

THE

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RAT'S ASS

Friday 27 August 1993 Volume 2 Number 1

Exclusive Back-to-school Issue!

Clay's Column
by Clay

Did Somebody Fart?

come out with it, but we have these little ways of getting around the situation, playing sheepish and letting everybody off the hook when they make a gaffe. When you get down to it, somebody farts, makes everybody around him or her suffer, and gets off scot-free. Seems harmless, but it can get pretty ridiculous sometimes,



but to the written documents as they come down to us in this century. Is it now illegal to dissent in America? Is

male with a goatee and glasses. That means all women, nonwhites, eagle-eyes and clean-shaven types are outta here. And I have a mole on the inside of my right forearm. Guess what that means.

Somebody's farting, folks. Either we'll giggle giddily and let it pass or we'll call 'em on it. Until we start being a little more honest about things, it's gonna stink around here.

Scenario: You're sitting in the Rat after hours. It's really quiet. You're talking with some of your new chums about your high school days, how those days now seem so far away, how you're a little excited and a little scared about starting out all over again in a new environment. You share fears and hopes. You confide in each other. You accidentally fart.

"Did somebody fart?" asks one of your new soulmates.

"I don't know, uh, I mean, I didn't hear anything," you say.

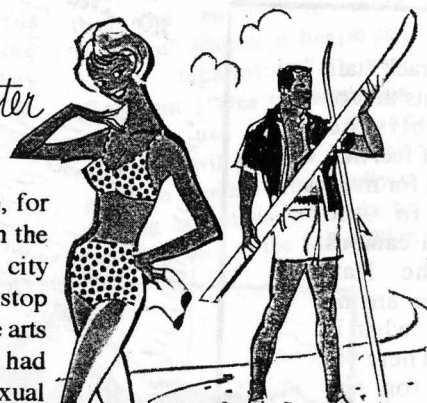
"Don't look at me," says another new soulmate. Pause. "Hey," he or she continues in your direction, "you did it, didn't you? You farted."

Moment of truth. Or not?

Now, 'fess up. You ain't gonna tell nobody. You're just going to lean back in that wooden chair and deny the whole thing. Make up some trash about your chair squeaking (your wooden chair) or your stomach growling or something. Fact is, everybody knows you farted. You, God and everybody.

You might as well just

say... All in favor of ^{better} figures



and we all just play along. A couple of days ago, for example, I heard a story on the radio about a town whose city council had voted to stop government funding for the arts because a local theater had staged plays with homosexual themes. The reporter interviewed several people who were pleased with the vote, applauding the council's nod to "community standards," which the people implied to be roughly analogous to Christian beliefs. *Fart.*

Is anyone concerned about the legal rights of the few? I refer not to the nebulous Enlightenment-era-natural-law-based rights our pioneering politicians may have advanced,

thinking for yourself tantamount to forfeiture of civil privileges?

If so, install me in office. I'll use my rhetorical powers to disfranchise anyone I want. Since Cobb County GA is taking care of the homosexuals, I'll leave that to them. I'll set right to work on other pesky, troublesome groups who "threaten" my way of life simply by not being me. Let's see-I'm an Anglo



Rat's Ass Proclaimed Holy Writ

In a controversial move Thursday, the pope declared the Rat's Ass to be "holy writ, straight from the mouth of the Lord." Biblical scholars have already jumped into the ring, one notable academic countering, "This is just another Shroud of Turin." An international team of acclaimed experts and college-age deadbeats is being gathered to conduct in-depth research into the mystery. Donations will supply all funding. *hint.*
by c schaffer

The Presidential Address

KILLED HER MOUSTACHE EVER AFTER 30 YEAR

The following are excerpts (due to limited space) from President Daughdrill's "Report to the Board of Trustees," dated April 15, 1993, and distributed to the faculty (but not to any students) around April 22, 1993:

...Growth has been the paradigm we have followed at Rhodes during the 20 years I've been here.

