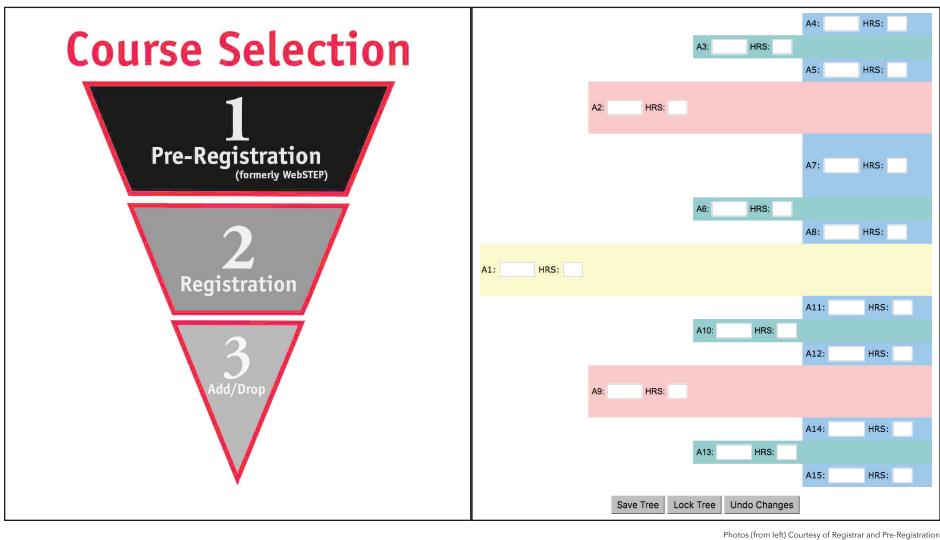
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#### Spotlight: Data Suggests Course Tree Near Impossible to Solve



By Jordan Hulseberg '19 Spotlight Bureau Chief

The course tree has been an enigmatic fixture at Rhodes for 23 years. Throughout this time its basic algorithm has remained relatively unchanged asserting itself as an intergenerational struggle. Unfortunately for students, it would seem the system cannot be beat, cheated or solved regardless of the deliberation or calculus involved.

The near impossibility of solution is due to cognitive and mathematical factors. Students cannot overcome cognitive biases in their decision making processes and cannot wholly compute the mass probabilities of each decision.

Dr. Katherine White, associate professor of psychology and cognitive psychologist, said, "Research has shown that human beings are not good

at judging intermediate probabilities [between zero and 100%]. We have difficulty comprehending the difference between having a 30% or 40% chance of something and what that difference means to real-life events."

Because students are not only making one judgement, but instead an array of judgements, it makes it very difficult to cognitively process all the probabilities.

"You not only have to prioritize a class, but you have to prioritize a class relative to another class. You have to determine how much you want this class, how likely it is going to fill up and how that compares to those likelihoods for each other class... It's not that you're making one judgement, you're making many of judgments," White said.

Ultimately, White was skep-

tical students could conquer their cognitive biases while making their trees.

"I think mathematically it might be possible [to solve the course tree], but cognitively... If you're really deliberate—and I have students who write all these 'if-thens' on their tree then I think you can reduce your likelihood of making irrational decisions. We're always going to have some [biases], that we're not aware of, influencing us," White said.

On a mathematical level, it is difficult to solve the course tree without having near omniscient access to past and current data. This is because course instructor, class size, time and even title influence students' choices. As a result, students attempt to strategically design their trees to account for these factors.

Dr. Eric Gottlieb, associate

professor of mathematics and computer science, said, "[Students] are misrepresenting their preferences to increase the likelihood of getting a class they want or need—even if it's not their favorite class. If they perceive it as harder to get into then they will rate it higher... They're being strategic."

