

# ODDS & ENDS

## Boys, booze and bad habits

A review of "Lush" by Natasha Friend

BY MARQUE MARRY

Lush, rummy, slot, swill bowl, toss pot, drammer - all words meaning drunk. Beer, tequila, wine and rum. All of these are alcoholic drinks. In the book, "Lush," by Natasha Friend, all of these terms appear.

The book's main character, 13-year-old Samantha, is one in a family that includes her mother, a brother, Luke, and her father. Pretty normal family you would think, but think again. The father is a major alcoholic who comes home nightly with a hangover and doesn't have a clue what is going on in his own family.

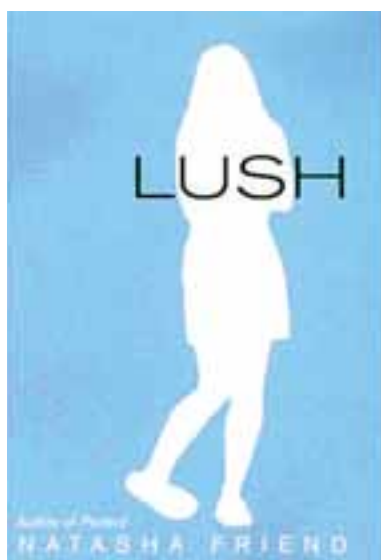
Her mother has her own problems, including believing everything her husband tells her and blocking out her life by going to Yoga class.

Luke is a happy-go-lucky, normal 4-year-old boy. Samantha acts as a makeshift mother to Luke when her father is at the bar or passed out somewhere, and her mother is at Yoga.

Samantha keeps her father a secret, even to her three best friends, Angie, Tracey and Vanessa. However, she finds comfort when she starts writing to a mysterious person in the library near her house, a reoccurring scenario throughout the book. This mystery person writes her notes on numerous topics that range from how to deal with her crazy family to what to wear to a party she's been invited to by a high school boy.

The boy's name is Drew, and Samantha "mashes" with him at the library. Samantha was too shy to talk to Drew initially, but ends up becoming such good friends with him that she makes out with him on a nightly basis.

Drew invites her to a high school party where she is asked what she would like to



