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Friday 3 September 1993 Volume 2 Number 2

WAREHOUSE PRICED!

\$41

RAT'S ASS

I Am Not Greek Bashing!
Well, maybe a little
by Mike Augspurger

My Dad went to a small liberal arts school called Wabash, a shining spot of learning in rural Indiana. "The Harvard of the West," the hundred and fifty year-old school calls itself. Dad loved Wabash. Still goes back every year. And when he returns, the place he goes back to is the FIJI house.

When I arrived on Rhodes campus my first year, I knew I was going to be in a fraternity. That was what college was all about, as far as I knew. Living together with the same guys, hanging out and shooting hoops and throwing the frisbee, or having a beer on a Saturday afternoon. A guy could make friendships that would last forever.

Three weeks into school, I dropped out of rush. The question of which fraternity I wanted to join had become outdated; I didn't want a part of any of them. Somewhere in those three weeks I recognized that for me the whole system didn't make sense. Talking with friends, from people who hadn't even rushed to new pledges, a familiar sentiment was, "My decision was the best for me, I think, but I wish the choice hadn't been there." By Bid Day, I was fairly certain that

Rhodes would be a better place without a Greek system. The system creates two imperfect choices for the first

side, and my social life has not suffered for it. But even if you are enjoying the smokers and the parties at Big Daddy's, consider whether you want to allow this system of premature division to continue. Would the parties really end if the fraternities died?

will be your friends for your college career, and they're all in one Greek organization, and you can't wait to learn the secret handshake, I can't ask you to do anything but pledge. But if you can't make up your mind between the Kappa Sigs and ATO, or if you want to pledge because it would make Dad proud or your friends back home jealous, or if you just haven't met anyone in three weeks and need to

feel a part of something, I urge you to reconsider. The Greek system is not evil. It is, however, unnecessary, expensive, stressful, and divisive. Rhodes can do without it.

Imagine...



Kentucky Bourbon is vegetarian!



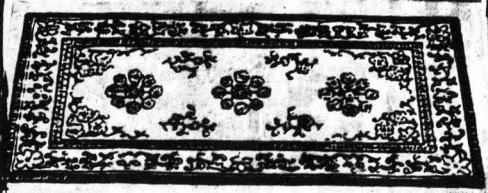
year student: 1) Go Greek, and in many ways lock yourself into a single social scene, or 2) Stay independent, and lock yourself out of a social scene.

Unfortunately, I can hardly suggest that the Greek system at Rhodes be abolished. It just simply will not happen. What I am suggesting, though, is this: if you are a first-year student and you don't want to make a choice, stay independent. Let the system die from lack of interest, or at least shrink considerably, so future classes won't have to worry about it. Over the last three years, I have seen the "locked out"

A Conversation With Ruthie

- Me: Hey, Ruthie, how was your Shakespeare class today?
- Ruthie: Well, it's pretty big.
- M: How many people are in it?
- R: 29, or maybe someone dropped, and it's 28.
- M: How many people were in your Shakespeare class at UC-Boulder?
- R: 29.
- M: Hey, Ruthie, why did you transfer to Rhodes?
- R: Scenery.

LETTER TO UNEDITOR
In your recent article Mr. Combs, entitled "D Somebody Fart" you come to the conclusion that the city council in Cobb County, GA is guilty of breaking civil rights laws, "disfranchising homosexuals, and stifling dissenting opinions. As I read your article and finished my Rat burger one day at lunch, my mind wandered back to my hour Logic class and the format of cogent argument and assertions were found in a plethora, but premises and facts were



continued, see "crap" p. 2



HALOLO (L) LIGHT BRIGADE regimental stripe jacket with British accent collar and exercise pocket. Shell head buttons. Slown with tailored front zip trunks. Of 100% woven cotton in color combinations of gold/red/gray/green. Jacket \$6.95. Trunks \$4.95.

not to be found in your article. Questions like this were asked:
 --"Is anyone concerned about the legal rights of the few?"
 --"Is it now illegal to dissent in America?"
 --"Is thinking for yourself tantamount to forfeiture of civil privileges?"

