

**I'm 40 and I'm just as disgusted about it as you are.**

I have no right to complain. I have a wonderful family, and they are obsessed with a particular university. It's where my parents met, my mother taught, and nearly every family member, me included, have attended for four generations. Most of that wonderful group of people also graduated from the same high school right down the street from the university proving that we won't be perceived as adventurous to most.

**My whole world is literally within a 10-mile radius.**

It's a sheltered existence that comes with pros and cons. Pros include having everything I've ever needed being right down the street. Cons include the fact that I'm still figuring out how to survive outside of my comfort zone.

**I had the honor and misfortune of growing up with a lot of smart people.**

I've often felt like an idiot among geniuses, but I learned to embrace the underdog mentality thanks to the discovery of theatre. I even had an outdated actor website with glowing reviews from local volunteer theatre critics. I somehow forgot to include that non-glowing one which sadly remains online for all of eternity. Theatre became my life beginning with my senior year of high school right up until the beginning of the pandemic.

**I never thought that the absence of art would eventually lead to a complete breakdown.**

Despite the recovery process that followed, I'm not ashamed to discuss a moment that could have ended much worse. I continue to be grateful for the support system that was always there whether it be through family, friends or coworkers and realized that we all need to be there for ourselves before we can be there for anyone else.

**Now, I look forward to creating and encouraging as the learning process in life continues.**