However, if students may not be making perfectly rational strategic decisions, like White suggested, then students are unwittingly harming their own

"Students are filling out their trees based on the best information available to them... The ability to be strategic depends on having good information. And so, if the information is of poor quality then the strategy used will also suffer," Gottlieb

Although it may seem impossible for students to metaphori-

cally crack the course tree code, careful planning, studying and

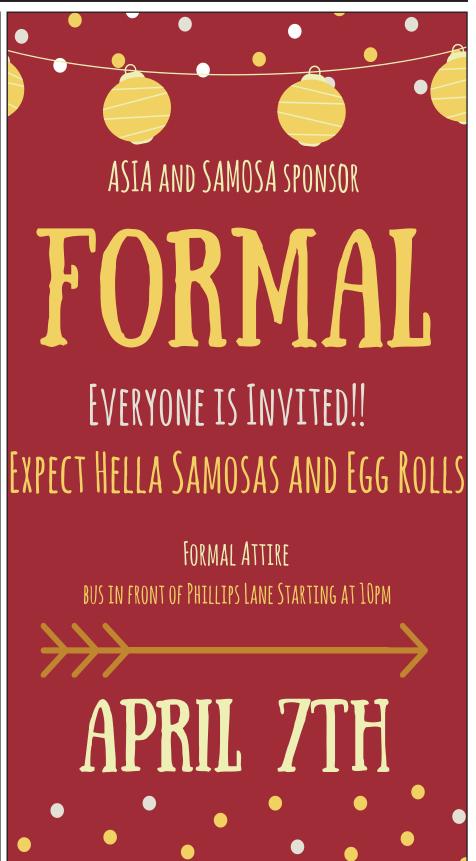
collection of information may make it possible—even if it is

not likely or feasible.

Regardless, the course tree students use today is a far cry from its predecessor. In the old system students would choose their courses live at once. This would have been similar to add/drop but with all of Rhodes competing simultaneously.

The course tree has been designed to account for a scarcity of resources as the number of sections for popular courses are few and far between. As a result, the current course tree is the best system currently available, no matter how frustrating it may seem.





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#### Hijabi For A Day

By Saneela Tameez '20 STAFF WRITER

Hijabi for a Day was Thursday, March 30. MSA (Muslim Student Association) started this event to demonstrate solidarity with Muslim women and men who wear the hijab and kufi. The event called on Rhodes students and professors to wear either a kufi or hijab based on the gender they identified with. MSA conducted this event because of the increase in hate crimes against Muslims. MSA also wanted to promote an understanding behind the hijab and kufi.

Hijab is an arabic term, and it means to cover oneself. The hijab is usually a scarf Muslim women wear over their head along with some form of modest attire.

The hijab is a way for Muslim women to show modesty and devotion to God. However, the hijab means different things to different muslim women. For some it represents a political symbol, a feminist statement and a tool of empowerment. Nonetheless, not all women choose to wear the hijab. Rather, they show modesty in different ways.

Approximately 80 people signed up to wear hijabs and kufis. Hamid Shirwany '19, MSA president said, "Events like Hijabi for a Day hold great significance, for they provide people with opportunities to gain a greater appreciation for those that don't look like them or that don't have the same set of beliefs. In this way, I hope that those who participated in Hijabi for a day were able to better the courage and the fortitude required to wear a hijab in a society where doing so is not the norm. With that said, thank you to everyone for all the support, and keep it coming as we continue to demonstrate that we are unapologetic Muslims."

At the end of the day, MSA held a reflection. There were delicious samosas and a passionate panel of muslim students: Aemal Nafis, Hibah Virk, Layth Al-Hindi and Saneela Tameez. Each one talked about how the hijab has impacted their perspective on the world. Aemal talked about the empowerment and wonrelationship with God.

