

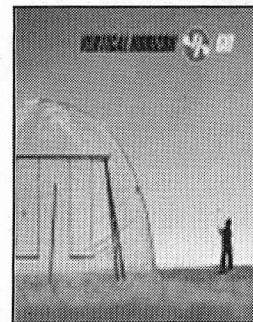
The Weekly Student Newspaper of
Rhodes College

THE SOU' WESTER



Review

Remember former Rites of Spring band Vertical Horizon? Marissa Foshee reviews their latest release, *Go*.



See **A&E**

Opinion

Columnist Elizabeth Brandon discusses the role of reality in the art of filmmaking.

See **Opinion**

VOL. XC, NO. 8

11.12.03

The bulletin board returns:

Are students connecting at Rhodes Connect?

By Jay Sulzmann

Quick: Where can you go to announce an event to which you want to invite the entire campus? Or sell that astronomy textbook that the bookstore won't take back? How about to discuss whether Islam is compatible with democracy? Or just to dazzle your friends with your witty commentary on current events?

Two years ago, nearly anyone at Rhodes could have immediately answered, "The online bulletin board!" But that tool went offline in a storm of controversy at the end of the 2001-2002 academic year. Now, after a yearlong hiatus, online discussion forums for the Rhodes community have returned with the launch of Rhodes Connect on September 17. Nearly two months having passed since the launch date, the early assessments are coming in from students.

The old bulletin board had a relatively plain format. There were three separate forums, with a number of topics, or "threads," inside each forum. One was a marketplace for buying and selling used textbooks and other items; another was used for announcements of campus events. The third, and most extensive, was an area for students, faculty, and staff to discuss controversial topics

relating to life at Rhodes or events in the news.

The new Rhodes Connect has significantly expanded on the old formula. In addition to fully ten separate forums, Rhodes Connect includes such features as blogs, image galleries, wiki pages, and polls. Blogs are running online journals that a single user can create and update; other users can then comment on individual entries. At present, there are 15 active blogs on Rhodes Connect, nearly all of them run by students. The wiki feature allows students and faculty to create their own webpages on the Rhodes Connect site. Students can also upload images to the image galleries. Recent polls on the site have asked users about their favorite food in the Rat and their favorite buildings on campus.

Most students seem to be happy with the new format. "[Rhodes Connect's] features are vastly improved compared to the bare bones of the last bulletin board," says veteran bulletin board user Logan Williamson ('04). Williamson points especially to another new element in Connect, the ShoutBox, which functions as a chat room for students logged into the system. Other bulletin board users, however, preferred the simplicity of the old system. In the words of Lauren Jarrell ('04), who had over a thousand posts on the original bulletin board, "It's new, it's re-

vised, and it's a brilliant layout, but it's just not the same."

To date, participation in discussions on the new bulletin board has been fairly low. "There's a lot less debate," notes Clifton Bryant ('05). "People just seem to be in a less argumentative mood." But that is likely to change as more students discover the possibilities of the online forums. Bob Johnson, Dean of Information Services and a major player in getting Rhodes Connect up and running, says, "Use of the resources will grow as community members become more acquainted with the site. Group collaboration on these resources may take a while to catch on, but we believe that within a short time frame the campus will use them a lot for collaborative projects." The old bulletin board took several years to reach full maturity; with its memory still alive among upperclassmen, the development of the new forums should be much faster.

And students with no memory of the old bulletin board have been just as eager to participate. "I love Rhodes Connect, especially the blogs. It's cool to read other people's rants and raves about school and life in Memphis," says Jimmy Cornfoot ('07), proprietor of the "Jiggity Jiggity Cornfoot Show" blog. The blogs have come under some criticism



Photo and caption by Erin Hoekstra

VAGINA MONOLOGUES

The leadership team of the V-day chapter at Rhodes College hosted tryouts for The Vagina Monologues, which will be performed the weekend after Valentine's Day. The proceeds from the performance as well as from the sale of merchandise like t-shirts, candies and buttons will benefit Memphis Sexual Assault Resource Center and the investigation of the murders of 300 women in Juarez, Mexico, over the past several months. V-day is also accepting any volunteers interested in helping with fundraising, merchandising and publicity.

from upperclassmen like Bryant, who observes that they are less conducive than the forums to extended discussion. But among freshman and sophomore users of Rhodes Connect, there is nothing but enthusiasm for the blog feature. First- and second-year students currently account for 11 of the 13 active student blogs. As "Learning to Breathe" blogger Ashley Mitchem ('06) points out, "If someone presents an interesting topic, people are going to talk, no matter if it is on the forum or the blog feature."

Of course, Rhodes Connect can also be a device for procrastination. "I love my avatar," says Michael Nelson ('05), referring to the icon that users can set to appear next to the comments they post. "I spent two hours getting it to work just right." It's possible to take a big GPA

hit by spending too much time online. And, as Mitchem and others have remarked, Rhodes Connect is no substitute for face-to-face personal interaction. Nonetheless, the benefits available to the Rhodes community are great. "The only thing missing is the student body," says Williamson. If you have never been to Rhodes Connect, or have not stopped by recently, visit <http://connect.rhodes.edu> to see what everyone is talking about.

