



TECHNOBABA TIMES

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"Feminism is the radical notion that women are human beings." —Cheris Kramer

Thinking of grad school?

Hannah E. Mongiat, *tbt* alum

Random guy in the Rome airport:

"Excuse me, do you speak English?"

Me: "Yes, I do. (chuckle) I'm American."

Guy: "Oh. So am I. Are they boarding the flight to Geneva already?"

Me: "Yes, they are. So, what is an American doing in Rome boarding a plane to Geneva?"

Guy: "I could ask you the same question."

Me: "I work for the World Trade Organization and am returning from holiday in Italy."

We ended up sitting next to each other for the short flight of one hour. He was a political philosophy major at UCLA trying to figure out his life while doing an internship in Geneva. He asked about graduate school, my research, what I do at the WTO and how I got from point A (where he currently is) to point B (where I currently am). I always find it odd when people, especially people my age, ask me for advice. I usually laugh a little and try to muster up something profound, although I usually end up sounding like a cheerleading coach or a soccer mom instead. If someone had told me two years ago that I would a) be a graduate student at Cornell University and b) be an intern at the World Trade Organization in Geneva, Switzerland for three months, I would have told them they were crazy.

When Anne Wysocki asked me to write a series of *tbt* articles on graduate school I was, of course, more than happy to oblige. But it occurred to me that I had better figure out exactly how I did get to point B. So, let's start at the very beginning...

Two years ago I was entering my final year at Michigan Tech studying Business Adminis-

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Come On Out for the Women Hockey Huskies!

Casey J. Rudkin,
The SportsChica



The Women Hockey Huskies face off against the St. Scholastica Saints. (Photo by Joe Wisniewski)

The ice may be cold, but hockey gets hot when our MTU Women Hockey Huskies begin their 2006-07 season this month at the SDC.

Club president Dana DesRochers started playing hockey at the beginning of her first year at Tech, although she says some of the other players have been playing hockey all of their lives. Any woman from Tech or the community who wants to join the club is welcome. Presently, the club has about 25 players on its practice roster for this season.

"Players just have to have their own skates, stick, and helmet," DesRochers said. "No experience in hockey is needed, just dedication."

DesRochers also added that with this hockey club, fun comes first.

"These women practice hard and play hard. Everyone is really dedicated to the team," she said. "Everyone gets a chance to play."

The Women's Hockey Club began in 1993. They primarily play other teams from Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan, although at their Fall Tournament at Rainy River Community College, there will be eight or ten teams from around the US and Canada.

The women's hockey game is not substantially different from men's hockey, with the exception of checking. DesRochers said that even though checking is not allowed, there is still a lot of contact, making it exciting to watch.

Students and community members are encouraged to find out for themselves.

"I'm really excited about this season," DesRochers said. "Winter Carnival is going to be a lot of fun. We play right after the men's team."

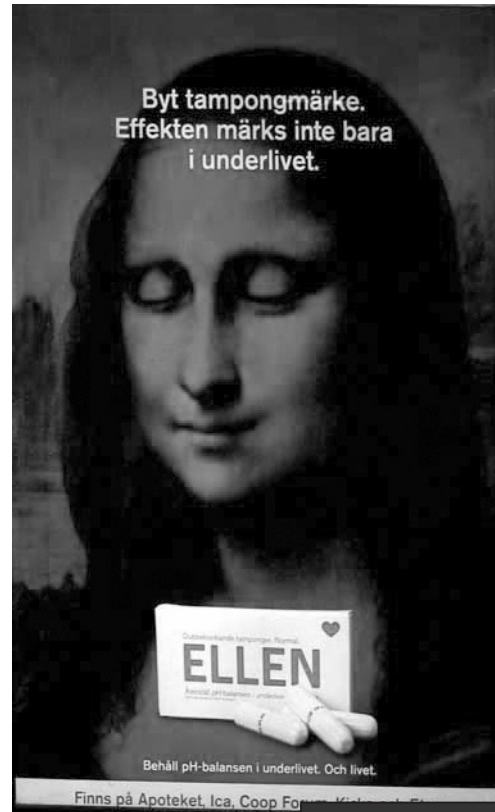
Games are free to watch, and schedule information can be obtained from the club. The Women Hockey Huskies play away in October, host two home series in November, and play home games in January and February.

For more information on the team, visit their website at <http://whockey.students.mtu.edu/> or e-mail the team at whockey@mtu.edu



...or are you thinking of a job after graduation?

Check out page 5 to learn what *tbt* alum Allison Thiel—that's her to the right in the photo above—is doing in a helicopter in a pool in Rotterdam...



