



THE SOU'WESTER

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Photo By Emily Monroe

Members of Rhodes' Mock Trial Team Tracy Kornblatt ('02), Dave Adams ('02), Grace Williams ('03), Emily Monroe ('00), Anna Smith ('02), and Kim Thomas ('02) celebrate after a recent victory. At their competition in Illinois last week, team 873 earned a gold bid to the National Championships in Des Moines, which will take place in April. Tracy Kornblatt won an Outstanding Witness Award, while Dave Adams received an Outstanding Attorney Award.

The previous weekend, Team 872 went to Washington University in St. Louis, where Jena Balton ('02) received an Outstanding Attorney Award, and Les Goodall ('00) and Laura Bauer ('01) won Outstanding Witness Awards. The team received third place at the competition.

Students Elect New Leaders

The following are excerpts from statements of winning candidates for elections held Tuesday, February 29.

RSG Vice-President

John Ramsey

John Ramsey is currently a senator on the Rhodes Student Government and a Resident Assistant in Glassell Hall. John believes constant communication with the administration is key, along with maintaining accountability between the executive officers and the RSG committee chairs.

Publications Commissioner

Kasey Sweeney

My involvement with Rhodes publications started two years ago. Currently, I am the Editor-in-Chief of the yearbook and a member of the Publications Board. Hopefully, my experience with publications will enable me to perform the job well.

Honor Council President

Amit Mirchandani

It is truly a great honor to be delegated the responsibility of leading a Council whose main objective is to make certain that our college's most noble and respected tradition, the Honor Code, is held intact and inherited as a gift by every entering class.

Honor Council V-P

Ruchir Patel

It was my involvement with the Honor Council this year that made me even closer to the notion of being honorable. I have observed the current Vice-President very closely, and it was through him that I was inspired to want to run for that position.

SRC President

Daru Lane

I have been on the council since my freshman year and have enjoyed serving the student body in this capacity. I feel that I am a person who takes their responsibilities very seriously and dedicates all the time necessary to get the job done.

[For the position of RSG President, there will be a run-off election on Thursday, March 2, between the following candidates.]

Corliss Givens

Here at Rhodes I am a member of the Rhodes Student Government, where I am a member of the Student Life Committee. I am also an All-Conference Performer on the Rhodes Football Team. I am currently serving as the Vice-President of FCA. While here at Rhodes I have been a part of the BSA, RHAC, and the Rhodes Singers.

David Weatherman

I served for one year on the Rhodes Student Government as External Services Commissioner for President Neeta Venepalli. Currently, I am serving on the Honor Council as the Corresponding Secretary and member of the pre-hearing committee—positions to which I was appointed by President Amit Mirchandani.

Board of Trustees Representative

Alison Lundergan

Serving for nearly two years on the Board, I have sat on such committees as the Building and Ground ('98), Committee on Enrollment ('99), as well as the Committee on Development ('99). Participating on all levels of college life from Greek leadership and community service, to Rhodes Athletic Department, I feel that I have a true sense of student concerns and opinions at Rhodes.

Catherine Neelly

Currently, I am on the Faculty Administrative Policy committee and Chair of the Residence Hall Advisory Committee, and I have served as an RSG senator. I am involved as a member of Campus Green, a facilitator of Westminster Fellowship, a member of Kappa Delta sorority, and am actively involved with volunteer work in the community.

Pub Board Votes to Break Away From RSG

By Matthew Shipe
Editor-in-Chief
and Valerie Witte
News Editor

In a seven-to-four vote last week, members of Rhodes' Publications Board voted to separate from Rhodes Student Government (RSG).

Publications Commissioner Andrew Shulman ('00) explained the changes that will arise from Pub Board's newfound independence:

"The biggest change is formal separation from RSG. It has been a *de facto* separation for the last four years, except when we wrote the constitution. It is in our best interest to be separate from RSG. . . . The potential for a conflict of interest necessitates

our separation from RSG."

RSG President Richard Lum ('00) alluded to this possibility for conflict, explaining, "The concern is occasionally presented that the Publications Board does not have free rein and that this association with the elected representatives of the Rhodes Student Body infringes upon the integrity of unbiased reporting."