A final word from Dean Johnson: "Rhodes Connect is the result of a successful collaboration among ITS, Communications and RSG." Specifically, he credits the efforts of Stacy Pennington in the Information Technology Department, Shiloh Barnat in the Communications Department and RSG President Jon David Willingham ('04).



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ERIN HOEKSTRA ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Democrats debate over South

In the campaign for Democratic Presidential Nominee, the South has become a topic of debate among the candidates recently, sparking issues such as gun control and voting along racial lines. Howard Dean has drawn criticism for his comment, "I still want to be the candidate for guys with Confederate flags in their pickup trucks."

Some people have interpreted his statement as attempting to be representative of Southern voters, while others argue that he was only referring to white male voters from the South, who usually vote conservative.

In an earlier speech, Dean referred to this same population, saying that these people should be voting Democratic because their children do not have health care or adequate schools. It seems then that Dean is not only appealing to white Southern male voters but to those from the working-class.

His comment sparked a response from Rep. Dick Gephardt, who said that he wants to be the candidate for "the guys with American flags in their pick-ups." In response to criticism from other nominee hopefuls as well as the media, Dean has apologized for his comments and stated that the Democratic

nominee must appeal to a wide audience in order to gain the nomination or the presidency. He also issued a statement that clarified his comment, stating that he wants these pick-up drivers "to put down those flags and vote Democratic."

Dean's comments have evoked criticism over his past relationship with the NRA as well as opened debate within the campaign over race and the Confederate flag. To complicate matters further, Dean's lead has caused him to be the object of scrutiny of both the media and the other potential nominees because of his growing popularity.

Though this comment must be taken seriously, and though it opens many issues for debate, the other nominees seem to be responding to Dean's comment in order to hack away at his lead. In order to win the nomination, the other candidates will have to focus their efforts on their own campaigns, especially Sen. John Kerry who has had turnover with his top campaign officials this week.

This is only to win the nomination. In order to have a chance to win the presidency, one candidate will have to not only stand out from the other democratic nominee candidates but will

also have to explain clearly and powerfully to the people of the United States the issues which are pertinent to them. So far, none of the candidates have established themselves above the others, although Dean is beginning to show signs of it with the recent union endorsements. And, none of them have proved adept at addressing the nation's most pressing issues of the economy and the war with Iraq.

Though Bush's approval ratings have been falling over the past several months due to the unemployment rate and the slowed economy, these ratings may increase if the recent reports about the improving economy continue to illustrate growth. Democratic nominees must address the jobs that are being lost, especially in the manufacturing sector, as well as the jobs that are being relocated overseas.

Furthermore, the candidates must address the problems in Iraq and the rising number of soldiers killed each day as the number of attacks on Americans increase as well.

As the Iowa Caucus nears, candidates must solidify their positions in order to create a platform strong enough to challenge President Bush and the Republican party.



The 2004 Japan Exchange and Teaching Program

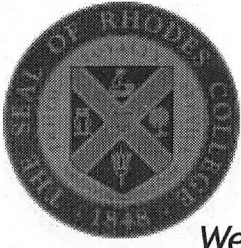
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Wednesday, November 12, 2003

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OPINION

ELIZABETH BRANDON

Inhumanity in film: For the sake of art?

The closer-to-life-near-death experience in a horror film captivates its viewers. The industry thrives on fear of one's mortality and the display of human transience in gruesomeness. Last March, the definitive line between cinema and actuality became less distinguishable when Travis Payeau filmed the assault of Danielle Taylor. Even after he and friends have been accused of kidnapping and tormenting the nineteen-year old girl, the aspiring filmmaker shows no remorse. He claims that the entire episode was play-acting and that Taylor was, in fact, part of it. The whole nightmare began when the lonely, unsuspecting girl decided to go a party where there were some old acquaintances. Soon after she arrived, her tormentors tied her up and began videotaping

their "work of art." Taylor found herself in the back seat of a car, blindfolded, and with a knife pulled on her. While driving to an unknown destination, her kidnappers inquired as to who she would miss most of all after they murder her.

Arriving at an isolated site in the Michigan woods, they proceeded to place the actress in an open grave. Her torturers then informed her that she would be buried alive. Suddenly, as if it never happened, Payeau says on videotape: "Congratulations. You're dead. Welcome to the afterlife." All of the players take a bow-The End?

Within two days of the tape's production, Payeau and company are arrested and charged with kidnapping. There was controversy, however, over Taylor's role as vic-

tim or actress. Payeau's defense: "The knife used to threaten Taylor in the car was wrapped in scotch-tape." He claims that the only reason she seeks to press charges is revenge. She "had a thing for" Payeau, and he apparently re-

jected her. He also states that she stayed in the company of the filmmakers even after the kidnapping and that she never screamed throughout the entire scene. Taylor's rebuttal: Her decision to press charges was not an act of revenge, and she did not have a voluntary part in that video.