PERIOD PRODUCTS

Cassie Thiel

Most women are well aware of the basics of menstrual regulation. There are pads and tampons, right? What most women don't realize is that there are plenty of safe and effective alternatives to pads and tampons. Hopefully this article will make you aware of your options!

Pads and tampons have been dominating the feminine hygiene market since the early 1930s when they were first manufactured in the US. Among tampon users, each woman is likely to use about 10,000 tampons during her lifetime (Wikipedia). In 1998, 7 billion tampons, 13 billion sanitary pads, and their packaging made their way into landfills and sewage systems in the USA alone (DivaCup)!

Are you all for the environment? Or sick of buying mass quantities of tampons and pads? Then you need to know about reusable pads and tampons. Reusable tampons are basically natural sea sponges, and while this is not an

FDA approved method, marketed products such as Jade and Pearl Sea Sponge Tampons do exist. The reusable pads, such as Glad Rags, LunaPads, and other washable pads require a certain degree of self-comfort and lack of squeamishness, but we *are* talking about periods.

If you're not quite ready to use reusable pads and tampons because you don't want to wash out your hygiene products or don't have the time—but you're sick of tampons drying you out—then you might consider a disposable menstrual cup. One of the major benefits of menstrual cups is a maintained moisture level in the vagina. The vagina is continually self-cleansing, washing away dead cells and bacteria. Tampons absorb the natural fluids that women need to keep the vagina clean and moist. Since menstrual cups simply collect the menstrual flow, the natural moisture level in

the vagina is undisturbed (DivaCup). There are a few different brands of menstrual cups, and while I've found a box or two on the shelves of Houghton's ShopKo, they're still a little tough to find (if you don't want to buy them online).

One brand is the Instead. The Instead still requires a certain level of self-comfort as they are a collection cup and not absorbent. But because it can be left in for up to 12 hours, it's very convenient. Other benefits? Because it is a soft round disc that sits behind the pubic bone and around the cervix it can actually be worn during intercourse. The downside is that if you let it fill up for a while and then laugh heartily or do anything else to your stomach muscles, it might leak a bit, but in general they work well.

If cleaning your hygiene products doesn't bother you, you might consider the reusable menstrual cup with brands like DivaCup, the Keeper, and the MoonCup. (I'll use the Diva Cup as my main example.) They are a more rigid plastic cup that can be worn for up to 12hrs. Upon removal, the DivaCup should be emptied and washed with hot soapy water. However, if you are in a public restroom, they can simply be emptied and wiped with a tissue and reinserted (and washed at the next convenient time).

Most reusable products are fairly expensive to start with but definitely pay for themselves over time. For example, the DivaCup—at approximately \$30—is much more expensive than tampons (initially), but within just a few months they'll have saved you that much in disposable products. Not to mention saved landfill space! Most of these companies provide some sort of "return" policy in case you aren't pleased with the product.

The following chart is just a brief comparison of various feminine hygiene products. The category "Effectiveness" is a subjective poll collected from female tbt members in the overall effectiveness of a certain product. Products were judged on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being comfortable, no leaking and 5 being uncomfortable, leaky. "Comfort w/ Self" is also a 1 to 5 scale, 1 being little comfort needed and 5 meaning to use the product, you cannot be squeamish.

Websites Used:

www.divacup.com
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tampon>
<http://www.moonhutnaturals.com>
<http://studentweb.uwstout.edu/mathewst/webpage/normalizing.htm>
<http://oochi.biz/instead/public>

Toxic Shock Syndrome

Allison Thiel, tbt alum

Anyone who's used tampons has probably seen the little folded-up paper inside the box, warning that tampons increase your risk of developing Toxic Shock Syndrome (TSS), a potentially lethal condition—but what exactly is TSS and how do you prevent it?

According to Kidshealth.org:

*Toxic shock syndrome (TSS) is a serious but uncommon bacterial infection. TSS was originally linked to the use of tampons, but it is now also known to be associated with the contraceptive sponge and diaphragm birth control methods. In rare cases, TSS has resulted from wounds or surgery incisions where bacteria have been able to enter the body and cause the infection.*¹

The form of TSS associated with tampon use is caused by the bacteria *Staphylococcus aureus*, however the exact link between the two is not actually known! It is thought that the warm, moist environment created by certain high-absorbency tampons results in the formation of the ideal conditions in which the bacteria flourishes.¹

TSS reached an almost epidemic level in 1979 and 1980, at which point the CDC became involved in identifying the source of the "outbreak." The resulting investigation linked the use of extremely high absorbency tampons composed of new materials- polyester foam and highly absorbent cellulose; in particular, one brand was identified, Proctor & Gamble's (P&G) Rely tampons. The Rely tampons were voluntarily withdrawn that same year from the market, by P&G, as well as several competing brands containing the same materials.²

