



in search of
TIER de AM

photograph



SO YOU'VE MASTERED MAKING OUT BENEATH THE CAMPANILE. WAY TO GO, STUD. BUT HAVE YOU TRIED DROPPING TROU IN THE TIERS? ACCORDING TO IOWA STATE LEG- END — AND A RECENT ISSUE OF *PLAYBOY* MAGAZINE — THE OLD TIERS OF PARKS LIBRARY ARE THE BEST ON-CAMPUS SPOT TO GET SOME WITHOUT GETTING CAUGHT. ETHOS DECIDED TO FIND OUT FOR ITSELF WHETHER THIS TRADITION HOLDS TRUE. HERE'S THE DETAILS OF A TWO-NIGHT TIER STAKEOUT BY EDITORS BETHANY KOHOUTEK AND PAUL KIX.

Night One: Monday

Paul: In the same issue, *Playboy* also rated Iowa State the 13th-best party school in the nation. Good parties here, yes, but really, 13th-best in the nation? I think this might be the 13th-best story idea **ethos** has had all year.

Bethany: Give the kids some credit, Paul. Iowa State students are resourceful, and love is in the air up here in Tier 7. I think I can smell it.

Paul: 9:17: I can't. Can't hear the sex either. In fact, the only thing I hear is the constant hum of the fluorescent light above my desk and the sound of me writing in my notebook, "the constant hum of the fluorescent light above my desk."

Bethany: The only thing I can hear is Paul. Not whispering. In fact, I'd say the actual volume is closer to shouting than whispering. Much closer. Then he asks me, "Bethany, why are we whispering?" Obviously, Paul, we aren't.

Paul: To prepare ourselves for the boinking Bethany says we're bound to see, we practice rising from our chairs, silently, when Bethany says "Go," then hiding behind bookshelves. This does not go well.

Bethany: Boinking? Does anyone who gets any ever refer to it as "boinking?" Anyway, as soon as I whisper "Go," Paul is up out of his seat, flailing, and tripping towards the shelves. After he brings down the entire

steel-rolling technology section, I suggest we split up. If there were any couples entertaining the idea of some library love, they've been scared off for good.

Paul: Fine. Go. You were none too graceful leaving your seat either.

Bethany: I settle in Tier 5, crouch down in the last row and listen. I don't have to wait long. I hear a feminine giggle, followed by a kittenish, "C'mon, Josh. Jo-OSH!" We may have something here.

Paul: 9:58: What if people are having sex in Tier 7 and I can't hear it? I mean, the florescent light's hum grows louder every minute. And the hiss from the radiator over there is surely drowning out the rest of the silence.

All right. Every 15 minutes, I will get up and thoroughly inspect this place, peeking between the 40 rows of bookshelves and underneath all of the 30 desks lined and barren next to mine. Because no one — NO ONE — will have sex under my watch without me taking meticulous notes on it.

Bethany: I drop to a belly crawl, and inch forward on my elbows until I have a clear view of Josh and Giggly Friend's knees. The knees seem to be moving closer to one another. Can it really be this easy? Then I hear footsteps to my right, and realize another student is staring at me. Worse, Josh and Giggly Friend have heard the footsteps as well and cleared out.

Paul: 10:10: It just turned 10:10.

Bethany: My cover's been blown, and I look like an ass. I grab my backpack and retreat to Tier 4, where I hunker down, licking my wounds and regrouping. I'm optimistic, though. We still have almost two hours.

Paul: 10:12: There are 49 names in my cell phone's phone book.

Bethany: Tier 4 is empty, so I lie in wait. Have you ever noticed all the hilarious graffiti carved into the desks in these godforsaken tiers? "I [heart] 12 Hour Viagra." "Kappa Alpha girls are hot." "Weed heals." This isn't so bad. I could entertain myself for hours doing this.

Paul: 10:22: Luckily — and I can't believe I'm saying "luckily" here — I've brought homework. But it's much too hot in Tier 7 to pay attention to it. Friggin' hissing radiator.

No one is here. No one. Sex would be so easy.

Any kind. By anyone. Any one person could have sex with any other if the mood struck. Or if it didn't, any one person could have sex with — whoa, wait a minute here. That would be easy too. And, you know, it'd kill a couple minutes. Maybe even five or six. Yes, I'd say, it'd move along time pretty well.

Bethany: "Chad and Jaime forever." "Call 4-5789. Ax for Norm. I'm hot." These are great. "Dylan lives." Wait — when was Dylan ever dead?

Paul: 10:26: Yes, I do believe it really would kill a few minutes.