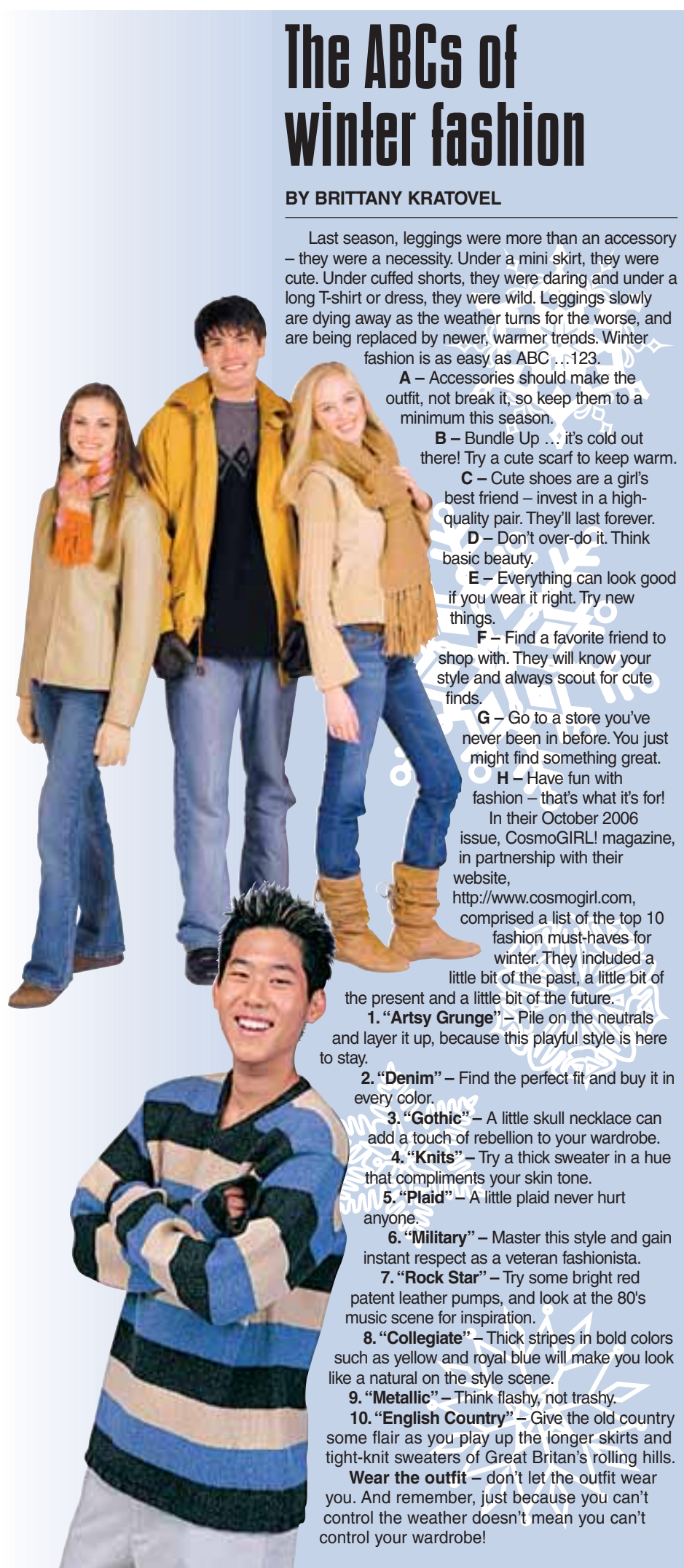
drink. Having never drunk before, and having tried to block her father's drinking from her mind, she responds, anything but Jim Beam (you'll have to read the book to find out why).

When Samantha then gets a little too tipsy, Drew invites her into a bedroom and finds out she is only 13. A predicament ensues as Drew, who is in his senior year, along with other boys at the party pull Samantha into a troublesome situation.

After the experience, Sam opens up to her mother, who finds out many things she didn't know about her daughter.

Along with many other good parts to the story, this book teaches you how to deal with the things life can throw at you, and because of this, I think it is a book worth reading.

The next time you are in the young adult section of your local library or bookstore, don't forget to look up "Lush" by Natasha Friend.



## The ABCs of winter fashion

BY BRITTANY KRATOVEL

Last season, leggings were more than an accessory - they were a necessity. Under a mini skirt, they were cute. Under cuffed shorts, they were daring and under a long T-shirt or dress, they were wild. Leggings slowly are dying away as the weather turns for the worse, and are being replaced by newer, warmer trends. Winter fashion is as easy as ABC...123.

**A** - Accessories should make the outfit, not break it, so keep them to a minimum this season.

**B** - Bundle Up ... it's cold out there! Try a cute scarf to keep warm.

**C** - Cute shoes are a girl's best friend - invest in a high-quality pair. They'll last forever.

**D** - Don't over-do it. Think basic beauty.

**E** - Everything can look good if you wear it right. Try new things.

**F** - Find a favorite friend to shop with. They will know your style and always scout for cute finds.

**G** - Go to a store you've never been in before. You just might find something great.

**H** - Have fun with fashion - that's what it's for!

In their October 2006 issue, CosmoGIRL! magazine, in partnership with their website,

<http://www.cosmogirl.com>, comprised a list of the top 10 fashion must-haves for winter. They included a little bit of the past, a little bit of the present and a little bit of the future.

1. "Artsy Grunge" - Pile on the neutrals and layer it up, because this playful style is here to stay.

2. "Denim" - Find the perfect fit and buy it in every color.

3. "Gothic" - A little skull necklace can add a touch of rebellion to your wardrobe.