The questions you should have answered— but didn't— are these:

- What civil rights laws were broken?
- How was anyone stopped from dissenting?
- How was any form of free thinking stifled?

sec "insolent bastard" p. 3

Burning Down the House by Julie Meiman

I would hate to see this fine institution burn, to the ground; I have no desire to call a charred wasteland my alma mater. Likewise, it would be a pity if the Vatican were engulfed in flames. (They've got plenty of candles-- it could conceivably happen.) The parallels between Rhodes College and the Vatican are striking: namely, they are both run by stodgy white men who enjoy dictating policy from on high. (As a side note: I have nothing against stodgy white men, really...just the two to whom I am referring in this article--His Holiness the Pope and His Holiness Big Daddy Jim.)

A new residence hall policy, enacted at the beginning of this school year, states: "Candles, incense, or any other open flame device are not permitted in residence hall rooms" (R.C. Student Handbook, p.26). As a member of the Catholic Church, and, therefore, a spokesperson for the Pope and the Church in its entirety, I must state that we are highly offended by this policy and its higher implications. Although initially enacted as some flimsy means of preventing fires, it is clearly a direct attack on the Catholic Church by the governing Protestant institution of this school.

Rhodes is supposedly "committed to the position that the students should formulate their own personal philosophy in dialogue with a Christian perspective on these issues in an atmosphere which encourages

freedom of thought and expression for all" (Rhodes Catalog). Well. I'm feeling discouraged. I think the Pope has some rule that says (I'm paraphrasing) "Prayers will be answered promptly and most efficiently if candles are lit and the person offering the prayer is gagging on incense." The man has spoken--we Catholics have a lot of rules, and we follow them whether they make sense or not.

As far as I know, the Protestants do not have any sort of rules concerning open flames (this doesn't include hell, of course); thus, the average Presbyterian, Lutheran, etc. isn't affected by this new policy.

I think the Pope would agree that this policy is discriminatory and harmful to the future of the Church. I think it's also noteworthy that the Vatican has been lighting candles and incense since the beginning of time (or thereabouts), and it hasn't had any major fires that I know of. The Pope--again, with me as his spokesperson--recognizes this attack and challenges Mr. Daughdrill--or should I call him Martin Luther?--to a fight in the amphitheatre at 3:00 tomorrow...Catholics versus Protestants, just like the old days. In the spirit Christian love, the Pope sends his words of eternal wisdom: "Hey. You started it."

Vintage Rhodes: Reflections of an Academic Degenerate

By: Graham YAHWEH Robertson

Interstate 40 West still turns into Sam Cooper Blvd., protecting all those nifty little creatures from far off places kept in cages: Rhodesand the ZOO of course. My cynicism is on guard, in rare form and two gears higher than the overdrive in my new Honda -- just one of the products of my year-long hiatus from the ivory towered walls I loved so well. I turn the corner and find myself alone on the divided highway at 2:00 AM, Atlanta time. I know I won't be able to fight the emotions much longer. As I zoom under Graham St. Exit the nostalgia engulfs me. I hold back tears, blaming them on the high-powered air-conditioner and shocking myself at the realization that for the first time since I left my friends and foes in Memphis I, the consummate bastard, am giddy. My first hours back on campus are spent in close company with a dear friend. Sitting together in White Hall we're alone with our thoughts, cigarettes, religion and each other. I never knew how lonely I was until I had a little company. As I stumble around campus for the next few days tracking down my ancient syllabi for my alleged transfer I am bombarded by hugs, kisses and handshakes from friends I'd left behind. My unwarranted tenacity and fear from being away for so long falls by the wayside as I am suddenly back