Bethany: A guy and girl have entered Tier 5. I don't care. I'm having way too much fun reading this graffiti. Thinking about adding my own mark to one of these desks.

Paul: 10:47: I gotta use the little boys' room. You know, aside from sex, the tiers would be a good place to take a dump. I like a quiet, secluded, inviting place where one can take care of business in any loud or smelly way the business needs to be taken care of. Plus, if one were stationed at a post in a tier, told never to move from it, one wouldn't get in trouble if duty called and a toilet was nearby. Of course, a toilet isn't. I go in search of one.

Bethany: OK, enough slacking. It's 10:48 p.m., and we're on a mission. Back to work. Out of the corner of my eye, I spy a girl with a coy smile heading up the stairway towards Tier 7, where Paul is stationed. I call him, but he doesn't answer, so I leave a message telling him to be on the lookout. He probably fell asleep. I sweep Tiers 1 through 5, but don't see anyone else except the kind of people who actually care about steel-rolling technology buried nostril-deep in their books.

Paul: Bethany's message talks about a girl "with a coy smile" on Tier 6. I finish up shop shortly thereafter, and find back on Tier 6, only a woman studying, alone,





books here, algorithms there, no coy about her, no smile either. In fact, the longer I stare at her, the angrier she gets. She stares back, briefly, and I dart back to Tier 7.

Bethany: It's incredibly hot here in the bowels of the library. Probably conducive to some serious clothes-shedding. But I wouldn't know; I haven't seen jack tonight. The only thing it's conducive for right now

is a nap.

Paul: Screw Tier 7. I'm not seeing anything tonight. I'm out.

Bethany:

Paul: Actually, I'm finding Bethany. I've watched about as much action tonight as an Amish man in solitary confinement.

Bethany: Paul and I leave, bleary-eyed and reeking of stale books, at midnight, when Parks closes for the night.

Night Two: Tuesday

Bethany: All day long I've been pondering things I'd rather be doing than spending another three hours inside those tiers. Clipping my cat's toenails. Washing dishes. Breaking both legs and four ribs in a tragic CyRide accident.

And come to think of it, there's not a lot of people on campus who I'd actually like to see gettin' their jollies in the tiers, or anywhere for that matter. I undertook this mission secretly thinking there was no way in hell I would actually spot two people in the midst of a library-quickie, but what if I did stumble upon two steel-rolling-technology-book-reading geeks in the throes of passion? I don't know if I could recover from those mental scars.

Paul: The models for the photo shoot for this story show up at nine. This is probably the only rendition of sex I'll see until I flip on HBO3 at home.

Bethany: Paul and I stick around and watch the **ethos** models in various stages of suggested hanky panky until around 9:30. Then, reluctant-

ly, we drag ourselves away and resign ourselves to the fact that we are going to be sitting in the library for another two-and-a-half hours, writing about desk graffiti and bowel movements.

Paul: I'm not writing about bowel movements tonight. In fact, I'm not writing at all. 'Cause the florescent lights are still humming, and the hiss from the radiator still makes the room hot. And I'm still sitting here alone, just like I'll be in a half-hour. One hour. And two hours from now.

Bethany: It's 10:17. I've been sitting in Tier 6 for 45 minutes. At this point, something must be done. And every ethical journalist knows that if there's no news happening, you create some. If you're on the crime beat and you haven't had so much as a stolen candy bar, start a fire! Rob a convenience store! You'll be sure to get a byline and front-page story to boot. I turn my attention to finding a lady friend for Paul.

Paul: I'm supposed to rove tonight to the various Tiers while Bethany stays on 6. I'm not doing it. But if you want to know why the *Columbia Journalism Review* thinks *Atlantic Monthly* is a great magazine, I'm your man.

Bethany: A nice-looking girl in a green sweater sits down at a study desk. She looks like Paul's type. There are about 40 desks on Tier 6. They're all empty, save hers. I sit down right next to her and noisily remove my books from my backpack, hoping she'll get annoyed and find another Tier — and Paul. Mission accomplished. She gets up and goes downstairs, to where Paul is supposedly roving Tier 5.

Paul: Yep. Still nothing. A girl in a green sweater shows up, but she's alone, and, like I said, fully clothed. I turn my attention back to the magazine.

Bethany: Paul didn't take the bait, and no one else shows up for me to herd downstairs toward him. It's getting hot, and I'm getting antsy. And hungry.

Paul: I'm grabbing Bethany. We're leaving and forgetting that we ever had to write this story. If sex happens here — and I still suppose it does — it doesn't happen when I'm around.

Bethany: It's 10:45. Jimmy John's is busy. And we've seen more meat here than we saw all night at the library. **e**