However, as he explained, "the Publications Board Commissioner is not a Presidential Cabinet position and is not responsible to the President of the Student Body or the Rhodes Student Government Senate.

"The Publications Board is considered an executive committee, and the Commissioner has historically

been a valuable visitor in the Senate and Cabinet meetings."

Lum provided information regarding the status of Pub Board, explaining that, historically, only the three student governance organizations—the Rhodes Student Government, Social Regulations Council, and the Honor Council—have been Category I Student Organizations, and, as a result, are always guaranteed funding through the Student Activity Fee.

"The Publications Board, and, until recently, the Rhodes Activities Board, are organizations but are technically Executive Committees of the Rhodes Student Government. In this respect, they are

guaranteed funding annually," Lum said.

Speaking of the Pub Board's ties to RSG, Lum said, "The relationship between the Rhodes Student Government and the Publications Board has always been amicable. As with last year's reorganization of the Activities Board as an independent Category II Organization, I trust that now, as the Publications Board desires to reorganize itself under a new constitution, the Senate will consider all aspects of the changes, financial and political."

Shulman also expressed optimism that the relationship between *The Sou'wester* and RSG will con-

tinue to be a harmonious one, saying, "Hopefully, *The Sou'wester* will be able to write about RSG in flattering or unflattering terms. The net effect does not change Pub Board or RSG operation.

"It will give us additional freedoms which may have not been exercised under RSG. . . . We don't have to worry about the specter of RSG."

Shulman added that the consequences of Pub Board's secession will not be readily apparent but will impact future Rhodes publications.

"The change won't affect us, [though] the freshman class might reap the benefits. From four years ago, our publications our light years ahead, [but we] still have a way to go."

BLAKE ROLLINS
CURIOSLY
STRONG
COLUMNIST



PRO & CON



ASHLEY TEAL BAKER
OUTSIDE THE BOX

Caught on Tape! When Good Weddings Go Bad

So who wouldn't want to marry a multimillionaire? Anyone who steadfastly swears to the contrary is arguably worse than the woman who said "I do"—she (or he?) is a liar. Financial security is on every newlywed's mind, even if the whole wedding package is wrapped in a shiny veneer of lifelong love and dedication.

I've heard people, in a fit of righteous indignation, characterize the show as prostitution. Well, the first half-hour of the program attracted 10 million viewers, while the suspense of the finale reeled in an enormous 22 million. I had no idea so many people in this country condoned prostitution—including one third of all women watching TV at the time.

Fox Corp. chairman Sandy Grushow declared his network would no longer broadcast sensational "reality-based programming," which has made shows like "When Good Pets Go Bad," "Caught on Tape!," and "Death Jump Live" such amazing successes. Disappointed viewers should take Grushow's announcement with a grain of salt: Fox has made similar pledges in the past but caved in when forced to decide between a respectable reputation and high ratings. Inevitably, Fox chooses the ratings. Good taste is hardly the easiest way to nab the largest audience, a fact eloquently observed by P.T. Barnum in the 19th Century: "Nobody ever lost money underestimating the intelligence of the American public."

Now, with the revelations of millionaire groom Rick Rockwell's history of domestic violence, including a restraining order, many moralists claim Fox has gone too far in its shameless pursuit of ratings. Obviously, Fox could have screened their applicants better, but an annulment clause in the wedding contract (remember, the show was filmed in Las Vegas) allowed the bride to quickly divorce her new husband.

Perhaps more deeply, the show attacked the sacrosanct institution of marriage, inseparably tied to notions of romantic love. Could it be that the stereotype of the nuclear family, with its ideal of lifelong love and devotion, is an outdated, at worst an unattainable ideal? Fifty percent of all marriages today end in divorce, with one in three children born out of wedlock. While many point to these statistics as evidence of the moral decline of western civilization, the reality of the situation is that the nuclear family is a 20th Century phenomenon with little similarity to the past.

While most pre-industrial era marriages ended in death as opposed to divorce, remarriage ensured households were full of children and in-laws from different marriages—much as they are today. In Manchester, for example, one third of all marriages in the 1650s were second or third marriages.