She did not know how to handle the situation, and so she waited to go to the police. Taylor now states she is paranoid, suspicious, and overly cautious. If Taylor was unaware of the fact that this was a "shot" for a horror film, in her mind she

was going through a near-death experience. After viewing the tape, Caryn Stark, a New York psychologist, stated that Taylor now suffers from post-traumatic stress. Payeau's simple fascination with horror films and proclivity to film his friends has appeared to blur with masochis-

tic tendencies. After the "filming," Taylor's doctor found bruises on her wrists during a routine physical. Even if she had known that this kidnapping was make believe, the violence of the act was evident, and the brutality of the videotaping is indicative of behavior in rape or homicide. The tension and suspense in horror flicks attracts numerous viewers. The more realistic the gore, the more enthralling it can be because it reminds the viewers of their own mortality. However Payeau and his friends blurred the line between reality and motion picture. Even though there is discrepancy in opinion over Taylor's position in the story, these rising filmmakers compromised humaneness for the sake of their art.

Payeau's simple fascination with horror films and proclivity to film his friends has appeared to blur with masochistic tendencies.

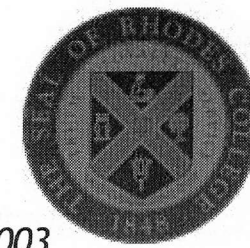
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CHRISTIAN MASTERS

Changing Power Through Communities

There is no sense of American community. There is no sense of wholehearted involvement with anything outside your own door. Almost all an individual's power is exerted within the home, some at work, and a little for their various extracurricular activities. We have convinced ourselves that the only things worth expending energy upon are those things over which we have power; everything else that trickles down is out of our hemisphere and therefore unimportant. We think the way the world functions beyond an individual's sphere of influence is inconsequential.

Unfortunately, there is no world separate from us, and that is where we have made a dreadful misstep. We have learned to make do with what power has been given us. However, power is not given, it's taken.

This suggests a scary sort of revolutionary process, but I do not want to suggest a grand coup d'état where we would place ourselves on the throne of our predecessors. Nor do I think working your way up the political ladder is the way to influence change. Power needs to be broken up into smaller bits and given to everyone.

But how could we subvert the current power structure by doing more than replacing the old figureheads with new ones? There are no issues monumental enough to inspire a section of the populace, large enough to cause change, to overthrow things. Gone are the boiling energies of catalysts like the Enlightenment, Marxism, or Maoism. Next to Capitalism, everything seems tired and too boisterous for its own good. We've settled for a lazy snooze.

The solution might be education. Letting people know of all their options, teaching them the mental method to even cre-

ate their own, if need be. This is very much what Rhodes College has done for me.

This is only part of the solution, and that's why we still haven't gotten anywhere; why there are still questions and always will be. People need to have the tools to implement an idea; dealing only with abstractions serves nothing.

Another mistake is assuming an idea can be right or wrong, turning it into a kind of moral mathematics. This assumption leads to the perpetuation of any system. Any ideas that are different from the current methodology are "other," and consequently "wrong." I do not endorse, however, a system of trial and error. We do not need to give allowance to every idea. This should be a democratic process. Do I sound Communist? I am not supporting taking an ideology and applying it to everyone, to inundate them in its merits, if that's what you mean by Communism.

The leading ideology should be dictated by a community, an educated colloquium that engages in dialogue and reaches some sort of decision which is then carried out with the support of all its members. Obviously, no one person's ideal will be reached. This will be a democratic notion that is fluid.

America and the world in general will not simply slide into this with open arms. However, these movements of community involvement and social change have already started in many countries. The key, as it seems to me, is open-ended community-run organizations, establishing a framework that will hopefully multiply and eventually influence a political body.

It is difficult to start this process because it is not obviously necessary. Most communities' needs are met in some

form or another. When a problem arises, when people start to bind together to find a solution, the issue is carried to the politicians who then solve the crisis from above.

We need to make an active effort to create these organizations within which we establish a community voice. We must create a community first though, before we can give it voice. They cannot be organized through selection. No WASP Utopias. In an era of deconstruction, of trying to eliminate discriminatory barriers such as race and gender, perhaps these are motivated not just through idealism but a need for community. However, coexistence can come before some sort of perfect unity. There are going to be a myriad of different ideas in a community no matter what, so the only importance is being able to listen, to base debate on opposing ideas rather than create conflict because of a more obvious difference.

Community is key. Communities can empower all their members; the power is not given by some benevolent politician but dispersed throughout. Unfortunately, I am confounded as to how to initiate this. There is no cultural link to tie us all together, as there is in many communities in Africa, nor would segregating people according to such an idea be practical or possible. America is a country of mixed ethnicities, mingled among our states, and creating tiny little hamlets would lose the democratic essence of our nation, one of the things we have going for us. It would create groups, not communities.

