

U, WITH AN AUDIENCE OF 6.6 MILLION, is the most widely read lifestyle and entertainment magazine among 18- to 34-year-old college-educated young adults. Editorial content focuses on the diverse interests, activities, attitudes and concerns of students attending four-year colleges and universities. U's assistant editors, selected each year from top graduating seniors, read campus newspapers, commission original articles and photography by the best student journalists, and maintain an ongoing dialogue via the Internet and U-Views line with students at hundreds of campuses nationwide.

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U. VIEWS

4 U. Mail, editorial cartoons and (shocker) more poll questions.

QUICKIES

5 Fat-, sugar- and cholesterol- free campus anecdotes.

U. NEWS

6 Buy four years of undergrad education, get your master's in a fifth year for free. Read all about Clark U.'s too-good-to-be-true offer. Or find out how to slam your professors — and get away with it! And, as always, we've got Bits & Bytes, The Buzz on campus and a girl and her dogs' 15 Minutes of fame.

U. LIFE

10 Home / Give Me a Break

Going home for the holidays means more than clean laundry and home-cooked meals. It means curfews, chores and family-bonding time. Are you ready to regress?

10 Class / Staying Power

Whether it's homesickness, school-sickness or just plain burn-out, some freshman won't survive their first year. Find out what schools are doing to keep the freshman spirit alive.

11 Dollars / Scholarship Scam

Take your grandpa's advice: You can't get somethin' fer nothin'. Some students are learning that the hard way after scholarship companies reel them in with false scholarship promises. Don't be the next little fish to fall hook, line and sinker.

11 Etc. / Big Returns on Crime Prevention

You might feel safe in that big academic bubble you've built around yourself, but campus crime is increasing everywhere. It's a big, bad world out there — find out what some campuses are doing to protect their students from it.

COVER STORY

14 Have Change, Will Travel

Pop quiz, wise guy. How much money does it take to travel around the world? More money than you'll ever have? WRONG! Check out our tips for cheap trips and find out how to stretch your meager travel budget. Plus, we've got the scoop on the new hip, happenin' places to travel. Bon marché voyage!

FEATURES

16 The Grade Debate

Since when does an "A" stand for average? According to some grade hounds, the meaning of an "A" ain't what it used to be. Others argue that us students are just getting smarter. Find out what all the grade inflation fuss is about.

20 Back to Schoolhouse Rock

Retro-madness doesn't stop at frosted lipstick or *Scooby Doo* lunch boxes. Yes, that's right. Your favorite Saturday morning sing-a-long session is making a comeback. Go ahead. Put on those footie pajamas and rock out with the *Schoolhouse* gang.

R + R

18 Rock

The last and latest from Blind Melon, plus Pocket Band, Our Picks and the U. radio chart.

19 Reel

Hollywood's last-ditch efforts to woo Oscar, plus Reel Deal and a Screen Saver on John Cleese's "equal" to *A Fish Called Wanda*.

22 Contests

Wanna win big money? Turn to our world-famous contests page now! And find out what little student Grinches want with U. Magazine's annual Holiday Gift Wish List.

WRAP

23 Exit: Stage Dive

Getting felt-up at a concert by a stranger isn't *that* unusual. But what if that stranger is a hairy, 350-pound security guy? Maximum security isn't an uncommon sight at most concerts these days.

GUEST EXPERTS: Beavis and Butt-Head



Alienated, obtuse, brooding, inarticulate — these are just a few of the adjectives that leap to mind when contemplating our December Guest Experts, Beavis and his longtime socialist companion Butt-head. The iconoclastic duo have been deconstructing bourgeois sensibilities every week on the avant-garde MTV. Following in the tradition of *Un Chien Andalou*, this month the auteurs offer un-expurgated discourse on our postmodern condition in *Beavis and Butt-Head Do America*.

COVER PHOTO BY MICHAEL PALMIERI, PENN STATE U.



There's one born every minute. Page 11



Hitch-free cheap travel plans. Page 14



Where we all learned to love our grammar. Page 20

Campus Shots



An ad for Tide? Nope, just boys being boys at James Madison U.

PHOTO BY MELISSA PALLADINO, JAMES MADISON U.