4. "Knits" - Try a thick sweater in a hue that compliments your skin tone.

5. "Plaid" - A little plaid never hurt anyone.

6. "Military" - Master this style and gain instant respect as a veteran fashionista.

7. "Rock Star" - Try some bright red patent leather pumps, and look at the 80's music scene for inspiration.

8. "Collegiate" - Thick stripes in bold colors such as yellow and royal blue will make you look like a natural on the style scene.

9. "Metallic" - Think flashy, not trashy.

10. "English Country" - Give the old country some flair as you play up the longer skirts and tight-knit sweaters of Great Britain's rolling hills.

**Wear the outfit** - don't let the outfit wear you. And remember, just because you can't control the weather doesn't mean you can't control your wardrobe!

# ISSUES

## Fair boards?

Are SATs an equitable assessment of all students?

BY SAMI COSSICK

The Scholastic Assessment Test is a dreaded four-hour test that the majority of college-bound juniors and seniors take on a Saturday morning. Every year, millions of students spend time taking the SAT because 92% of American colleges require its scores for admission.

Throughout life, teenagers are told that each person is unique, but when it comes to the SAT, they are just a number.

The College Board believes, however, that it is fair competition for admissions offices to judge how each student will do in their first year of college - which is what the SAT is said to evaluate - by a number earned on a standardized test.

The first SAT was developed by Carl Campbell Brigham in 1926 for the College Entrance Examination Board. It included two 30-minute verbal and two 30-minute math sections and a 30-minute "experimental" section of verbal or math. Today's SAT is composed of more than three hours of reading, math, comprehension and essays.

Julie Osekowski, admissions counselor for Penn State University, said the SAT is fair and unfair for students.

"[The SAT] asks appropriate questions and is more fair now with the essay because it gives students an opportunity to express themselves," Osekowski said. "I think that they do test on a lot of principles that students are studying. Guidance counselors need to watch what

students are taking, though, and students need to be well-prepared in high school."

Osekowski said it is important for all prospective students to take the SAT. Two-thirds of Penn State's admissions are based on tenth- and eleventh-grade records, and the other one-third is based on the SAT.

Alton Newell, vice president for enrollment at Washington & Jefferson College, agreed with Osekowski, adding that "there are students who test well, and, for those students, it can be an indicator of how they will do."

"However, some students don't test as well as others, so it doesn't give an indicator of performance or predictor of success for them. How can you measure qualitatives such as motivation and desire?"

The SAT is required by W&J, although Newell said they have discussed dropping it as an admission requirement.

Kevin Eggleston, assistant director of admissions at California University of Pennsylvania, said, "The SAT is a fair predictor of first-year success but can't measure the potential of students. I think there are a lot of socio-factors, eco-factors, and cultural factors that may prevent some students from scoring high on the SAT."

He said overall the SAT plays a role in admissions at the university, but it is not the most important factor. He said if he could change anything about the test, he would change the emphasis schools place on the SAT.

"They tend to overlook all that is done over four years of high school," Eggleston said.

Nikki Demark, a representative for Pittsburgh Technical Institute, said the school does not require SAT scores because there are not many technical questions on the test. PTI does, however, advise students to take the test in case they decide to transfer to another school.

Jefferson-Morgan High School senior Travis Watson said he doesn't feel he performed his best on his last SAT attempt. Watson said he thinks the SAT is a fair evaluation of students because "it has a lot to do with what you learn in school."

"It is a good evaluation of what you've learned, but a lot more goes into being a student than a test."

Watson's classmate Noelle Koci said she was tired when she took the test because she "tried to study for the test the night before and didn't go to bed."

But Koci believes the SAT is a fair evaluation of students and it is "an example of what college will be like."

Admissions offices, students and the College Board have similar, yet differing, views on whether the SAT is a fair evaluation of students. If you don't agree with the admissions office, you can tactfully state your points in your interview. I'm sure you'd impress them with your knowledge.