This is not something we can wait on. It cannot be tested elsewhere first, because there is no test case. Every variable will be different, because every person is different.

Is running away an option? If everyone is content with a lazy snooze, if they cannot see

the benefits of a community, if they are willing to suffice being tugged by capable hands, can I just go away and join some other community?

Yes. If Americans are unable to get this off the ground, if things keep being made divisive as opposed to cohesive, I have to draw a line, stop trying to convince people and hit the road.

Maybe we need an example; maybe people need to see successful communities, but as it is now, we're running wild in internal space. I can convince myself of my power by seeing how easily I affect what I'm allowed to affect. I can lose myself in that. If I feel curiously dissatisfied, I can vent my frustrations in exhausting and focusing my power. We need to have someone to run into. Many people. Then we can all decide on somewhere to run.

Do you have any opinions regarding domestic and international issues? Send submissions to mascd@rhodes.edu.

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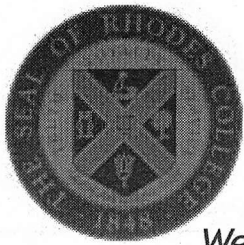
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Wednesday, November 12, 2003

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NEWS

Campus Safety

11.1.03-11.7.03

11/1	1:00 p.m.	Fargarson Field; Rhodes football team's last game at home against Trinity University
11/2		NOTHING UNUSUAL REPORTED
11/3		NOTHING UNUSUAL REPORTED
11/4	4:45 p.m. 11:02 p.m.	Mallory Gym lot, staff member car is sideswiped; accident report is filed Trezevant dorm, student reported her prescription medicine is stolen from her room, report taken. Investigation is pending.
11/5	11:05 a.m.	Thomas Lane, Memphis Fire Department and ambulance on campus, a demonstration is planned for Campus Safety Awareness Day.
11/6		NOTHING UNUSUAL REPORTED
11/7		NOTHING UNUSUAL REPORTED

STATS:

ACCESSES: 91	ESCORTS: 15
VISITORS: 842	JUMPS: 2
CITATIONS: 97	BOOT: 0
PROPPED DOORS: 2	TOW: 0

Help Rhodes help St. Jude

By Mary Claire Giffin

Rhodes College is once again participating in Up 'Til Dawn to benefit the children of St. Jude. Danny Thomas, the founder of St. Jude, stated, "No child should die in the dawn of life," and students at Rhodes are able to help him keep this statement of hope alive. No family, regardless of income, is required to pay for their child's treatment at St. Jude.

The program at Rhodes has already raised \$10,000 for St. Jude, and it is only the beginning of November. This would not be possible without the hard work done by the Rhodes Up 'Til Dawn Executive Board, and, most importantly, participants from the student body. However, our goals are high this year: Rhodes College is set to raise \$50,000. This goal is attainable, but only with support from each and every student.

Up 'Til Dawn is a fundraising program that takes place on college campuses all around the na-

tion. The purpose of this program is to contact people by mail and to educate them about St. Jude and all the miraculous events that take place there with the hope that they will respond with donations to help keep St. Jude alive.

Up 'Til Dawn will take place at Rhodes on February 7, 2004, from 8:00 p.m.-12:00 a.m. in the Bryan Campus Life Center. In order to attend, one needs to send at least 30 letters to friends, family, or businesses. The process is quite simple--all one must do is simply fill in one's name and address on 30 pre-typed letters and seal them. The Up 'Til Dawn committee will pay for the postage. This fun-filled evening event is full of free games, food, concerts and multiple other forms of entertainment, while helping save the lives of children who come from all over the globe to St. Jude. The letters are due by Thanksgiving, so if you wish to participate, contact Liza Hanson at hanek@rhodes.edu.

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THURSDAY SPECIAL

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Meal Includes
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Individual Cole Slaw
and 1 Baked Biscuit

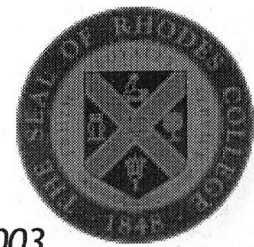
\$2.49

Plus Tax



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REVIEW

Mysteries of The Secret Life of Bees ~by Samantha Hurt

I hardly know where to begin reviewing a book like this one. I believe that *The Secret Life of Bees* is a work of such complexity and skilled authorship that it is difficult to do it justice. All of the things that could be of interest to a reader of fiction are packaged into this one finely crafted story.

The Secret Life of Bees is a novel imbued with a subtle sensitivity and understanding of such nebulous issues as race, sexuality and love, a work that blurs the boundaries between and within these traditionally polarized areas with the overarching themes of forgiveness, human strength and human frailty.