But the economic winds affecting higher education are shifting dramatically...And what this means for Rhodes is that we can no longer expect smooth sailing with a strategy based squarely on growth-- on increasing the numbers of students, the number of services and staffing we offer and the corresponding amount of tuition we charge...

We must...change the way we do business...to be one of the nation's best colleges of liberal arts and sciences.

...As I said at the January Board meeting, I think our chief focus must be on "affordability." By that I mean "furnishing value for the price." If we are perceived as providing high value for the cost, we will be perceived as affordable.

I believe the most reliable indicator of affordability will be the disposable income of Rhodes parents. Therefore, we will try to project our future tuition increases as close as possible to the disposable income rate of Rhodes parents....

The old adage "what gets measured gets done" is largely true....Now I want to change some of the ways we keep score. For instance, we have talked about student-faculty ratio on the assumption that the lower the ratio the better the education. We have talked about student services on the assumption that there was no end to the on-campus services for which students were willing to pay. These traditional assumptions served us well during traditional times. But the wind has shifted, and I want to measure not how many professors and staff we can hire per student, thus driving up costs (sic); I want us to start measuring our productivity.

The measurements that we have deemed important in the past have resulted in our wanting more faculty, more staff, more books, more release time, more cost, and more tuition. I want to change our incentives so that we will achieve more productivity, better use of technology, lower costs per student, and lower tuition increases.

I have asked Executive Vice President Harlow to appoint an advisory task force of faculty and administrators to recommend a division of our merit salary plan that will recognize productivity and cost-saving measures in addition to teaching, scholarship, and service. We should have this new weighting in place by December of this year.

To ensure that this redefinition will accomplish our new goal of increased value in addition to excellence, we are putting a cap on hiring both faculty and staff beyond the present number, while projecting a growth of ten students per year. We will hire only to replace present faculty and staff (Italics added).

How do we achieve productivity? Part of the answer lies in expanded and innovative use of the latest technology. One of the criteria we will use in purchasing equipment will be "how does this purchase increase productivity in serving our students?" Measuring productivity may also mean that faculty and staff will be rewarded for increasing efficiencies, cutting cost, and more efficient use of equipment and technology. Clearly it means that each of us must find ways to deliver excellence without adding more faculty and staff to get the job done. Increased technology and efficiency can enable us to provide quality and personal attention to our students, but without large tuition increases....

A Call for Inefficiency
(Maybe We Don't Need Racquetball Courts?)
by M. Augspurger

James Daughdrill said at an "Ask, Talk, and Tell" session in the Rat last spring that his function as President was chiefly a fund-raising one; he left the academic decisions to the deans and faculty-- an appropriate position for a successful businessman who has not spent significant time in a classroom since he finished graduate school.

So the question arises: why, in his Report to the Board of Trustees, does the President appear to be single-handedly changing the direction of the Rhodes classroom? If Rhodes needs to cut costs (which is admirable), why are these cuts being made in areas the faculty feels to be most important?

Daughdrill writes in the report that he wants to "change the way we keep score. For instance, we have talked about student-faculty ratio on the assumption that the lower the ratio the better the education." The implication is that this assumption is no longer correct. No reason for this change in perception is given.

Last semester, I had two English discussion courses-- one a 300 level course-- with over twenty-five people in each. I haven't had over twenty people in an English class since the ninth grade. Does this hinder the educational process? If the

purpose of these two courses was to have twenty-eight people read a series of difficult texts, listen to a professor tell us about the significant symbolism and imagery, and move on, the classes succeeded. But if we were supposed be taught how to think through an idea and close read a fictional text, I'm afraid we were sorely missed. I'm also afraid that President Daughdrill doesn't understand this.