I asked a couple of students that participated what they

derment she felt when she saw her own mother wearing the hijab in a small town in Mississippi. Aemal continued on to explain how this brave act inspired Aemal to later adorn the hijab and appreciate its meaning. Hibah talked about how modesty for her is more of an internal understanding and how she does not have to fully rely on the scarf just yet. She wants to internalize her empowerment and devotion for God through other means first. Then Layth, a student who does not wear the hijab, talked about how his mother wearing the hijab has always made him slightly concerned because of the recent hate crimes that have been going on, especially after the Chapel Hill shooting. I talked about how the hijab has always been a form of escapism from beauty standards when I was younger, and how the hijab has always been a tool of empowerment for me because I did not have to focus so much on my outward appearance but more on my spiritual



Photo Courtesy of MSA

thought about the event, and Henry Coonrad, a first year, said, "For me the most relevant moment of Hijab for a Day was when I heard the board talk about their own experiences with the Hijab. It gave me a deeper understanding; about how the Hijab wasn't cultural, but universal." I also asked Meghan Kimbrell about her experience in Hijabi for a day, and she said, "Seeing so many people throughout the day wearing a hijab and showing their support made my heart so warm." She wasn't the only student that was happy to see the support. Matthew Harris said, "Honestly it was pretty fucking awesome seeing the number of people coming out in solidarity with the Muslim community!" Suffice to say, this Hijabi for a day was pretty successful thanks to the amazing students and professors at Rhodes.

#### **OPINION:** A First-Time Hijabi Wearer's First-Hand Account of World Hijabi Day at Rhodes College

By Anu Iyer '20 Staff Writer

More than 80 students of various races and genders participated in MSA's (Muslim Student Association) World Hijabi Day promotion at Rhodes on Thursday, March 30. As part of Islamic Heritage week, MSA leaders Saneela Tameez, Hibah Virk and Aemal Nafis encouraged fellow students to don a hijab or kufi for a day and invited them to a discussion in the basement of the library at night.

Truth be told, I had no confidence to walk out of the door and face my peers with a scarf around my head. No matter how nonchalant I tried to make the wrap look, I knew

that my classmates would pick up on it. I'm ashamed to admit that I let my insecurities about others' judgement shroud my purpose of being an ally. Many times throughout the day, I slipped the hood off and wore the scarf only around my neck. While many students remained on campus with friends who were also participating, I had to work off-campus at a non-profit for several hours. The loneliness is what I least expected. Being a person of color is one form of marginalization, but adding the layer of cultural and spiritual difference pushed me even further outside the norm.

Our visitors would do a double-take when they saw me and would quickly ask me to clarify my ethnicity and religion (I've been working there for seven months). As expected, I received more frowns than nods of approval when I explained that I was pledging solidarity to my Muslim friends for a Rhodes event. "I think you're misunderstood," they would assert, "I don't think that's ok." The wind was a whole other complication that I don't even want to think about.

The discussion at the end of the day, however, made all the trouble worth it. Surrounded by the warming aromas of samosas and chutney, nearly thirty students sat in the basement of the library with four members of MSA at a panel in the front. Many were still wearing their hijabs and kufis. The

four panelists opened the conversation by explaining why they chose to wear their hijabs, and the answers varied for each member. Hibah Virk, for example, does not wear a Hijab every day. In order for her to express fully respect for her religion and the symbol of the hijab, Virk chooses to wear it for prayer and visits to temple. Students were then encouraged to share their opinions and to ask questions surrounding the day. Many expressed an appreciation. A few admitted to feeling insecure. Some asked about appropriation versus appreciation, and Saneela beautifully brought clarity to the question. She explained that by asking permission from Muslim peers and acting out

of respect and support for the religion (not necessarily the culture), non-Muslim students wearing hijabs is not cultural appropriation.

She also explained that showing solidarity does not simply stop at sharing in symbolic practices. Promoting Muslim voices everywhere, from mainstream media down to the everyday classroom, is an action that does more to show support for the Muslim community. I hope to see this event and MSA's efforts thrive over the years, and I hope to see the response and support of the Rhodes community grow stronger with it.