As Sue Monk Kidd's first novel, *Bees* also takes its place alongside the great works of other Southern authors for its astute sense of place and historicity, and for its use of layered, poetic language that transcends the novel form and transforms its subject matter into material with mystical resonances and mythic character.

A comparable work is *Little Altars Everywhere* (the precursor to *Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood*), but where *Altars* examines the world at large through the eyes of many very different individuals, *Bees* chronicles the abiding truth that a single individual may seek and discover through his or her interactions with others.

The Secret Life of Bees is the narrative of Lily Owens, a girl on the run from the law and the strictures of a life with a repressive father. The story unfolds in South Carolina, in the year that Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act into law. Tormented by the guilt of accidentally killing her own mother when she was four and left without the benefit of a loving father, Lily decides to take her life into her own

hands and to rescue her nanny from the racial injustice of their hometown.

Guided only by a few articles of her mother's, Lily's quest to learn of her mother's past leads them to Tiburon, S.C., where they are taken in by three black sisters who will change their lives for the better. Lily finds not only her mother's past (and by extension her own), but new mothers, a new vocation and newfound love with a strong-hearted youth named Zach.

Most importantly, Lily is instructed and learns to find the mother within herself. She is told by the wisest sister that "...even if we already have a mother, we still have to find this part of ourselves inside...This [mother] I'm talking about sits in your heart all day long, saying, '...you are my everlasting home. Don't you ever be afraid. I am enough. We are enough.'"

Perhaps the most compelling reason to read this novel, apart from the story's own magnetic pull and the locomotive plot development, is the language. It surprises at every twist and turn, every bit as much as the revelations and mysteries of the narrative. Wordplay on common expressions creates a delightful comic relief in the midst of dramatic events, and the metaphors of the moon, the river in Tiburon and beekeeping, augmented by symbolic passages from beekeeping texts, enhance the messages that Kidd conveys regarding life and death.

Essentially, in spite of the recurrence of the narrative, this is a story about life. Racial injustice, interracial relationships, sexism and sexuality all fade and blend into the grand backdrop of life's mysteries. This is a novel of remarkable breadth, and will with any luck leave the reader full of hope and full of wonder as well.

Vertical Horizon: They're still here

By Marissa Foshee

So who remembers Vertical Horizon from back in the day? Maybe my fellow seniors out there feel the same faint, special connection to this band that I do. At my first Rites of Spring, this band was all ANY of the upperclassmen could talk about. They had graced the amphitheatre stage the year previous to my freshman year at Rites, having been booked before "Everything You Want," their first single, hit big...no surprise to most of us, considering how hard it's been since then to get big acts here. However, now that those upperclassmen have graduated (most of them, anyway), it seems like forever since we've heard ANYTHING about Vertical Horizon.

Their second album, *Go*, recently released after a three-year break, has not only awakened memories of my freshman year, but it has opened my ears to the capacity this band has to rock...and I mean ROCK, to the point where I'm dancing in my car, singing along and basically

making a fool of myself while listening to the CD.

Having purposefully chosen to stay more relaxed and true to heart in this album, Vertical Horizon communicates a sense of tenacity and persistence, not only in their career but also in their musical talent and in the overall theme of the CD, "going on with life." Lead vocalist Matt Scannell says of their new album, "A lot of these songs deal with taking action and moving forward with your life. We can remember to look up and see the sky a little bit more, as opposed to always looking down on our feet thinking about the problems that we have."

The album demonstrates the depth of their talent both lyrically and musically. Some tracks, like "When You Cry" and "Sunshine," are much harder than the typical Vertical Horizon single we heard three years ago, but they are well-positioned on the CD, so that you aren't left exhausted by the surrounding tracks like "Goodbye Again" or "Forever" that are slower and more lyrically driven. These slower songs are great, too, but

it's nice to see that Vertical Horizon has made a dynamic, diverse album.

My personal favorite is definitely "Sunshine." If this song is at all foreshadowing the direction their music is starting to take stylistically, we may soon hear this band on stations like 93X with their next album.

Overall, the single out now, "I'm Still Here," is definitely the best example of Scannell's lyrical talent. To be honest, I don't think I can even pinpoint the exact story or overall message behind this song, but that's what makes it great. You can get out of this song what you want, either a feeling of self-assertion with lines like "Everything you wanted me to hide is everything that makes me feel alive" or the acknowledgement of strange paradoxes in your life, like "I smile the widest when I cry inside and my insides blow apart."

You can relate to this song however you like, but "I'm Still There" at least communicates the simple story of Vertical Horizon's music career. Yes, they are still here.

RHODES PUZZLER

#38 (November 12, 2003)

Last week's movie pass winner: *No one!*

Last week's Puzzler must have been too difficult, so I have decided to keep Attila for a while longer. He was so happy to hear my decision that he volunteered to write the Puzzler this week. Here is what he came up with.