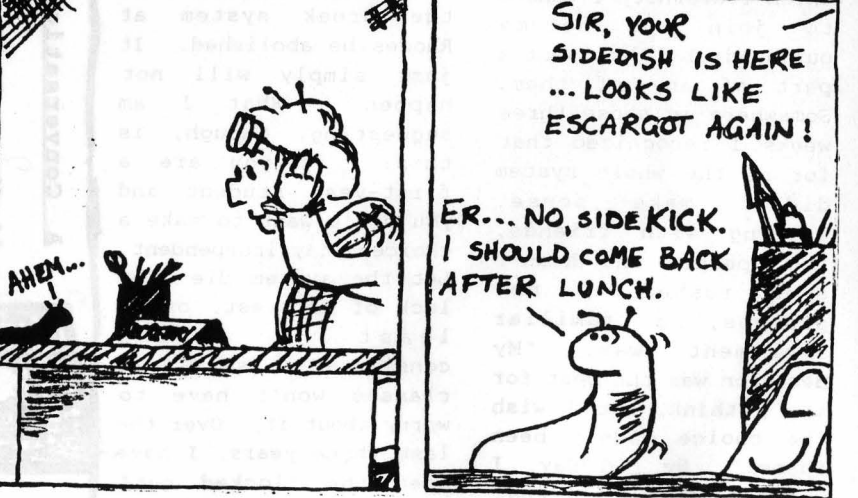
in the "groove."
 All the friends I love and missed are around me once again. I am hearing all the same complaints I once carried on my back: difficult classes, mega-stress, student poverty, a dubious administration operating with more secrecy than the Gestapo -- allowing rumors to persist because they're too cowardly to give the students the truth, the drudgery, and the futility of all things under the sun. But now, here, tonight, on the eve of my second departure the giddiness returns. I finally realize what the mysterious power is that I miss so much about Rhodes: the friends. That was and is my solace, my salvation. The small pieces of me that I see reflected in those I was closest to. The communitas, the conversations I no longer can afford because of work schedules, "doing lunch," making rent, and paying off the mountain of school loans I unknowingly accrued. This is what I've sacrificed, what I've lost.
 If you haven't made friendships of this caliber or you have but are taking them for granted stop and realize how special your time at Rhodes really is. Everyone: I love you, you're not forgotten just dearly missed. Thanks.
 FOR LIFE OR LONGER...GMR



FART BOG AND Slug Boy



by J. GADOMSKI

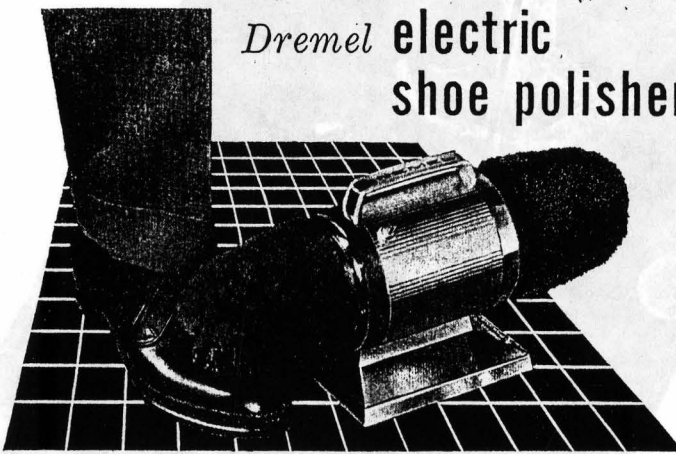


From "Insolent bastard" p. 2

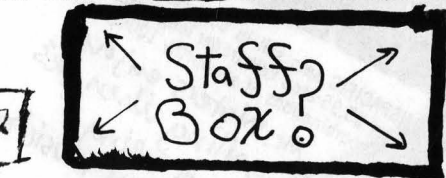
The local theater was not stopped from showing the plays nor were people banned from attending the play if they so chose to do so. The only action that took place was that government funding was no longer allocated to the arts. Without answering the questions above and providing any facts for your assertions, one must come to the conclusion that your argument is one big FART! Now, 'fess up.
 -- Chris Brown

Whispers of Superficiality: A review of last week's issue by Brian Dixon

The R.A. (I was informed at press time that the name *The Rat's Ass* is the intellectual property of issue one and cannot be used in issue two) triumphantly returned from a summer hiatus last week with its *Exclusive Back to School Issue*, once again displaying that the writers, even during the first week of school, have nothing better to do. After reading the issue, I took a moment to reflect and offer this critique. Immediately apparent is the paper's use of blatantly sexist clip art. Culled from an ad in a mid-sixties Esquire, the



Wonderful to Own... Exciting to Give



The *Rat's Ass* is assembled by a crack staff of Rhodes students and/or friends, published whenever the staff feel like it, and distributed for mass consumption in the domain of actual campus publications, the *Rat*. Obviously there are no restrictions on what is published. There is neither regard for, nor claim of, truth, so don't get on us about it. Feel free to send contributions and/or letters via campus mail to any one of the poor souls listed here.