### Rites RECAP 2017: Quite The Weekend

By Farah Ibrahim '20 Staff Writer

In case you were living under a rock this past weekend, Rhodes College celebrated Rites of Spring, an annual two day extravaganza filled with parties, concerts and little petting zoos. Oh boy, what a weekend it was.

To start out the whole fiasco was the duo from Nashville known as CHERUB, who played on Friday night. Although I am from Nashville, I have never heard of them. However, I grew to become a fan after seeing them perform on campus and, quite frankly, they were pretty good.

Saturday, on the other hand, was a lot more jam-packed with numerous activities from Frat Row all the way to Buckman Hall's backyard. During the day, many frat houses opened up their parties to the masses where people could come by, socialize and feast on the ridiculous amount of crawfish that was to be found around campus as well as to get back into the Rites mood after the previous night of concerts and parties.

On the other side of campus there was a kid's event (honestly, this surprised me the most this weekend) known as Rites to Play. It featured many attractions that parents and kids alike could enjoy on the beautiful lawn behind Buckman and the terrace before Burrow like the aforementioned petting zoo, the mini train and many more attractions that spread out quite far.

Going back to the college-rated events there was the PIKE-SAE joint party, where the wristband proceeds went to St. Jude Children's Hospital.

At the end of Saturday was the highlight of Rites this year and that was Waka Flocka Flame. While he may not have been on stage that long he sent the crowd into a frenzy when he came on and thus we ended Rites of Spring with a massive bang. And while the weekend was a massive blur to me, I don't think I'll forget how fun Rites was and come next year maybe, just maybe, I may know a little of what to expect.



Photo Courtesy of Michael Clark



Photo Courtesy of Facebook

## Kinney Hosts Discussion on Free Education

By Jack Patton '18
Staff Writer

Kinney Mentoring and Education hosted the discussion "Should Education be Free?" last week. Rhodes students discussed possible avenues for improving the American education system.

The group featured students from different majors—political science, urban studies, economics, physics and math. The discussion was led by two Kinney coordinators—a biology major and an education major. Of the students at the discussion, 75% had attended

private school, while the other 25% went to public school.

These students first discussed European Union education systems assigning students to different tracks-university or trade school-based on their performance. While EU systems are free, the group concluded a similar system in the US would be more harmful than helpful because it removes an individual's opportunity to determine their own best interest. A senior urban studies major added the US labor force needed more opportunities for Americans without college degrees to attain high paying iohe

Students also reflected upon the importance of investing in pre-k, elementary and secondary education. Free college was discussed as a possible combatant against the unequal education system. This allowed post-secondary education to be attainable for those who needed it—regardless of socioeconomic status.

However, students felt tax dol lars could be most effectively spent preparing students for college. Education Studies major, Jeremy Breddan '18, spoke about his experience teaching first-year students at a local public high school who were only able to read at a third grade level. Another student shared how she was upset by her high school's failure to prevent numerous kids from dropping out.

Urban Studies major, Amanda Rubin '17 said schools needed to provide a more well-rounded curriculum and social services in order for students to succeed. The group concluded more resources should be allocated to prevent students from falling behind but this would be a much more expensive, controversial and complicated fix compared to offering free

ollege.

Almost all of the students agreed pre-k should be free. Most students agreed the government should pay for people to attend community college and trade schools. However, students were split whether or not bachelor's degrees at public universities should be free. Some said yes, but there should be a time limit on how long someone can attend, grade requirements or volunteer/work requirements to prevent people from abusing the system.

## Lecture on the History of Neonatology & Ethical Dilemmas of Modern Neonatology



By Ty Georgeadis '20 Staff Writer

Last Monday, March 30, Dr. Bryan W. Darling (pictured above), Medical Director of Neonatal ICU and Women's & Children's Respiratory Care at North Mississippi Medical Center, presented a lecture on the history of neonatology and later focused on the ethical dilemmas a modern doctor faces when the life of an infant rests in his hand.