In 1982 the FDA began requiring tampon manufacturers to display TSS warning information, as well as symptoms of the condition and ways to prevent it, on or in all boxes of tampons. In 1990 the FDA standardized absorbency labeling, enabling consumers to be able, for the first time, to compare absorbency between different brands.²

Whether it was from increased consumer education, increased standards in the industry (companies now conduct test on new products, checking for bacterial growth, among other things), or the removal of certain brands/material types, the incidence of TSS has dropped dramatically in the past 20 years, as illustrated by the chart on page 4. The record high of 813 cases, with 38 deaths, in 1980 has dropped to only 3 cases in 1998. There is some speculation of underreporting of TSS cases, but this is

still considered fairly insignificant in comparison.²

Warning Signs

TSS mimics the flu, so the warnings can be easily overlooked, however if you experience any of the following within a week after your period (and you've been using tampons) you should contact your doctor immediately and express your concerns about TSS.^{1,2}

- Sudden high fever
- Faint feeling/dizziness/fainting
- Watery diarrhea
- Headache
- Muscle aches
- Vomiting
- Rash that looks like a sunburn

Also, one to two weeks after initial symptoms, flaking and peeling of the skin on the palms of hands and soles of feet usually occurs. 2

Treatment generally consists of antibiotics, and within 2 to 3 weeks the patient has recovered. 2

Prevention

Menstrual-related TSS can be completely prevented by not using tampons—see PERIOD PRODUCTS to the left for alternative ideas—but if you don't want to give up your tampons, here are some good tips to decrease your risk of TSS²:

- Frequent handwashing, both before and after insertion/removal of tampons
- Follow package instructions for insertion
- Choose the lowest absorbency for your flow
- Your tampon is probably too absorbent if:
 - It is hard to remove.
 - You experience vaginal dryness.
 - The tampon shreds.
 - It doesn't need to be changed after several hours.
- Dryness and ulcerations may occur if a tampon is too absorbent for your flow!
- Change your tampons every 4 to 8 hours.
- Consider alternating with pads.
- Know the warning signs of TSS.
- Don't use tampons between periods.

Sources:

- 1 http://kidshealth.org/parent/infections/skin/toxic_shock.html
- 2 http://www.fda.gov/fdac/features/2000/200_tss.html

	PADS		TAMPONS			MENSTRUAL CUPS	
	Disposable	Reusable	w/ App	w/out App	Sponges	Insteads	DivaCups
Price/Period*	\$3.50	-	\$4	\$3	-	\$9	-
Price/Product	\$5/30	\$17/1	\$8/40	\$6/40	\$10	\$13/14	~\$30
Time Worn	6hrs	6hrs	6hrs	6hrs	6hrs	12hrs	12hrs
Reusable?	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
Life Expectancy	-	5 yrs	-	-	1 yr	-	several years
Risk of TSS	No	No	Yes	Yes	-	No	No
Comfort with Self	1	4	2	3	5	5	5
Effectiveness	2	2	3.5	3.5	3.5	4	(4)**
Benefits	doesn't dry out vaginas		as a plug, it prevents leaking			Clean Intercourse is possible	hypoallergenic, latex free, can be used for several years, 2 sizes
Problems	leaking may occur	leaking may occur, need to be washed	removal of natural vaginal fluid, leading to dry, scratchy feel (and TSS risk)			some leaking with full cup and pressure (from coughing, etc)	need to be washed although not after EVERY use

Prices are approximate as varying brands and stores offer varying prices

* Price/Period based on 5 day, average flow cycle

** No tbt Members have used this product, however, based on website info, seems to be similar to Insteads

Michigan's New Reproductive Health Insurance

Katrina Keteri, *tbt alum*

Sitting in the waiting room at Planned Parenthood with a roomful of somewhat bored and self-conscious young women while waiting for my annual pelvic exam, I glanced at the new exam prices. I was shocked to see that my annual would cost me literally twice what it did last year due to budgetary cutbacks at the state level. I sighed, mentally shuffling around my budget trying to figure out how to subtract a hundred extra dollars from the month's groceries. I sighed again and finished digging through my paperwork, and I noticed a form I didn't remember from the year before: a sign-up sheet for insurance. I thought to myself, "I've been through this before. I can't afford insurance." I put it back down and finished filling out the rest of the papers.

