

# Men may suffer from self-image issues

The University Men's Center can help men with problems including poor self-image and bouts of depression

**Roman Gokhman**  
Campus/City Culture Reporter

On any given day, University junior Phil Harms may look into a mirror and tell himself he is looking sharp, only to return five minutes later and say, "What were you thinking? You don't look good today."

The University Men's Health Team conducted a survey in 1999 in which men on campus listed depression as the sixth major health concern they faced. But many, like Harms, do not like to talk about their self-image problems.

"(Men) are trained ... not to express their true feelings or emotions — that might seem femi-

nine," Harms said. "They are supposed to be confident, strong and self-reliant."

According to the University Health Center, while much emphasis has been placed on dealing with women's self-image problems, such as eating disorders and depression, the same is not the case for men.

"Men's depression is downplayed," health center psychologist Jon Davies said. "Because men hide it." Davies said crying is a good way to let go of grief, but society encourages men not to cry.

George Hanawahine, director of the University Men's Center, agreed with Davies. Hanawahine said when men feel depressed, have relationship troubles, suffer from low self-esteem or problems at work or school, they are less likely to seek counseling than women.

"The tendency for ... most men

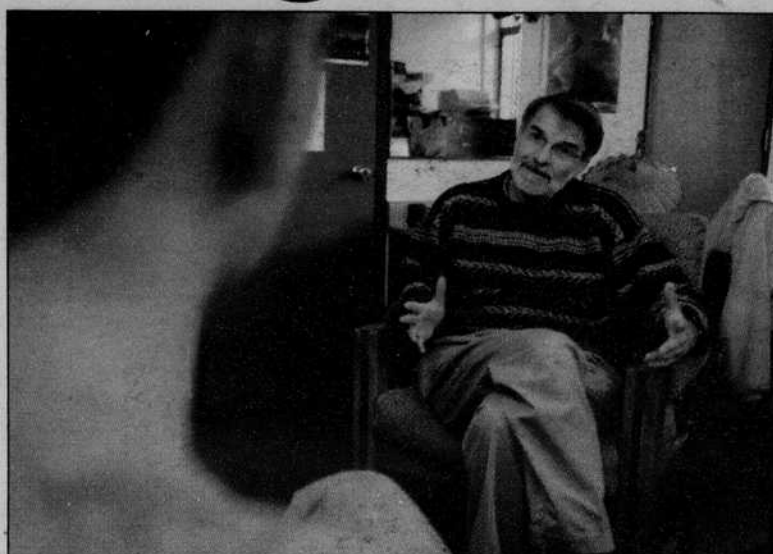
is to try to solve their problems on their own," he said, adding that if they cannot accomplish this, they often go to a friend or family member. By the time they go to a counselor, "they are in a more severe situation."

This repression of feelings lowers self-esteem and self-image, and people with little self-confidence — despite their appearance — are less social, health center physician Ben Douglas said.

"Self-image and self-confidence goes hand-in-hand," Douglas said. "The most important thing to do is ... develop some comfort about yourself."

Like Harms, University freshman Aaron Martin said for him, low self-image is a strong cause of depression.

"Sometimes everything seems Turn to **Esteem**, page 7B



Adam Amato Emerald

Senior staff psychologist Jon A. Davies, Ph.D., counsels men on problems ranging from depression to relationship problems at the University Counseling Center.

## 'Pretty boys' often wear heavy crowns of (excessive) hair gel

It's time again for our annual "Vice" issue, and while I don't exactly have writing experience in this area, I have been summoned to write a story.

To me, the issue seems like a compilation of off-the-wall topics, which only serve the purpose of entertainment. Originally, I was told to write about pizza addiction. But since I am lactose intolerant, I don't fit the bill. Then, I was asked to write a story on race car driving, but my own car is from the late Ronald Reagan era and its only purpose is getting me where I want to go.

