Web exclusive: Life lessons through laughs

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Accompanied by a bevy of polo-shirted friends, Ryan Clauson swept into the club and quickly altered the pensive afterHOURS atmosphere. The focus shifted from two quiet singers to the large, loud man in the back of the room: Clauson.

Clauson, a middler theatre major known for his Campus Pulse segment on NUTV, began the 20-minute show, titled "Ten Minutes of Fun," with a call for chairs in the middle, forcing the audience closer to the stage, where he stood at a podium.

After a few minutes of exercises designed to break down the personal barriers of the audience, Clauson embarked upon the main act, "transformational entertainment." This is mostly what Clauson performs - stand-up comedy with a self-improvement bent.

To deliver this combination, Clauson utilized the "shock jock" brand of comedy. From his story of being thrown out of a Somerville club for vulgarity to his almost non-stop discussion of phalluses big and small, Clauson presented a show peppered with adult language.

Clauson gave audience members advice on staying positive.

"I lost my computer, man. It's gone," Clauson said. "And what's worse is that I lost 20 years of porn ... well 10 years, but it's like 20 years worth. But am I like, 'Fuck, I just lost my porn?' No, I'm like, 'I get to buy a new computer' ... and think about all that porn which I haven't even seen yet."

The other life lessons which he presented are similarly packaged. Clauson said he believes he can help people succeed at anything they want.

"People can have anything they want," Clauson said. "But I feel like a lot of the time, they settle for what they have."

Most of the audience members at the show were acquaintances or friends with Clauson. Senior communications studies major, Whitney Turner attended after she was invited through Facebook.

"I think the crowd is mostly friends of [Clauson]," Turner said.

Other audience members, like Northeastern alum Michael Pemza, echoed this sentiment. Pemza attended the show with a group of friends who all knew Clauson.

"It was funny ... it seemed a little bit self-help for stand up," Pemza said after the show.

David Laskowski, a middler mechanical engineering major working the soundboard in afterHOURS, said he did not like Clauson's performance.

"I don't think I enjoyed [Clauson's show] as much as [the crowd up front]," he said.

Clauson's stage presence captured the attention of the audience. His loud antics filled the room and literally brought the crowd to its feet. And although his brand of off-color humor affected the presentation of his messages, the audience seemed to appreciate his talent for what it is: entertainment.