Forty-five minutes went by and there were still over a dozen people ahead of me, so in order to avoid pole-vaulting over the zoo of children running around in front of me, I just read through the insurance hand-out. To my surprise, it was a new kind of insurance Michigan had just started offering called Plan First!, and it's administered through the Michigan Department of Community Health. The program is intended for people who do not have medical coverage and do not otherwise have the money to kick out every month on reproductive planning services including treatment

The program is intended for people who do not have medical coverage and do not otherwise have the money to kick out every month on reproductive planning services including... your annual pelvic exam.

of sexually transmitted infections, lab tests, prescriptions for birth control and the birth control itself, and your annual pelvic exam. It costs nothing and the signup sheet is very simple and took only a few minutes to fill out. I got an acceptance letter two weeks later, and I saved 180 dollars on my pelvic exam and paid nothing for my pills!

Over the last few years, things have been discouraging for the reproductive health programs in the state and around the country. Every day it seemed we were hearing about pharmacists refusing patients their birth control or health care plans cutting back on family planning services. We may, however, see a step forward with this program that reportedly will benefit up to 200,000 low-income Michigan women. The plan does not cover abortions or

fertility treatments, but some are still criticizing the program for providing an inadequate solution for what some deem the "moral" problem of the nature of human sexuality. I do not believe critics of the program realize how important it is for women to get their annual pelvic exams every year, which has nothing to do with sexuality or morality. Regardless of one's activities, women who are not getting annual pelvic exams are putting themselves at risk because the female reproductive system is prone to many problems that can only be diagnosed with a pelvic exam. Many problems women are at risk for are relatively or completely symptomless and can render women infertile or can even be potentially fatal. Regardless of what issues people have with sexuality and morality, I do not think anyone can argue that a simple and potentially life-saving procedure should be available to all women, and this program will hopefully help that become a reality.

To learn more...

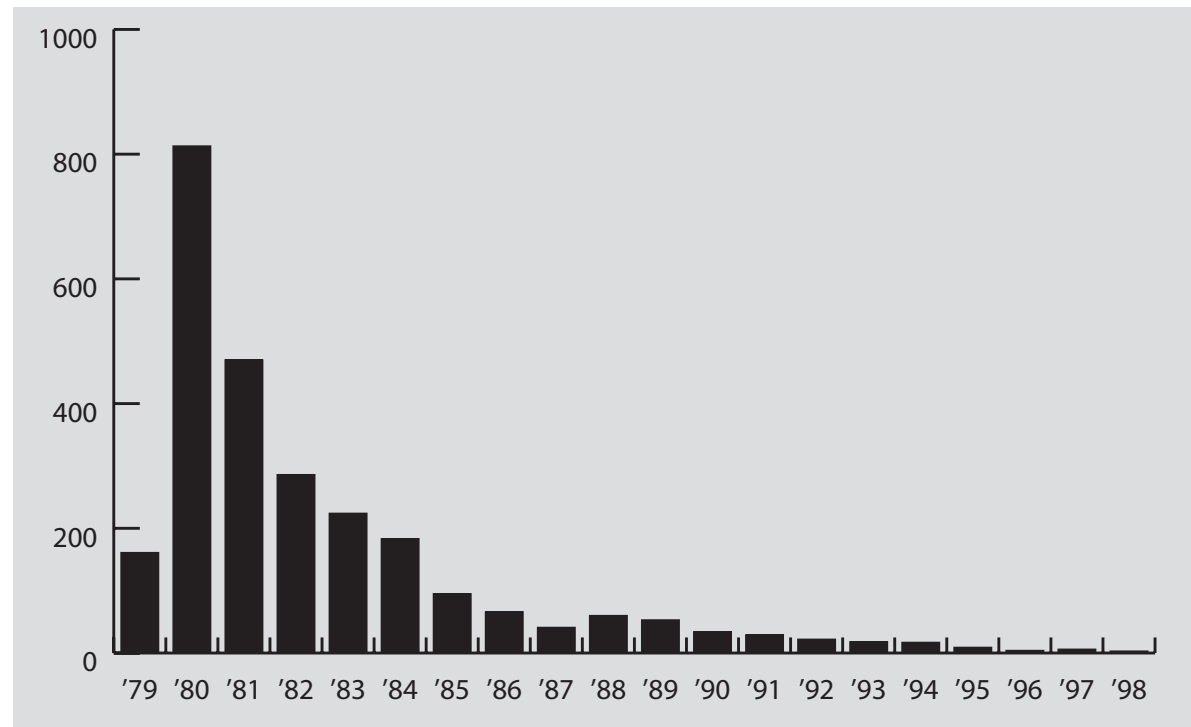
You can get more information about this program at Planned Parenthood or any health care provider, or at <http://www.michigan.gov/mdch>

The form is available online at (hold on, it's a long url):

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/MSA-1582PlanFirstApplication_162101_7.pdf#search=%22plan%20first!%20form%20michigan%22

Reported cases of TSS occurring during menstruation, 1979–1998

(source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)



A little life after school...