Blaming "Who Wants to Marry a Multimillionaire" or any other TV show for the high incidence of divorce doesn't add up: the same social consequences of divorce, like mixed families with children of different parents, are common throughout modern history. Rather, the rise of romantic love as the only legitimizing factor for a marriage is to blame for the widespread failure of marriage as an institution.

Parents promise their kids, especially females, a non-existent "Mr. Right"—the ideal spouse that has no flaws. With such unrealistic expectations, is it any wonder so many marriages fail? Ambitious blondes like Anna Nicole Smith who married rich oil billionaires were labeled opportunistic gold diggers and publicly smeared. Why is that so evil? Any boob knows that love fades over time. At least gold maintains some of its original value over the years, though, with the depressed commodity markets today, I wouldn't rush to invest...

Obviously, this is a cynical opinion, but, realistically, how many couples who have stayed together 50 years still woo each other like youthful romantics on a daily basis? Only an exceptional few. The lion's share of successful marriages treat it as a contract which cannot be broken without penalty. It's the dedication to principle, not love, that keeps marriages solvent.

If you blame anyone, blame the sinister purveyors of sappy loves stories that, time and again, promote the same predictable tripe about love conquering all, etc. They're worse, because they shuck out that idealized garbage with a straight face—at least Fox has the common decency not to take itself seriously.

Was "Multimillionaire" in bad taste? Such a decision is best left to the market, where the consumers make their preferences known. And would re-running "Multimillionaire" really be all that bad? After all, it was slated to replace "Banned in America: The World's Sexiest Television" in Fox's Tuesday night lineup.

Who Wants to Marry a Pinto-Drivin', Tobacco-Spittin', Natty Light Drinkin', Porn Addict?

The title of this column only betrays my disgust for the program Fox Television dared to call "entertainment." How anyone can defend it is completely beyond me. I thought the tradition of clubbing a woman over the head and dragging her to your cave had died with the dinosaurs. But, apparently, Fox found some redeeming value in that tradition and promoted it across the world two weeks ago. Never mind that it turns out the man they married off is an accused abuser and his millions are questionable.

The "Who Wants to Marry a Millionaire?" program was viewed by approximately 23 million people, most of them women under the age of 35. This response to the show is a sad commentary on the state of romantic affairs in this country. Are women so desperate to be married that they are willing to marry a man they've never met and without any chance of taking any of his money in a divorce ("contestants" were required to sign a prenuptial agreement)?

For that matter, why is a "millionaire" (I used the term loosely because he apparently isn't *actually* a millionaire) willing to leave his marital destiny up to some producers at Fox? The answers aren't entirely clear.

According to news reports, some of the fifty "finalists" chosen to appear on the show didn't even *want* to get married but just agreed to appear so they could be on TV. Why were these women willing to appear on live national television and agree to be married, if only for a short period of time?

The questions surrounding the "millionaire" are less puzzling. Rick Rockwell, dubbed Ricky Rocky, apparently agreed to the show as a publicity stunt to boost a sagging real estate and motivational speaking career. Ah, the sanctity of marriage.

Some have blamed the evil forces of feminism for this debacle. Others blame the culture of society-at-large. My feelings on both causes are mixed. Feminism, for me, is about allowing women a right to make any choice they wish. The reality of all women's lives ought to be the freedom to choose.

But at what cost? Darva Conger agreed to marry a man she had never met, presumably for the money, prizes, and fame such a union would bring. But why was she compelled to get married at such a high price?

This is where the influence of our social culture steps into the picture. American men and women, admittedly mostly women, have constructed an ideal of romantic love that is nearly impossible to fulfill.

Being single is something to be shunned and avoided, despite all the feminist rhetoric expounding on the value of being an individual. Ms. Conger was so desperate to avoid the threat of remaining single that she was willing to sacrifice herself to the institution of marriage.

Ms. Conger pledged to seek an annulment soon after returning from the "honeymoon" that the couple largely spent apart. She is supposedly mournful of the outcome and regretful that she and Mr. Rockwell did not hit it off. WHAT WAS SHE EXPECTING? That she would meet a strange man and some magical connection would take place according to destiny?

