

Been There, Can Vaguely Remember Doing That

I happened to read a shocking magazine last week – it was the premier issue of a new (and free!) local magazine called Campus Access. It's a "lifestyle magazine strictly catered to the University of Iowa campus."

I say shocking because either I forgot what it's like to be a UI student (it HAS been 30 years), or college students have degenerated into oversexed, deceitful, cynical, manipulative hedonists.

Sure, there was a fair amount of depravity going on in 1975 as well, but we didn't have a magazine promoting it.

25% of the cover of the current issue displays the cleavage of Miss Illinois, who for some reason is attending the University of Iowa. Five other photos of her bikini-clad student body accompany her interview (she seems very nice). Other highbrow features are:

- A centerfold detailing the daily drink specials at eight bars
- Advice for a young woman worried about getting pregnant because she and her boyfriend have sex "at least twice a day"
- How girls can "party penniless" by getting guys to buy them drinks
- The most effective ways to lie to the guys buying the drinks
- How to b.s. your parents into supporting your college "education" for 6 or 7 years

In fairness, there are also some helpful articles on health and wellness, a restaurant and movie guide, an astrology chart and a couple of tongue-in-cheek columns knocked out by reasonably entertaining and articulate writers.

Despite the overall theme it's a slickly produced magazine that's interesting to read, in a voyeuristic sort of way. That being said, it also cries out for a column from the perspective of an older-but-wiser graduate who has been there and can vaguely remember doing that.

Of course, nobody would read it because it would advise restraint, responsibility and moral integrity - things most teenagers are tired of hearing about. It would also point out entertainment opportunities that do not involve (gasp!) alcohol.

For example, if you are a UI student and your world consists only of your frat room and downtown Iowa City (and you want to keep it that way) you should at least check out www.englert.org. The Englert Theatre is quietly providing a broad array of relatively low-priced family entertainment - even stuff that morally bankrupt students would enjoy.

One of my favorites – Baxter Black (cowboy poet, ex-veterinarian and starvin' cattle feeder) - will be appearing the evening of September 27th in a fundraiser for the Johnson County Soil and Water Conservation District.

Those of you willing to travel a little farther for your wholesome kicks should check out the 35th annual Fiddler's Picnic next Sunday afternoon (the 18th) at the Johnson County Fairgrounds, just past the Iowa City Municipal Airport.

It's not nearly as hokey as it may sound. For \$5 you can hear many of Iowa's finest musicians playing bluegrass, Celtic, country, folk and old-time music from noon until 6 p.m. There will be string instrument workshops, a vintage instrument dealer showcase, parking lot jam sessions and food options. Check www.fiddlerspicnic.org for details.

I don't expect to see many UI students there, because it appears that they are more interested in grinding against total strangers on a dance floor sticky with beer than listening to a Scottish reel played on a concertina. That will probably never change.

It's probably just as well - I'd hate to rob anyone of the cherished memory of his or her first two-day hangover.

If you'd like to relive that experience plus many others from your college days, pick up an issue of Campus Access. As for me, I'll stick with my A.A.R.P. Magazine.