Allison Thiel

"Do you like to swim?" The question came out of the blue, and was made even more odd by being asked while I was interviewing for a position as a mechanical engineer. The Career Center never prepared me for a question like that! I soon discovered the reason behind the odd question, one centered around essential job training...

As part of that training for my new job with an international engineering firm based in Denmark, last Sunday I boarded a plane from Copenhagen to Amsterdam for a week of training at Falck Nutec in Rotterdam. The training course: *Basic North Sea (BNS) OPITO (Offshore Petroleum Industry Training Organization) & OLF (Norwegian Oil Industry Association)*.

Bright and early Monday morning I wandered into the giant cafeteria at Nutec, which also serves as the morning meeting and registration areas. I have a degree in Mechanical Engineering from Tech, I've interned/co-oped for several different companies (in most all of which I was one of, at most, two female engineers), and I've participated in/attended many science/engineering-oriented programs and conferences, all lacking in the number of female attendees—but nothing else compares to the room I entered that morning.

Falck's training facilities include both Nutec, which trains on maritime/offshore issues, and Risc, which is mainly a fire-fighting training facility. Neither of these areas attract copious amounts of women to enlist, and so very few women participate in the training. My age was the next factor that made me stick out: being only 24 I was definitely the youngest person in my group, and one of the youngest out of all the various training programs. The resulting combination made me feel, as I walked up to

get lunch or discard my tray, as though none of these men had ever seen a woman before in their life. Most of them just stared!

But I digress...

That first morning, I quickly located the BNS B table (the BNS course was split into two classes) and met a few of my peers for the week, before we were ushered off to the boat. Yep. The boat. The training facilities for Nutec consisted of several ships and barges anchored just outside the main building.

We started off the morning learning about laws and regulations for the Norwegian sector of the North Sea (in order to obtain our OLF certification). After lunch we had the theoretical portion of our helicopter safety training. Helicopter safety training? Offshore rigs are usually reached by helicopter, although sometimes people do board from supply vessels, hence the HUET portion (Helicopter Underwater Escape Training).

Tuesday morning was our first time in the pool. After picking up our survival suits we trudged over to the changing rooms. Karmina, the other female in my group, and I were crammed into a tiny room, the ladies' changing room, along with our female instructor, Fleur. I suppose I should be grateful we even had our own changing room!

Once we donned the woolen long underwear it was time to step into the dry suit; talc powder (to avoid ripping the hand and neck seals) completed the look. Back up top we struggled to get the air out of the suits, everyone squatting to the floor and leaning forward while holding open the neck seals. Then we put on the air pockets, which are a re-breather device; as soon as impact with the water occurs you quickly open up the air pocket, throw on the fashionable nose clip, and exhale a deep breath into the pocket, while simultaneously maintaining contact with the window and then quickly locating your seatbelt release. The air pocket, while giving you slightly more time than just holding your breath, is actually designed for cold shock. When your body is suddenly plunged into ice cold water (such as, say, the North Sea) you immediately go into cold shock and the uncontrollable reaction is an intake of short, sharp breaths. The air

...because otherwise you are in danger of swimming up through still-rotating blades, thus negating the danger of drowning...

pocket thus prevents drowning, because otherwise you'd be inhaling your last breath instead of the water surrounding you.

So how does one train for this exactly? Back to the pool.

Nutec has a 'helicopter body' lowered from the ceiling with a winch. You enter it from the water, and then it is raised up. The instructor gives one last briefing on the upcoming ditch and the procedures, before the helicopter body is lowered into the water, where it quickly sinks. There are 4 trainees inside the helicopter at a time, and 5 instructors are in the water with them, 2 of them in SCUBA gear. The helicopter is ditched 6 times for each group of trainees, with various scenarios: sometimes air pockets are used, sometimes not; sometimes the helicopter body is lowered straight into the water, sometimes it is flipped 180° while sinking into the water, and during a few trials the windows are put back in and have to be removed before you can escape.

The second scenario we enacted was, to me, the hardest: 180° flip, without windows or air pockets. True, not having windows means you don't spend time removing them, but the torrent of water pouring in through them tears you away from the window frame and makes it impossible to see anything clearly. You also have to wait to escape until you feel a shudder run through the helicopter frame: in a real emergency situation you have to remain inside the aircraft until the rotorblades break off (which makes the frame shudder), because otherwise you are in danger of swimming up through still-rotating blades, thus negating the danger of drowning...

While I had trouble using the air pocket while underwater (my breaths were shallow and erratic underwater, the fear of getting stuck firmly ingrained in the back of my mind), the air pocket relaxed me while the craft was sinking: I wasn't fearful of not having enough breath to make it out.