Despite relatively high infant mortality rates today, the field of Neonatology is quite old. Advancements in neonatology began as incubators were invented in the late 1800s. The field grew in America when Julian Hess published the first textbook on prematurity in 1922. Infant mortality rates lowered, but there was not enough national support until 1963, when President Kennedy had a premature baby who died. To highlight the differences between neonatology then and now, Darling noted

that Kennedy's 34-week (gestational age) and four pounds ten-ounce baby was considered non-viable then, but not now. He said, "In my world that's a monster, I take care of fourteen ounce babies." Obviously, what is considered viable has changed over time. Viability (the capability of living or developing into a living being) has seen a revolution due to the advancements in medical technology. Medical professionals have since shifted to another term, the limit of viability, which is the fetal age associated with a 50% chance of long term survival outside of the womb.

"The question in ethics," Darling said, "is at what cost are we doing these resuscitations?" The survival rate for premature infants has steadily increased but so has the percentage of newborn disabilities like cerebral palsy, cognitive disorders and neurosensory problems. Difficulties arise when doctors must balance doing what is right for the baby and what is

right for the family. Problems get worse when the family, or surrogate, makes decisions that are not normal and are sometimes taken to court as a result. Universally, some main guidelines neonatologists uphold when considering an infant's case are: the Hippocratic Oath, the principles of beneficence, non-maleficence and respect for a family's autonomy. Other ethical considerations for many physicians, including Darling, are whether or not the child will be a burden to society and the cost to the hospital if they need to come back.

Darling, who made no political comment on how the patients are considered, said one of the biggest problems is informing parents about risks. Mostly, though, parents want their children to live. Kenzo, for example, was a baby born at 22 weeks gestational age. Darling advised his parents not to continue treatment but the mother urged him to continue. Today, Kenzo is a perfectly healthy baby and has no prob-

lems. On the other hand, there will be children such as Noah, born at 25 weeks gestational age, who grow up to need a wheelchair and ventilator. What Darling refers to as the "gold standard" for decision making is the collaborative effort balancing the physician, parent and fetal/infant concerns. Laws have been passed to protect the fetuses from the sole decision of the parent. In 1944, the Supreme Court heard Prince v. Massachusetts. This case dealt with Jehovah's Witnesses who would not allow their children to receive blood transfusions which were deemed necessary by the medical practitioner. The Constitution values religious freedom, but the Supreme Court stated, "parents may make martyr of themselves but not their child."

Neonatologists have different stances on when a premature baby should not be resuscitated but it is commonly ill-advised for a baby under 23 weeks old. As Darling showed, however, a 22 week baby can turn out per-

Photo Courtesy of North Mississppi Medical Center

fectly healthy. 23 to 24 weeks is usually a grey zone, and above that deals with the doctor's discretion. What is important to note, is that sometimes resuscitation and intensive care is not saving a life but prolonging death and suffering.

Darling said 'comfort care' was what MacDonald refered to when he said, "Care is not discontinued, only technical interventions and advanced life support are. Dying infant should be treated with compassion, dignity, and have their needs met."

Hopefully, survival rates will increase and techniques are adopted to stem disabilities, but advancements in technology will come with a change in. Right now, a large part of decision making comes from doctors' ethics, but whether or not more stringent laws will be placed on the discontinuation of life support is something to look out for.

## Get Out is a Great Social Commentary on How Everyone Else is a Little Racist Except For Me

By Meaghan Pickles '19 Satire Editor

While watching *Get Out*, a horror film exploring issues of racism from director Jordan Peele, I was reminded of times when I had seen racism in my own life-exhibited by white family, friends, peers and acquaintances. I was shocked and disturbed by the ignorance of white people who aren't as evolved as I am in matters of race. I was probably more shocked and disturbed than anybody who had ever

seen this movie, which just goes to show how un-racist I am. If there's one thing I could take away from *Get Out*, it's that even though the majority of white people have some latent racist tendencies, I am not in the slightest bit racist.