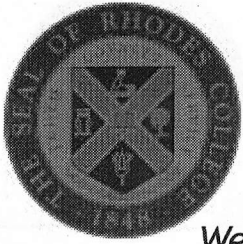
A box of chinchilla treats has been placed behind one of three doors. On each door are two statements:

- Door 1: The treats are not behind this door. The treats are behind door 2.
- Door 2: The treats are not behind door 1. The treats are behind door 3.
- Door 3: The treats are not behind this door. The treats are behind door 1.

You know that on one door both of the statements are true, on another door both of the statements are false, and on the third door one of the statements is true while the other is false.

Where are the treats?

The Rhodes Puzzler sponsored by the Math/CS Department of Rhodes College. Send your solution (with your name!) to shelton@rhodes.edu or turn in a hard copy to Kennan Shelton, 318 Ohlendorf. All solutions must be received by 5:00 p.m. Sunday. A weekly winner will be randomly chosen from all correct entries to receive two free movie passes, donated by Malco Theatres. See the Rhodes Puzzler Page at <http://www.mathcs.rhodes.edu/puzzler.html>.



Wednesday, November 12, 2003

Dinner & a Movie

This week, Allison Brown tells the truth about Matrix Revolutions, and Leah Kaye reviews the Mexican restaurant La Espiga.

Matrix Revolutions packs a weak punch

By Allison Brown

Ok kids...I'm sure that by now many of you have already seen the third (and reportedly final) installment in *The Matrix* series, *Matrix Revolutions*. But for those of you who haven't, consider this your warning. It seems that the Wachowski brothers missed their intended cinematic and philosophical mark, whatever it might have been, and ended up with a film only a few steps up from mediocre.

The movie, while not entirely a waste of time, falls flat on the promise of the first movie. Sitting in the theatre and waiting through the seemingly endless previews, I decided that this third movie would be a worthwhile venture if it satisfactorily wrapped up the various loose ends left by the first and second *Matrix* episodes. No matter what else might be good or bad about the movie, it all basically boils down to whether or not the main story-line (the freeing of human minds, the defeat of the machines, yadda yadda) gets resolved.

And it does...somewhat. The problem is that the last hour or so of the movie is so watered down with sappy romantic dialogue and melodrama worthy of a soap opera that you almost forget you're supposed to be watching a ground-breaking sci-fi action movie. To add insult to injury, all of the admittedly impressive high-dollar special effects seem to take precedence over the actual plot of the movie, and in the end it feels like the sets and graphics are the real stars of the film.

At the culmination of all this, we have Keanu Reeves' Neo, our lone hero, marching out to chal-

lenge the machines in an awkward and unexplained head to head. Yet the Neo we see in *Revolutions* is nothing like the Neo of the original film. The Neo of the past two installments was dynamic, focused, and (dare I say it) kick-ass, and the newest Neo is, by contrast, sallow and often wimpy. At the anti-climactic end of the film, we see the formerly vibrant character of Neo lying listless and unmoving while the camera cuts to a new scene. Whatever happened to the good old days when Neo left us by striding purposefully into the horizon to the adrenaline-pumping sounds of *Rage Against the Machine*? *Revolutions'* Neo is more deserving of a Celine Dion overture.

The character of Trinity (Carrie Anne Moss) dissipates in much the same way. In the first two *Matrix* installments, Trinity enters as the most hard-core of all super-heroines. But in *Revolutions*, this formerly authoritative and confident character becomes lethargic and tired. She comes in with a bang, and she goes out with a whimper, literally.

The previously menacing Agent Smith, a program that has run amok within the Matrix and must be stopped to the benefit of humans and machines alike, also loses his sting. Smith, played by Hugo Weaving, was the ultimate villain in the first movie because of his precision and sub-zero personality. Smith was a bad guy unlike any bad guy we'd ever seen before. In *Revolutions*, however, Agent Smith dwindles into a not-so-scary version of his former self by embracing the tried and true super villain ste-

reotypes. At one point he even reverts to using the typical "demented bad-guy" laugh that seems like it comes straight from the dog-eared pages of an old comic book.

As disappointing as the second half of the movie is, it begins perfectly, with Neo lost somewhere between the Matrix and humanity. In this beginning, we meet two new characters, one of whom persists throughout the film to symbolize youth and hope. The one real honest-to-goodness perk of the film comes a little later, though, in the epic humans-against-machines battle scene taking place in Zion, the only remaining human city. The battle scene is long and elaborate, but it's probably the only scene in the movie that is actually worth the production money spent on it.

Overall, *Matrix Revolutions* could have been better, but it's not a complete bomb. The introduction of new characters and the special effects bonanza of the monumental fight scenes make the movie worthwhile if you have nothing better to do than plunk down and watch a movie. Its futuristic sets and fast paced battles are deserving of a big screen; a home theater system will likely cause the special effects to belly flop into the ordinariness of every other action movie. By itself, *Matrix Revolutions* might have been better, but given the promise and philosophical premise of the original one, it's slightly less than par. Even though the storyline doesn't quite wrap itself up, it is still worth its ninety-five minute running time. It's by no means great, but it's not too shabby, either.

