban them and remove them from libraries is a dangerous step towards censorship and a threat to free speech.," said Kent State English professor Matthew Shank.

"[BOOK BANS] ARE VERY HARMFUL BECAUSE THE **DENIAL OF EDUCATION** IS A **CRIME** OF ITSELF."

After conducting a study, the American Library Association (ALA) found that over 1,500 books were challenged or banned in 2021. This study found that most of these banned and challenged books were generally centered around LGBTQ+ people and people of color.

The ALA also provides a list of commonly challenged and banned books that are constantly at risk of being removed from the classroom. This list includes "Gender Queer," "All Boys Aren't Blue," "This Book is Gay," "The Perks of Being a Wallflower," "Flamer," "The Bluest Eye," "Me and Earl and the Dying Girl," "Trick," "Sold" and "Let's Talk About It: The Teen's Guide to Sex,

Relationships, and Being a Human."

Each of these books focus on themes related to sexuality, race, LGBTQ+ community and politics.

First-year fashion merchandising major with minors in journalism and fashion media, Ella Reese, shared her thoughts on book bans.

"Censorship starts with the silencing of books and then of voices," Reese said. "They [book bans] are very harmful because the denial of education is a crime of itself."

Morgan Rockhold, a first-year political science major, believes that censorship prevents people from having a choice in what they read. "Book bans are harmful as it infringes upon the first amendment," Rockhold said.

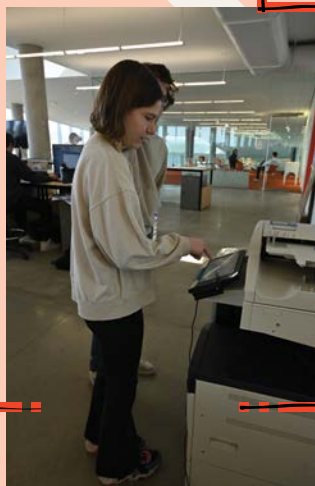
Despite these bans, there are still ways to access banned books. Some stores, such as Barnes & Noble, have sections dedicated to banned and challenged books. Online resources like ALA work to keep readers informed on what books may be in danger.

Ibram X. Kendi, American author and professor, stated in a video from the Washington Post. "Books aren't dangerous. At least, they're not dangerous to those of us who want to create an equitable and just society." **B**

DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN ARCHITECTURE STUDENT

PHOTOS BY **NATALIA GRIFFITHS**
DESIGNED BY **STEPHEN MCHALE**
FEATURING **CORRI LECIAN**

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