POWERFUL

snippet supports the notion that less weight is more, that to catch the eye of the steely hunk the woman should have a nice figure. However, the paper's attempt at mere montage should not be viewed as an approval of the sexist ideology advanced by the ad. Rather, it serves as a reminder that now hopefully obsolete attitudes (but who are we kidding?) were once rampant in our culture. The editors are obviously appealing to the old adage that history forgotten is doomed to repeat. With this in mind, look for *The Rat's Ass* "Piece of Cheese" centerfold in future issues honoring the 1940's calender artist, Vargas.

In another controversial move, the paper allows the use of the word

Lava's Lamp of Illumination (Ode to Esme)

Blue-green lava falls and swells in a primal rhythm Like bare emotions Unearthed by honest digging. A light from within forms impressions-- Shadows of life and death-- An affirmation of the natural order.

A synthetic nature of blue bubble-blobs Bearing the essence of soul-made philosophies-- Eons of questions without answers. It pulses with a separate energy

And tranquility. Reason is a treatise with reality-- Imagination is the child of God-- Wisdom is the only transgression-- Knowledge is a fortress of glass.

Burp. Belch. The wind is broken.

And illumination passes from me With the aftermath of that chili dog From Burney's Burger Barn.

Bill Wiggleston

Catalina THE SEAFARING MAN IS A

TELEVISION AS A MOTIF OF CULTURAL CORROSION (or, why I like Roger Waters' "Amused To Death")

by Ross Gohlke

The first impression startled me like a pick-axe to the head (did I say *startled?*). I was lying on the floor, half-asleep and tuned out to the CD player. Then suddenly—CHOP CHOP—the piercing rhythm of an axe splitting wood; I'd already slept through the nuclear explosion which nearly gave my dozing roommate a heart attack.

My first exposure to Roger Waters' latest effort "Amused To Death" had nothing to do with music, which says a lot about why this release has not received mountains of attention from the music press, although it's been on the market since 1992.

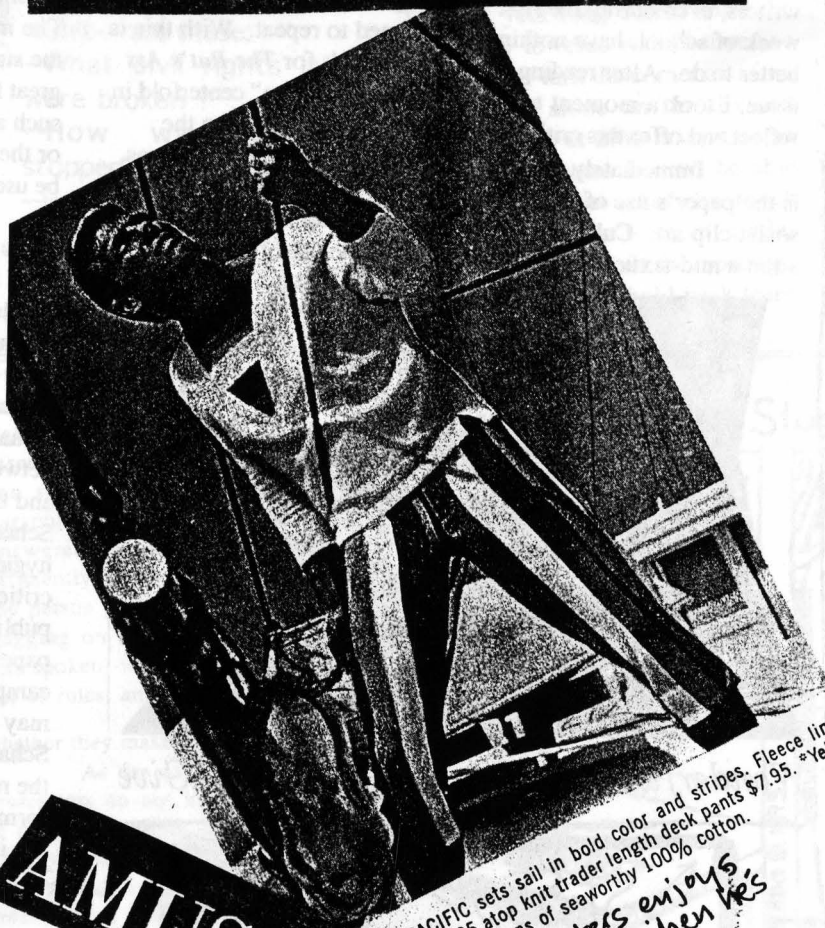
The second listening, in the same dimly lit room with the same crappy CD player (apologies to my roommate), this time with both ears wide open, gave me a clearer sense of what this album is about, what a mammoth and gutsy undertaking it was, and just how refreshing it is. The sheer magnitude of Mr. Waters' ambition alone is admirable. But it just so happens that he's created a work of art, which if not entirely flawless, is nonetheless a little gem worthy of a listen. Well, you really have to hear it more than once. And you ought to be awake—although I have to admit it was a pretty cool way to wake up.