In his report, Daughdrill moves on to announce-- hidden within two and a half pages of amorphous phrases such as "traditional times," "increasing

have to teach and make happy as many students as we can." Individual attention is in effect being discouraged. Who will teach a direct inquiry, or a small upper level class in an intense subject, when it will only decrease their salary and their chance at tenure? Mathematics, physics, and philosophy professors will be doomed before they begin. The liberal arts and diversified study will disappear at Rhodes.

(In an unrelated thought (?), this policy also effectively silences the heavily-supported faculty petition asking that former Dean of Academic Affairs Harmon Dunathon be reinstated

Campus Life Center? I wonder. Rhodes already has a top of the line computer system and language lab. Where do we go next? How will "technology" improve that English class?

How will a computer explain the intricacies of Paul Tillich or late developments in the Middle East? The frightening fact is that Daughdrill has no solid idea which will counteract the loss of faculty-student contact. In most of the liberal arts, nothing can take the place of individual attention; this is one of the truths which has made colleges like Rhodes so attractive.

The ultimate problem with President Daughdrill's viewpoint lies in the opening of his speech. "If we are perceived as providing high value for the cost, we will be perceived as affordable" (Italics added). Daughdrill is a fund-raiser, not a scholar. To him, and the people he deals with, the difference between 12:1 and 15:1 is slight. To the serious student and the professor, it is very considerable. To Daughdrill, a Campus Life Center impresses visitors. To a student and a professor, it makes an afternoon game of racquetball a little more pleasant.

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productivity...of the faculty," and "innovative use of the latest technology"-- that "we are putting a cap on hiring of both faculty and staff beyond the present number, while projecting a growth of ten students per year." In other words, thirty people will be in that English class next year, and maybe thirty-one or two the year after that.

as a Chemistry professor. But that is another issue.) Making such decisions surely requires some kind of "alternate" measure of excellence. Daughdrill proposes that the answer to more "efficient" education lies in the "latest technology"-- new equipment. "One of the criteria we will use in purchasing equipment will be 'how does this purchase increase productivity in serving our students?'" Is he referring here to the \$17 million

What other campus publication would miss *Seinfeld* to bring you hard copy the first Friday of school?

That's what we thought! When it comes time for our crack Allocations Board to hold their annual convention in Atlantic City, just remember who loves ya, baby.

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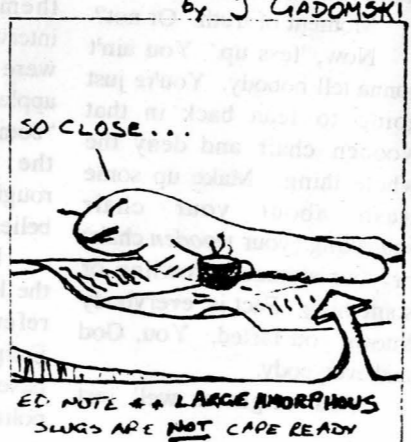
CANT DO WITHOUT LOST CAT

LOST MARBLES

GADOMSKI 1993

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CAN'T DO MEN AND



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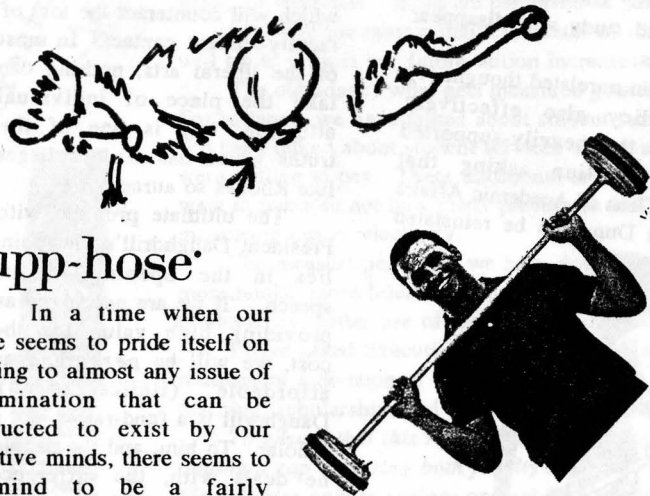
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RAT'S ASS