The movie perfectly encapsulated the subtle racism of white people who constantly say things like "one of my best friends is black." Statements like that sure do give me a laugh. It's tough to listen to their ignorance, especially as someone who has two best

friends who are black. I have plenty of pictures of them on my phone, and they would both tell you that I've never acted even the slightest bit racist. For example, when I went to my black friend's house and met his mom, I just thought of her as a regular mom. I didn't even think about her being a black mom. Unlike the characters in the film, that thought wouldn't have even passed through my mind. Plus, we got along great.

A lot of white people will say things like "I don't see color."

If you haven't taken a semester of an African American Studies class, you might not realize that that's actually kind of subtly racist. I wouldn't say that "I don't see color," if I didn't actually have a rare disorder that rendered me legally blind to skin pigments. You might not have heard of this disorder, as it affects only me, the one white person who is not at all racist. So, as someone who actually can't tell the difference between black and white due to my rare form of blindness, it hurts me to see the lack of

understanding exhibited by the white people around me.

When I saw the racism exhibited in *Get Out*, I was absolutely appalled that it even existed. Believe me, I was more offended than just about anybody out there. A black person and I could talk together about how much we hate racism for hours, and not even get tired of it. The more I talk about how much I hate the racism in *Get Out*, the more you will believe me that I am not at all racist.

# Prepping For The Course Tree

## Second Highest As Multiple sections All Bio sections Multiple sections All Bio section All You are in Life Section Interesting Class All Also Important Als

#### Style Crisis: Frat Boys Lose Vintage Jerseys, Vacation Ruined

By Warren Socher '19 & Will Morrow '19 SATIRE WRITERS

With the recent spike in temperature, we are devastated to announce to all that jerseys over hoodies are no longer the most practical option to wear. To back our claim, we will share a couple of tragic tales of jersey mishaps that occurred this past spring break.

Dubie Doobins and the brothers of Klappa Flappa Jenga took their talents to spring break in Cancun—ready to sit on the beach while sticking their lettered fabric pole in the sands. However, upon landing in the airport and sifting through his Southern Proper swim trunks and a towel-wrapped bong at the hotel, he realized he would not be able to wear his red 1999 NBA all-star game jersey, as he did not bring a sweatshirt to wear it over.

This is not as severe as what happened to Floggo Duplex, a brother of Alpha Aristotle Beta. The crew made the trek all the way to the Rocky Mountains to spend an hour skiing and the remainder of the 23 hours in the hot tub. They ingeniously stored their Coors Lights in a snow hole. Floggo and the rest of the crew decided to pack the jerseys with the longest names and biggest numbers so they could wear them over their ski gear, as the extra fabric would provide additional insulation on the slopes.

When the gang arrived at

the bro lodge, Floggo was met with a horrific discovery; he had forgotten his jersey with two hyphenated last names back at his dorm. This tragedy was met with such utter despair that Floggo decided to head back to school to sulk for the remainder of the break, despite his brothers' suggestion of having his father Amazon Rush a new jersey to him at the slopes.

The sartorial epidemic has made its way back to campus as well, where it has posed a dilemma for the preppy crowd. Currently, it is too warm to wear a half-button up Patagonia and a jersey over a hoodie but the bros are still not ready to give up this staple. Some have tried the jersey over a Vineyard Vines button down, but ridicule has driven them back into the normie pastel sea.

#### Lady Lynx Tennis Serves on Despite a Few L's



Photo Courtesy of Rhodes Athletics

By Ellie Johnson '20 Staff Writer

The women's tennis team faced off against Millsaps and Birmingham-Southern this past weekend. Despite losing both matches, the team has journeyed far from its origins at the beginning of the season.

Anna Volkov '18 said, "All

of the matches were really tight which was a bummer because they could have gone either way. I think everyone performed a lot better than we were performing at the beginning of the season, especially because about half of our line-up is freshman."