She reported being offended when Mr. Rockwell kissed her on the lips after the wedding ceremony. Seemingly she neglected to take into consideration that they had just been *married!* She was not a contestant in a traditional beauty pageant, nor was she a participant in a dating game show—*she had agreed to get married on the spot!* Her exact expectations remain a mystery to her television audience.

Perhaps most distressing in this entire episode is the fact that Fox only pulled the show from reruns when it was revealed that Mr. Rockwell had an abusive past and questionable finances. Fox did not act in response to the fact that the marriage was destined for annulment from the first commercial break following the ceremony or the resulting public outcry.

Luckily for America, this means that we won't have to endure another forced marriage or the sob story of a woman who set herself up for disappointment by taking part in such a spectacle.

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All staff editorials published in *The Sou'wester* represent the majority opinion of the Editorial Board composed of section editors and executive editors. Opinions expressed in *The Rhode'ster*, opinion columns, and letters-to-the-editor do not necessarily reflect the opinions of *The Sou'wester* Editorial Board. Letters-to-the-editor are encouraged; all letters must be signed and will be edited for clarity.

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World Watches as Oil Prices Soar

By Kenneth Lukas
Staff Writer

Drivers everywhere are experiencing the effects of an increase in oil prices almost unrivaled since the Arab-led OPEC oil embargo of 1973, which ended the economic boom experienced by most of the industrialized nations after World War II and ushered in the infamous condition known as stagflation, where the economy enters a recession but inflation keeps increasing.

Prices recently topped \$30/barrel for the first time since the Gulf War, due to increased cooperation between OPEC and other non-OPEC oil producing nations, like Mexico. Economists were already worried about the inflationary effects of \$25/barrel oil a few months ago.

If you remember the reports of regular unleaded being sold for around \$0.70/gallon in some areas from this past summer, then you might wonder what happened to triple oil prices so quickly.

Well, OPEC and the other oil-producing nations have actually managed to abide by their quotas and not over-produce. It's a situation common in game theory, where doing what appears rationally as your best choice is actually not. If everyone restricts oil production, the prices will stay high over an indefinite period of time.

But, if one member sells more oil than the quota allows (the short-term rational choice), that country will make a killing until the other countries also produce more oil, bringing down the commodity price. Eventually, the dif-

ferent countries will all try to undercut each other, and prices will stay low. In this way, all the countries, even the original "cheater," end up making less money.

But this situation probably won't last long for a number of reasons. First, it's unlikely that the oil producers will be able to avoid "cheating" for much longer. At these inflated prices, the first one to start producing more oil will make a lot of money, and, if the past is any predictor, discipline will not hold among the cartel.

Actually, cheating is occurring and has increased, but no one has really noticed yet, because it's winter and the demand for oil is greater, so prices have stayed the same. Compliance with the quotas dropped from 91 percent in September to 76 percent in January. Qatar and Libya are already habitual cheaters.

Second, a lot of these oil-producing nations realize that increased oil prices may send the world economy into a decline like the one that occurred in the 1970s. For countries like Mexico, where oil makes up less of the GDP than in the past, the costs of a major international recession will outweigh the increased revenues from high oil prices.

None of these countries wants to be blamed for starting a new international financial crisis, so they are almost certain to comply; even Iran is concerned with keeping the global economy stable, for the sake of its own domestic reforms. Mexico, Venezuela, and Saudi Arabia have all adjusted their government budgets for 2000 to plan for oil prices below \$20/barrel. Mexican Energy Secretary Luis Tellez has said that he hopes oil prices will drop below \$25/barrel. They would all prefer a soft, regulated decrease in oil prices (hopefully to around \$20/barrel) that will keep OPEC/oil-producer unity and quotas intact, rather than

wait for countries to start cheating and oil prices to enter freefall, perhaps to \$10/barrel.

Third, the United States has been strongly pressuring countries to increase oil supplies. Mexico, Venezuela, and Saudi Arabia, the three main organizers of the current high oil prices, are all American allies. This U.S. pressure, if handled delicately, may help the oil producers convince their people that it is in their own best interest to charge less for oil, certainly a counterintuitive way of looking at national interest.