A step above Tex-Mex in Memphis

By Leah Kaye

La Espiga, located at 3967 Summer Avenue beyond the thrift store block, brings authentic Mexico to Midtown. Number one priority in preparation for this excursion, however: bring a Spanish major or a Spanish-speaking exchange student. When I called to ask about the business hours, I found that I needed to touch up on my Spanish. No one in the building spoke English, and I knew that La Espiga would be a truly cultural experience.

The food was worth all the extra effort of lugging my English-Spanish dictionary to the restaurant in my purse. The sauces were spicy and the flavors were a step above Tex-Mex. Each dish had a simple excellence; their preparation did not require extra seasonings and garnishes to make up for bland ingredients. The portions were perfect as well, a bit smaller and healthier than most Tex-Mex restaurants. We sat down to a basket of fresh and crisp chips with salsa.

At other Mexican restaurants, one must consciously avoid stuffing oneself silly with the free chips before the entrees arrive, but at La Espiga, the service was prompt enough that this was not a problem. Once again, no one spoke English, and our waitress did not seem to have much sympathy to our

language difficulties, but the staff was very friendly nonetheless.

The dinner items were typically priced between \$5-12. At such a cheap price, I would recommend coming with cash. La Espiga does accept credit cards, but this takes much longer.

In addition, the restaurant is connected to a panaderia and a mercado (a bakery and a store). We purchased some sweets out of the panaderia for the ride home, and pondered bringing home a donkey or a Powerpuff Girl piñata for later.

The language barrier, rather than increasing the difficulty of getting beef instead of chicken, was something to be appreciated at La Espiga. While we still have yet to figure out whether "espiga" means spike or ear, neither of which sounds appetizing, we can be certain that we experienced a piece of Mexico in Memphis.

La Espiga

Genre: Mexican
Prices: \$5-\$12
Location: 3967 Summer
Phone: (901) 454-9220
Fax: (901) 452-7011

How to Reach Our Authors and Us

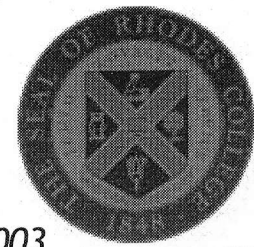
As the official student newspaper of Rhodes College, *The Sou'wester* is produced entirely by the students on staff. It functions independently of faculty and administration. The newspaper is published weekly throughout the fall and spring semesters, except during exam periods and breaks.

Staff meetings are open to the Rhodes community and convene in the second floor of Briggs Student Center every Monday evening at 8 p.m. *The Sou'wester* is a member of the Student Publications Board, a six-publication consortium that includes the editors of all student publications, class representatives, and at-large representatives from the student body.

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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Women's soccer completes 11-6 season

By *Camelia Trahan*

The Lynx women's soccer team finished its most successful season in five years on Sunday, November 9 at home with a 2-0 loss to SCAC rival Centre College.

"The loss to Centre was an unfortunate way to end a truly great season," said Head Coach Laura Whiteley. "Regardless, this season represented a milestone for the women's soccer program at Rhodes College—a turning point—and our coaching staff couldn't be prouder of our players and all of the hard work that they put into achieving what this team was able to accomplish in 2003."

The team finished 11-6-0 overall in 2003 and went 5-4 in the SCAC. This represented a fourth place finish in the SCAC—the team's highest conference finish since 1998 and its first conference-winning season in five years. During the 2003 season, the team was also ranked as high as number seven in the very competitive South Region for NCAA Division III women's soccer. There are seven regions within Division III women's soccer; thus, Rhodes' number seven ranking essentially placed the team in the nation's Top-50.

Throughout the season, Rhodes was also honored by having two of its players named as

SCAC Defensive Players of the Week by the conference office: These included junior defender Stacie Beverly and junior goalkeeper Nicole Lazo. Both players are expected to return to the field in 2004.

In fact, this most successful team in recent-Rhodes' history will be returning all but two of its members next fall, as only two seniors will be graduating. Four-year letter-winner Jenny Vaughn, from Bogart, GA, will graduate in May 2004 with a Religious Studies major, and three-year letter-winner Leigh Coburn, from Shreveport, LA, will graduate in May 2004 with a History major.

"I can't express in words how much this team will miss the Class of 2004 next fall," said Coach Whiteley. "Both Jenny and Leigh were great leaders who contributed a lot to turning this program around, and each are leaving very large shoes to fill. The truly exciting thing about this past season, though, is the fact that the vast majority of our players will be returning to the field next year to finish what we started this fall. Most of our players were left feeling unsatisfied because of the losses to Sewanee and Centre during the last weekend of the season. They're already ready for those games in 2004. We're all really excited about the future of the women's soccer team here at Rhodes."