Finally, last week someone heard me say, "Shit! I totally forgot to bring my hair gel today, and I have to go swimming and then go do interviews. That's no good." That sealed my fate in the newsroom.

I now lay myself before the mer-

cy of my audience, not as a sports columnist, but as a self-described "pretty boy."

I do own a credit card account at Structure.

I do wear Reaction shoes by Kenneth Cole.

And I do spike my hair with a decent amount of gel every morning before I walk out the door.

I wanted to find other pretty boys on the campus, to try and understand the image. I came up with absolutely nothing.

Even with the Gucci glasses and Armani sweaters, the guys I tried to

speak to became overly modest about their style and refrained from comment. They appreciated the compliments but felt their image would be affected in a negative way by admitting to the media that they were, in fact, pretty boys.

I am left with no quotes, no interviews and no story. But I was given 15 inches of column space to try and explain the depth of what it is to be classified as 'pretty.' If I missed you and you classify yourself in this category, please allow me to apologize. My understanding is that it's not about feeling self-conscious or always needing to look your absolute best, but simply taking pride in your appearance.

People should take pride in how they present themselves. I am just not the type of person to walk out the door in the morning with tapered blue jeans, white tennis

shoes, a tucked-in T-shirt and a rain coat. I would rather walk out in black leather shoes, faded jeans, a fitted shirt and a black wool coat.

For some reason that is beyond me, my hair is what fascinates my colleagues the most. In case you are curious, here goes nothing: I put gel in it once, then blow dry it, add more gel for the wet look and finish it up with a little hair spray for a permanent hold.

It seems a little over the top, I agree.

My style also seems to plague people with the question of sexuality. I had a good friend of mine tell me once, "you dress too nice to

come across as a straight man."

But, I must say that I am heterosexual — and just because you wear Abercrombie, Express or Armani doesn't mean anything, despite the classic stereotype that gay men dress nicer than straight men.

I like to think of my style of dress as nice-casual but don't, in fact, like the term "pretty boy." However, I must bring this article to an end because I have to re-gel my hair, as a strand has just fallen out of place.

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**Jesse Thomas**  
Go the distance

## Casual

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"I really, honestly thought we were dating," she said. "I learned quick."

Recalling the numerous Saturday and Sunday mornings she has seen girls trudge home in their party garb, Haley said the walk of shame is the best indicator of drunken one-night stands.

"You know they're not just taking a morning stroll in their five-inch-heeled stilettos," she said. According to the Student Conduct Code,

no consent is given in sexual intercourse if either person is intoxicated in any way. Considering alcohol lowers inhibitions, Leith said all sexually active students should apply for the Family Planning Expansion Project — or FPEP — to receive state aid for health services and contraceptives.

Despite the availability of FPEP services, Leith said one-night stands are not a healthy pastime due to the risk factor. "If you need sexual release, masturbate," she suggested.

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## Kleckner

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ended up feeling betrayed or cheated, or just plain dirty — and not in a good way.

Once you learn to be honest with yourself about what you need and what you can give, fulfillment can

come in all sorts of "casual" encounters. Although, if you're getting your needs fulfilled, it's hard to see how these relationships can continue to be called casual. Who says they're casual? Are they casual because they don't meet society's pretty but fictional picture of romantic-sexual-domestic-friendship bliss?

People should reclaim "casual" relationships and redefine what they want and need from others. Of course, everyone needs to play safe with casual sex. But we would all be a lot happier — not if we were in perfect couplings of being everything to each other, but if we were honest about what we needed and were willing to assert the personal agency necessary to seek out what we wanted.

And you know what? Being honest with yourself in just that way is the only thing that will make the real thing work — if and when it ever comes along. Without that honesty, you'll find yourself caught in a loop of ultimately unfulfilling serial monogamy, anyway.

So start cultivating some honesty right now, and don't be afraid of a little safe, casual need fulfillment.

Contact the editor in chief at [editor@dailyemerald.com](mailto:editor@dailyemerald.com). His views do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.

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