This season the team has changed a good amount. One

such change was the addition of a new coach who joined in January.

Caroline Doherty '19 said, "It's been a positive change to have a women's coach in doubles because she gets what we need to be doing. We've been mixing it up a lot more and playing more aggressively."

Regarding the team's long-

term goals, Volkov said, "I'd like to improve our doubles strategies, but I think most important is just learning how to support one another."

In the short-term, the players believed they will gain increasingly stronger recruits to increase the likelihood of future success.

"Something we are working

on improving is our recruiting. With this coach she has a different philosophy to recruiting and I think it will prove to be really positive. So we should have a few coming in this next year and the year after that we should have an even stronger recruiting class," Doherty said.

### Rhodes Track and Field: Divide and Conquer

By Ellie Johnson '20 Staff Writer

Rhodes' Track and Field team split-up and competed in three different meets on April's first weekend. The throwers competed at Mississippi College in Clinton, Mississippi and a select group of distance runners went to Washington University in St. Louis while a majority of the team competed at Southeast Missouri University.

The distance team had a no-

table performance even though the weekend was viewed as practice for conference.

Ben Griffith '20 said, "Overall, I think we did ok. Some people definitely had some breakthroughs. The big news for this weekend was the people who went to Wash U in St. Louis and ran. The men's distance team had a really great meet there."

Since the beginning of the season, the team has been training tirelessly in hopes of

winning the SAA conference championship. Thus far, hard work has made quite the difference.

"We've seen some good production from our sprinters. I think that as we've gotten deeper into the season we've see a lot more improvement and some really encouraging work. I think our training has paid off a lot," Griffith said.

Ultimately, Track and Field hopes to secure the SAA Conference title at the end of the season. However, the pressure to win a title is higher than ever before.

Sara Kate Capel '20 said, "If the girls win this conference, they will have won 10 conferences in a row. If they win ten in a row, they will be ranked eleventh nationally of all time for colleges who have won that streak."

With the title in mind, the team has a lot of work ahead before the SAA Conference. Despite the pressure of their

end-goal, Capel believed one of the greatest aspects of the team was enduring everything together.

"It's fun to be on the team and to make connections with others. There's really nothing like running that bonds people together," Capel said.



"ATHLETIC CINDERELLA": Well, its fibers are plastic and its not a plastic bag or a styrofoam cup, but we have so many questions. Will a handsome, young frat prince return this shoe to the beautiful owner? Has someone lost their right foot, discarding their useless shoe thoughtfully in the plastic recylcing? Perhaps the lone sneaker has been left out to dry post beer-spillage. If New Balance is yours, let us know at rhodescnews@gmail.com so we can set up an interview.



"HYDRATE, HYDRATE": Can you spot the RazberRita? Too bad it didn't end up in the recycling with the shoe. On the brightside, whoever left it behind seems to have been practicing safe drinking habits. Additionally, the abandoned alcohol has spurred the following quick-eval of the kind of drinker you are: (a) You spotted the can, recycled it promptly, went back to studying: Not a drinker. (b) You spotted the can, snapped a photo to your friends, giggled to yourself: Casual drinker. (c) You spotted the can, shook it a little, downed the remnants: Head to rehab.



"CEREAL KILLER": The Froot Loops go in the bowl. How did the trigger-happy, breakfast eater manage to leave this mess and sleep at night? Fear not dear readers, we have captured this atrocity for the world to see and for the perpatrator to be so embarrassed that they start filling their cereal bowls an inch lower than the brim. Justice hasd been served (at The Rat).



**"THE DIVER":** It appears Physical Plant has been hitting Beale in the best way: buckets of who-knows-what at Silky O'Sullivan's. For those of you in the dark about what Silky's calls "The Diver" it's essentially a yellow bucket of ice with beer and assorted alcohols mixed in. The resulting substance is reminiscent of hops punch. At 20 dollars a piece, you're playing yourself if you don't take home the container. Physical Plant knows what's up.