Football ends winning season with 35-3 rout

By *Camelia Trahan*

The Rhodes football team ended their 2003 campaign in outstanding fashion, winning their fifth consecutive game 35-3 over Millsaps in Jackson, MS on Saturday, November 8th.

Junior quarterback Daniel Swanstrom led the Lynx attack, completing 24 of 35 passes for 350 yards and two touchdowns.

Swanstrom broke his own single season completion record and career season yardage record with 230 completions this year for 2634 yards and 23 touchdowns.

Junior wide receiver Matt Dement caught seven passes for 126 yards, and senior wideout Allen Sheehan hauled in 6 catches for 112 yards. Rhodes cruised to a 21-0 lead in the first

While you were sleeping: Rhodes crew team starts season with Augusta regatta

By *Mills Ramsay*

Every morning of every day of the week, while most Rhodes students lie in bed asleep, the members of the Rhodes Crew Team are out doing what they do best—stroking. Starting practice well before the sun comes up, they train to compete against schools several times the size of Rhodes. Rowing is as intensely mental as it is physical, and a great deal of self-discipline is required.

This fall, the crew has taken on eighteen new members and continues to develop as a program. With the absence of a coach, the experienced rowers have had to teach the new rowers their technique and guide them in developing speed and efficiency on the water.

New rowers include Ross Hilliard, Craig Souza, Paul Zarychta, Drake German, Paul Sinclair, Matt Cain, Ross Dawkins, Andrew Willey, Stephen Howden, Jenn Bulmash, Cori Anderson, Laura Stanford, Emily Baldwin, Laura Beth Minnich, Sandy Marcon and Tess Waechter. New coxswains are James Die and Gena Dolson.

Other schools with crew teams have boathouses where they keep several boats along with all kinds of rowing equipment. Many of these schools have varsity crew teams who receive generous amounts of money through their athletic departments. Full-time coaches work with experienced rowers and recruit rowers from high school. The Rhodes Crew team does not have such amenities. It borrows space at the Har-

bor Town Marina, where it keeps its few boats. Each semester, the team pleads with the Allocations Board for enough money to have at least minimal participation in intercollegiate rowing. Nearly all rowers at Rhodes are crafted from little or no exposure to the sport whatsoever.

The team now owns one two-person boat and two four-person boats. The addition of a brand-new Vespoli Millennium 4 has made practice more competitive as the different boats can race against each other. However, the team has no way of transporting any of these and is forced to borrow boats and equipment from other teams at competitions. When possible, the crew will purchase a boat trailer and be better able to transport boats and equipment to regattas.

This weekend, the members of the Rhodes Crew Team traveled to Augusta, Georgia for their first regatta of the year. Most regattas are held on Saturdays, and all the competing teams arrive on Friday night to park their boats at the rowing club where the race is being held. Early Saturday morning, everyone awakes to rig the boats, check equipment, and prepare for the races. The atmosphere is festive, with vendors selling shirts, jackets, posters, equipment and many other rowing-related items, and teams set up tents to sit under while eating picnic lunches and cheering on their teammates. One hour before a given boat's race, teams head down to the river to warm up.

New members have been training rigorously for the past six

weeks and were able to earn places at the race. The Men's boats took third and fourth place in their event and the Women's boat took third in its event. Rhodes raced against Georgia Tech, UGA, Berry College, Emory, Clemson, and others.

Races during the fall season are longer distances and are humorously called "head races." These are tests of endurance and differ from the spring races in that the spring races are shorter distance and faster paced. The race course in Augusta totaled 4500 meters, or 2.8 miles. The sprint races of the spring will be 2000 meters and much more intense.

Conditioning and fundraising will be the main focuses as the team gears up for more competition. In order to attend more rowing events, raising money will be crucial to the future of the team. The Crew Team's annual Erg-a-thon will take place in March. At this event, the rowers keep four rowing machines (ergs) going for six hours each, for a total of twenty four hours of rowing. Friends and family send pledges for the number of total meters rowed. Washing cars and the occasional odd-jobs are other means of raising money, but neither brings in the sort of revenue needed for a fully competitive program.

The crew will continue to train throughout the winter in preparation for the sprint races next spring. As an up-and-coming sport, it will persist to fight for more funding and the right to become a varsity sport at Rhodes.

to 189 yards of total offense and recorded a single season game high of eight quarterback sacks. Senior linebacker Chad Milam and freshman defensive tackle Alex Conforti each recorded two sacks apiece.

Offensively, the Lynx totaled 445 yards, and Daniel Swanstrom broke two of his single season passing records. For the season, Swanstrom completed 230 passes and threw for 2634 yards, both

new Lynx single season passing marks.

Rhodes' 7-3 mark in 2003 is the best Lynx football record since the 1990 football team's 7-2 finish. The win also improves Coach White's overall mark at Rhodes to 34-33 in seven seasons as the Lynx head coach. His 34 career coaching victories make him the second all-time leader in career coaching wins in Rhodes football history.