No bad after-effects.
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Supp-hose

In a time when our culture seems to pride itself on attending to almost any issue of discrimination that can be constructed to exist by our overactive minds, there seems to my mind to be a fairly significant one that has yet to issue forth from the issue factory: the olfactory issue. I have a personal stake here; I do not bathe on a particularly regular basis. I assure you, faithful reader, that it is not the unusual occasion upon which the corner of my eye detects the subtle nodding of heads or a vulgar sneer meant to communicate ungentle feelings about my odor. This troubles me and strikes me as unnecessarily judgmental; that is, a negative judgment is applied to me solely because I carry the natural odor of sweat. Now there may be those among you who are already finding fault with my complaint

here. You may be thinking to yourself that this is an extremely artificial problem for me, a problem that I could easily remedy by showering daily. I could do so. But where is the artificiality in this situation? Certainly my odor is natural. Of course, we have to live close together here on this college campus, so abandoning ourselves completely to dirt and perspiration is impractical. However, bathing fully every day is a fairly uncommon custom worldwide and the American obsession with the daily rinse is, by and large, the exception to the rule. Surely, departures from this standard should, within reason, be viewed with tolerance. If it is not acceptable to make fun of a person's dress or lifestyle, we can certainly refrain from meeting variant hygienes with upturned noses.

by charles schaffer

Do you make these common mistakes



...about whiskey?

The Memphis Nationalist: Over Easy Please by Brian Dixon

With the term dinner shamelessly interchanged with lunch, meal terminology can be a source of great consternation. Liberals, like that vixen Susan Sontag, argue that this breakdown of ambiguous language is necessary for a modern society, that the rules governing the amalgamation of low and high culture should also apply at the table.

I find great comfort that no one has similarly attacked breakfast. For now, there is a consensus that breakfast should be called just that. In this we can rejoice because the power of a good breakfast is staggering and unchallenged. A well done, and I don't mean overdone, breakfast sets the tone for a day offering limitless possibilities. Poorly executed, breakfast leaves a bitter disposition and a longing to return to bed. Speaking to liberals on the campus and the morally bankrupt everywhere, I realize that this is not necessarily a negative quality. Nonetheless, breakfast, good or bad, is the best way to start the day - with food.

For the most part, the RAT provides a decent breakfast, especially if you drink the sometimes stout coffee. There are, however, several other well appointed breakfasts to be found in the City.

Offering down home southern fare, Ferguson's is perhaps the most familiar breakfast joint to Rhodesters. A weekend visit will usually find one or two students

enjoying fried eggs (over easy please), sausage (patties preferred) and biscuits slathered in milk gravy. Ferguson's specialty is country ham and red-eye gravy, a concoction of ham drippings and coffee, and offers such delicacies as country hash and pork brains. Ferguson's uniqueness, though, is not the food, but its steadfastness. The restaurant is, and has been for several decades, located at 3171 Summer Avenue. The sign out front. Its real. The swivel stools at the counter. Real. Stepping into Ferguson's is like stepping into the 1950's, an era of innocent confusion. Lunch may have been dinner, but it wasn't because of some modern liberal mambo jambo.

The Barksdale Restaurant, located on Cooper near Peabody, offers much of the same menu found at Ferguson's. The main difference is the atmosphere. Where Ferguson's is stylized, the Barksdale is plain and simple. Unless, of course, you consider the celebrity portraits that line the walls. Some are well known and some are, well, obscure. Once again, however, the hand of the wicked liberal is present. Professional wrestlers and athletes share the wall of fame with country singers and soap stars, in a confusing intermingling of society's has beens, never beens, and once weres with the who's hot. What better place for this confusion to happen than a restaurant which probably serves dinner when they should be serving lunch. Don't fret. Just grab a biscuit and enjoy your breakfast. No one is trying to call it what it isn't. Yet.

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