We also practiced being lifted up in a shoulder sling by a helicopter (for water rescue operations).

The morning was definitely mentally taxing. Everyone seemed to have a decent appetite at lunch, due (I think) to the adrenaline coursing through our veins during the 20 minutes of being dunked underwater. The afternoon was quite tame in comparison: offshore safety and safety cases.

Wednesday was more exciting: lifeboat theory and practice, first with a winch-lowered lifeboat, and then with the free-fall lifeboat.

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Thinking about graduate school?

continued from page 1...

tration. My boyfriend of three years and I were having a long distance relationship and I was planning on moving to Chicago for graduate school so we could be together. My top choice was the University of Chicago for three reasons. First, it was a top ten school, second it was located in one of my favorite cities in the world, and third one of my most favorite people in the world was there (the boyfriend - I know, I know. It's awful, right?). I sound like I have it completely together, right? Midway through my last year as an undergraduate, I decided to study in Italy. It was unexpected. It wasn't what I was 'supposed' to do. As a good Italian Catholic girl I was supposed to get my degree, marry my college boyfriend, and make lots of Italian babies. It's just what we do. But, hey, at least I was going to the motherland. So I boarded the plane to Italy not knowing then that it would change my entire existence.

While I was in Italy, the boyfriend and I broke up and I started getting acceptance letters to graduate schools. I did get into to the University of Chicago as well as other schools. One of them was Cornell University—with an attractive funding package. I accepted both the University of Chicago and Cornell's offer

It wasn't what I was 'supposed' to do.

and boarded a train to Brindisi, Italy, where I would catch a ferry to Greece. I called my mother before I got on the ferry and said, "I'm going to Greece. I don't know for how long or where I will go from there. I'll call you when I'm coming home." In retrospect, I can only imagine how terrifying that phone call must have been for her. Her only daughter had just called to tell her she was going to Greece indefinitely and would call when she was returning to the states. After three weeks in Greece and about five additional weeks of backpacking around Western Europe I called my mother to tell her I was coming home for a couple of weeks before I moved to New York where I would be starting graduate school at Cornell University.

So, that is how I got from Michigan Tech to New York. It certainly wasn't a straight shot. I took a few detours along the way—but those detours have been some of the most beautiful.

PRIORITIES?

AMOUNT (in billions of U.S. dollars) SPENT ON...

Cosmetics in the U.S.	8
Ice cream in Europe	11
Perfumes in Europe and the U.S.	12
Pet foods in Europe and the U.S.	17
Business entertainment in Japan	35
Cigarettes in Europe	50
Alcoholic drinks in Europe	105
Narcotics drugs in the world	400
Military spending in the world	780

WHAT IT WOULD TAKE (in billions of U.S. dollars) TO PROVIDE

Basic education for all	6
Water and sanitation for all	9
Reproductive health for all women	12
Basic health and nutrition	13

(Source: The state of human development, United National Development Report 1998, Chapter 1, p.37)

HANNAH'S TOP 10 TIPS FOR GETTING INTO GRADUATE SCHOOL

- 1 Start looking at schools early (about 1.5 -2 years before you expect to start your studies). Go to the U.S. News and World Report and look at the rankings. Talk to professors and professionals in your field of study.
- 2 Check out the research faculty and students are doing at the universities you want to attend.
- 3 Start writing your personal essay about one year before you start studying. I started writing my essay, with a coach in the Writing Center, in September of my senior year.
- 4 Listen to others' advice, but make your own decisions. Family and friends always have an opinion, but only you know what is best for you. Be true to yourself.
- 5 Travel. I wish I would have traveled more as an undergraduate. Study abroad, volunteer abroad for spring break, work abroad for the summer. There are countless opportunities out there – do some searching on the internet. Aside from the traditional semester abroad, you could teach English in Thailand or South Africa for the summer, build orphanages in Romania or Moldova for spring break, or waitress on the beaches of Greece for a couple of months. Break out of your comfort zone—you won't regret it.
- 6 Keep your grades up (above a 3.5)
- 7 Get involved on campus. This looks good on applications, sure, but it also helps you be connected with others and stay positive about your work.
- 8 Get to know your professors. They will prove to be invaluable when writing you letters of recommendation—and getting to know them helps you get more involved in your work, and you will do better.
- 9 If at all possible, visit the universities you are considering.
- 10 If you don't know what you want to do, it is ok to spend some time figuring that out.

A little life...