Energy Secretary Bill Richardson, who will be visiting Mexico on Saturday, February 26, said that he would go to visit his mother, who lives in Mexico, in order to make the trip look less like a pressure excursion. Anti-U.S. feeling is strong in Mexico, and, despite the fact that Mr. Tellez and the Mexican government are convinced, perceived U.S. pressure could cause a backlash among the populace at large, something that is already being exploited by the left-wing mayor of Mexico City, Cuauhtemoc Cardenas.

Unfortunately, even though it is likely that producers will raise output at the OPEC meeting in Vienna on March 27, decreased prices will not occur immediately. The increased production will take time to get through the refineries, probably at least six months.

Philip K. Verleger, an oil industry monitor for the Brattle Group, estimates that prices will be \$33/barrel by year's end even if output increases, or \$40/barrel if it does not. This probably stems at least partially from the increasing economic recovery in East Asia, which is causing oil demand to pick up globally.

On the bright side, at least this will probably increase profits for makers of bicycles and walking shoes.

Strife Continues in Northern Ireland

By Margie Hall
Staff Writer

Recent terrorist attacks in Northern Ireland signal the ongoing struggle between the country's Protestant and Catholic factions.

The latest attack occurred on February 25, when a bomb was detonated in a British army base in Ballykelly, Northern Ireland.

However, the perpetrators were surprised before they could fully assemble the device, and, consequently, there were no injuries.

Irish police received a call from an individual claiming to be a member of the Continuity IRA, but the caller did not use a recognized code word to verify the information, so the claim is disputed.

The Continuity IRA split from the IRA in order to carry out what it believes to be the IRA's original mission: to remove all British power from Ireland. The party claims to have no military wing but is alleged to be responsible for the 1996 bombing of the Killyhelvin Hotel in Enniskillen.

The terrorist attacks stem from the Irish opposition over the means to achieve peace. All main

parties involved agree that peace is the desired goal, but the methods of obtaining that peace are almost universally disputed.

The Ulster Unionist party, the largest unionist party in Northern Ireland, is concerned with maintaining relations between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK. Sinn Fein, the political wing of the IRA, is a proponent of an independent, united Ireland.

"Because Northern Ireland still is predominantly Unionist, it is still part of Britain, but Sinn Fein, the extreme Nationalists' group, supports the IRA in their attempt to cause economic trouble, so that Britain will want to give up the North and be rid of it," said Kathryn Patterson, an exchange student at Rhodes from Northern Ireland.

Both groups support the Good Friday Agreement, an April 1998 document that strives to establish relations within Northern Ireland, with Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic, and between both republics and the UK. A major tenet of the agreement is the decommissioning of arms on all sides, which has been a stumbling block to the effectiveness of the agreement.

Sinn Fein President Gerry

Adams recently expressed frustration over pressure on the party to force the IRA to disarm. The IRA has declared a cease-fire, which has not been observed by certain factions of the organization, but it refuses to give up its arms completely.

In December 1999, a power-sharing government was agreed upon by both parties and approved by Great Britain. In addition, the Irish Parliament revoked their territorial claim to Northern Ireland, assuring Protestants in Northern Ireland of their freedom. However, the new governmental powers were revoked earlier in February due to the conflict over decommissioning, and the debates continue.

"Currently, there is a peace agreement in Ireland, although I think things are just going round in a big circle, as the Sinn Feiners seem to be getting their way in parliament and still aren't giving up their weapons—which was the condition [by which] they could sit in parliament in the first place," Patterson said.

"So, being over here and looking into it rather than being in it, it angers me to see how things don't seem to be going anywhere—especially with those who support the IRA getting more power in other parts of parliament decisions."

"I do have to say that things

aren't as bad as what they seem," added Patterson. "The news over here tends to exaggerate the situation."

Despite the continuing struggle, Patterson feels that the situation is improving. "There are a lot more integrated schools in Ireland, now where Protestant children can be brought up with Catholic children

and are hopefully taught to love each other, rather than being brought up with a big barrier between them as a lot of people in the past have been.

"Tradition is a big part of the problems in Ireland, and it's only when people start looking to the future rather than the past [that] anything [will] ever get better."

Gordon Biersch
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