And don't try comparing this stuff to Pink Floyd. Although there's plenty of that psychedelic influence that made Waters famous as a founding member of England's premier 70's art

rock band, this time he needs to stand on his own two feet, and I need a justification for not talking about Pink Floyd. But Waters doesn't just stand up. He looks you straight in the eye, and sometimes even gets close enough to spit in it. Or hit you over the head with a pick-axe.

Catcher In the Rye or maybe Naked Lunch (the movie). Yet to call it simply music is misleading. "Amused to Death" is more recorded performance art. Sound effects litter the entire album, bleeding some songs together and completely altering the moods of others. There are narratives also, and it

ROGER WATERS



AMUSED TO DEATH

Whatever the term "college music" has come to mean these days really has little to do with being in college; and I doubt that "Amused To Death" will ever make it to the College Hit List—or any hit list for that matter. Yet Waters has produced something that sounds more like what should be blasting from dorm room stereos than any imitation grunge sound or Let's-Call-Ourselves-Crotchrocket-Mama band. It's the musical equivalent of, say,

wouldn't be stretching it to call Waters' strained vocals more narration than singing. Many of the lyrics are simply poetry painted onto a canvas of sounds—or perhaps it's sounds painted onto a canvas of words?. Regardless of how you see it, there is no denying the strong visual imagery conjured by the choice and

quality of sound on each track. Even with my roommates' cheesy jambox, I jumped up to answer the phone at one point. It just kept ringing. By the same token, Waters takes his music seriously, enlisting the help of such notables as Jeff Beck and Don Henley to create a dark, dirty and blue music with integrity.

Perhaps the key to the success of "Amused to Death" is this balance of so many different things, in the curious juxtaposition of delicacy and bloodletting, the engagement of various senses, the range of topics addressed—everything from the "Melrose Kids" to "What God Wants" to Tiananmen Square in "Watching TV"—"She's the one in fifty million / Who can help us to be free / Because she died on TV." You cannot simply listen to this album; you must experience it. Consider it an intense alternative to watching "Roseanne" reruns some night; or every night.

As is the case anytime someone points the finger, especially at well-dressed people sitting comfortably around big TV sets in nice houses, there ought to be criticism of unfair heavy-handedness. I don't hear anything. OK, I'll say it. The album gets a little weighty. I mean, look at the cover art! Forget about understatement. And then there's that line from "Too Much Rope", the same song with the axe: "Give any one species too much rope, / And they'll fuck it up."

But Waters' words are so intriguing and the music so eloquent, I can forgive him for being intense and thought-provoking. In fact, he's given those of us monkeys without TV's something to do.