...continued from page 5

The platform for the ramp free-fall boat at Nutec is only about 12 meters (it's just a baby compared to the 42 meter one at the training center in Norway). The boat is bullet-shaped and dives into the water, bouncing back and skimming off the surface a few times before stabilizing. My duty aboard was to pump the hydraulic lever that releases the boat. In this way I lucked out since I had a slight view out a window: I could see the sky falling away and the rush of water over the boat. We also played a bit with the pyrotechnics included on every lifeboat, hand flares and smoke signals. (We didn't get to use the rocket-propelled flares since the nearby Port of Rotterdam doesn't appreciate that too much...)

Thursday was first aid and CPR, followed by an afternoon of survival theory and practice. Back in the pool in survival suits and lifejackets, we tried different group survival techniques and then practiced group swimming to a nearby life raft. This was more difficult than it sounds, since they turned on the waves, wind and 'rain', and turned off the lights. I was thrown like a sack of potatoes into the life raft, launched onto my face with my back

twisted at a strange angle. Luckily, I managed to remain uninjured. In any event, the life raft wasn't anywhere near capacity and it was already quite tight and made me feel claustrophobic. I can't imagine drifting for hours, much less days, in one.

The last activity for the day was climbing practice. With all our gear, we had to shimmy down a rope, then climb, from the water, up a rope ladder, and then, from the water once again, up a cargo net. While I don't consider myself in bad shape, my lack of upper body strength (just a fact for most women when compared with male counterparts) coupled with the extra few inches of mammary glands (thus further greatening the span between my body and the ladder) meant that I was fearful I wouldn't make it up the ladder. (You have to climb up it with one leg on either side, not like you would climb a normal ladder). My arms and elbow joints are still killing me!

After the exertion of the ladder my body just couldn't take the cargo net, so the instructor allowed me to climb down it, instead of up (the technique is the important part, not necessarily which direction you're going, and in reality you're much more likely to be climbing down, not up). The factor that made

it that much more difficult to climb was that the ropes were not supported on the bottom; since the majority of a person's body weight is concentrated up high in the chest and shoulders the resultant moment causes you to tip backwards, thereby necessitating climbing at an unnatural angle, increasing the difficulty further! I managed to complete the exercise though, and a straw poll showed that everyone had struggled with it, finding whichever climbing they did second to be the hardest.

Our last day of training was actually through Falck Risc basic firefighting and evacuation techniques. After discussing the basic fire and extinguisher types, we tromped across the property and got outfitted in our gear. (The women's change room here was a lot better than at the pool!) Our task for the morning: extinguish several different types of fires, using a few different techniques and extinguisher types. (For those who don't know: make sure to have foam extinguishers at home! They put out any type of fire you're likely to encounter there, including electrical!)

After lunch we geared up again, and picked up filter masks, designed to filter out hazardous gases from the atmosphere while you are

continued on page 8...

RESOURCES

Barbara Kettle Gundlach Shelter337-5623 <i>Domestic violence shelter; 24-hour crisis line</i>	Legal Services of Northern Michigan.....482-3908
Career Counseling.....487-2313	MTU Educational Opportunity Office487-3539 <i>http://www.edopp.mtu.edu/ : great programs, great people!</i>
Counseling Services487-2538	Office of Student Affairs.....487-2212; 487-2465
Dial HELP.....482-4357 <i>Crisis intervention: a gentle, helpful voice, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week</i>	Office of Residence Life.....487-3404
Employee Assistance Program482-2299	On-campus emergencies 123
Houghton Community Health Center483-1860	Society of Intellectual Sisters (SIS)..... <i>http://www.sos.mtu.edu/sis/ Promoting sisterhood primarily among African-American women and scholarship among members</i>
Keweenaw Pride..... <i>pride@mtu.edu</i> <i>An MTU group for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered or Questioning Students, Staff, Faculty, Community Members, Friends, and Allies</i>	Society of Women Engineers <i>http://www.sos.mtu.edu/swe/</i>
	Western UP District Health Department.....482-7382 <i>AIDS testing, family planning, immunization, pregnancy testing</i>

WHAT IS tbt POLICY ?

The TechnoBabe Times is dedicated to the empowerment of women in all aspects of technology.

We want **tbt** to be a place where voices not usually heard or seen on campus or in the community can be seen & heard. We want to be a publication that encourages new and different voices. And so: we solicit thoughtful, reflective, critical writings (or drawings or mixed media pieces or poems or...) that offer us all positive views and smart actions...

If you have any ideas, questions or comments—or wish to advertise in **tbt**—please contact our staff at **tbt@mtu.edu**. You may also write the list to submit a piece of work or to become part of the **tbt** staff (all girls and boys interested in the cause are welcome!).

THANK YOU to the CCLI for help on this issue.

tbt is: Stephannie Boettcher, Anna Cynar, Michelle E. Jarvie, Diane Koskela, Casey Rudkin, Jon Soper, Cassie Thiel, Lisa Tincknell **layout:** the committee **faculty advisor:** Anne Frances Wysocki



next tbt meeting

Thursday, October 12,
5pm, Walker 139

Pizza • Pop • Good company
• Many plans—for the newspaper and for social events...All are welcome!

This is a planning meeting, open to anyone who wants to be involved with tbt.



A little life...

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making an escape during a fire. These only work, however, if there is enough oxygen present in the surrounding air. We walked through darkened containers, practicing stairwell descents and how to stick together in a group. We then swapped the filter masks for SCBA (Self Contained Breathing Apparatus) masks and did the course again, this time with a fire smoldering in one of the bottom containers, filling the containers with smoke.

After receiving my stamped Personal Safety Logbook, the course was over and it was time to fly back to Copenhagen.

Last June, in my job interview, when the swimming question was first posed to me, I had no idea what to expect out of the training, and not much time to ponder on it: completing a trans-Atlantic move without actually returning to the US first is challenging and scary enough, without wondering if your on-the-job training will result in drowning. This type of training is definitely not something I had ever thought I would encounter in my future career, while I was still planning and dreaming from within the confines of my cozy life in Houghton—but then again I had never

On School Pride, Snarls, and Being a Transfer

Lisa Tincknell

I'm beginning to get used to the snarls. Naturally, when people hear that I am a transfer student, they want to know where I hail from. I loathe answering this question, so I usually begin defending myself by explaining that I wanted to stay close to home after high school graduation... which is why I went to Northern Michigan University. This is when I bite my lip and wait for the MTU reaction: the rolling of eyes, the smirk, the chuckle, or for whatever reason – the bit of sarcasm that tends to show. (Now, I would like to make one clarification. The Tech consensus says that Northern is a terrible place, but it's really not. As far as schools go, it's just fine. No need to pick on poor NMU.) My decision to transfer was not because I was unhappy at NMU, but that I wanted to remove myself from my comfort zone. The familiarity of everything around me was becoming dull, so the choice to shatter all that I was comfortable with was made.

A big difference that I have noticed coming from NMU to MTU is in school pride. Michigan Tech students love this place. It seems to me that the mind-set of all who attend Michigan Tech is that it is a superior school. It is obvious that this school and Houghton itself are different from any other place on the planet. Maybe it's the seclusion. Maybe it's the scenic beauty. Maybe it's the pickled eggs at the Dog. Maybe it's Winter Carnival. Maybe it's the extremely imbalanced guy to girl ratio. Maybe it's because you need higher scores and averages to enroll. Perhaps it's the great placement rate after graduation that gives this school an edge. Maybe it's because MTU is a technical school. Or maybe, just maybe it's because this is a place of pride and unity.

I know a few people who might say that MTU is a place where all the nerds from high school come together. If this is true, then it may be assumed that they would experi-

ence full acceptance here (since there are so many), right? Now, please don't take this the wrong way – I'm not saying that being a nerd is a bad thing at all or that everyone here fits the description. Personally, I am highly qualified to be on the nerd list. I hesitate to admit it, but I have a great collection of Lord of the Rings action figures and possess a plethora of other nerdy features. Because of that, I feel comfortable proclaiming that the majority of the student body also fit into the nerd description. The degree of nerdiness varies from person to person, but I feel that at least a small portion is present in almost every one of us. Tech is the perfect haven for the underdogs who aren't going to take any bullying from anyone anymore. We're smarter than most, we're clever, we're witty, and others might as well accept that they'll be working for us someday.

Along with the realization that I am exceedingly happy and accepted here, comes the new attitude trait. I'm getting that "Tech thing"... that why-on-earth-would-anyone-choose-a-different-school superiority trait. It's surprising how quickly I have picked up on this; I've only been here for a few weeks.

We may never know exactly why this school is so different from the rest, or why most attendees develop the viewpoint that we are incomparable to others, but I think it is clear that this place deserves to do some boasting for whatever reason it may be. Michigan Tech is unmistakably one of the best. The people here are unique, nerdy, and downright extraordinary. I am enormously pleased with my decision to transfer to Tech and will try my hardest not to snarl at those who make the mistake of going elsewhere. One more thing, I would really appreciate it if you didn't tell my friends at NMU of my new viewpoint on this subject. Thanks.



envisioned the job I would have either.

My biggest piece of advice to everyone out there is to challenge yourself (it doesn't have to be big and grand, just start small and slowly push on your boundaries) you might surprise yourself, and I guarantee you're bound to have fun along the way.

