

DRIVING UP WITH DRIVE THRU RECORDS

Former student's band lands recording deal

By Lacey Korevec
Entertainment Editor

On the brink of his 19th birthday, Adam Swider would have been a second-semester freshman at Rider. Instead, opportunity came his way in the form of a record deal with one of today's most up and coming labels. Now on the path to success, Swider's band Socratic has hit it big.

Formed about three and a half years ago, Socratic is switching from its current label No Milk Records and is in the process of being signed with Drive Thru Records, according to Swider, who serves as the band's bass player.

"We went on tour and we met up with Drive Thru. They heard our demo, came to one of our shows and told us they were going to sign us," said Swider. "So as soon as I got home I withdrew right away."

Despite his withdrawal from school, where he majored in biology and secondary education, Swider said that his parents are proud of his music career.

"Of course they've got their concerns," he said. "But they understand that this is what we want to do and they're going to give us support."

Socratic has shared the stage with well-known bands including Dashboard



Photo provided by Adam Swider

Band members Adam Swider, Kevin Bryan, Duane Okun, Tom Stratton and Vinny D'Amico make up the band Socratic.

Confessional and Something Corporate, said Swindler.

"We have a really big Beatles influence but its more in our music writing and attitude than in our sound. We're all really influenced by Saves the Day and all kinds of other stuff," he said. "We just try to bring all the music that we love into what we write."

Aside from Swider, the band is made up of guitarists and vocalists Kevin Bryan and Duane Okun, drummer Tom

Stratton and pianist and vocalist Vinny D'Amico.

"We're all best friends," said Swider. "We enjoy having good times. We'll just laugh and that's really how we keep each other going."

Among some of Socratic's fans are Rider's own Assistant Dean of Student Affairs Anthony Campbell and Dean of Freshman Ira Mayo, according to Swider.

"Both Dean Campbell and Dean

Mayo were really happy and supportive of this whole thing," he said. "Campbell was real psyched."

Although it was short-lived, Swider said that he enjoyed the time he spent at Rider.

"I was really close with a lot of my professors. I had a great time. I thought the classes were pretty challenging but also fun," he said. "I had a lot of friends and I'm going to miss a lot of people. If the band were not happening then I'd definitely be happy to stay there."

For now, however, Socratic has a busy schedule ahead of it, including recording two songs for the band's new label, according to Swider.

"We're going to be in the studio this Saturday finishing up our demos," he said. "All I do is practice and write and go out at night and play shows on the weekend. We have a lot of things planned coming up and it's kind of required for us to practice five times a week."

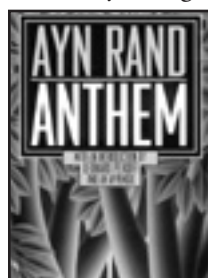
"If the band doesn't work out then of course I'm going to have school to fall back on," he said. "The only way the band won't work out is when it stops being fun, and who knows when that's going to be."

Top ten must-reads before graduating from college

By Laura Sass
Executive Editor
& Dave Maccar
News Editor

College is all about reading; very often, it is about reading things that bore us as opposed to things that interest us.

For those who are looking for a little inspiration along with their education, here a few essential books that every college student should read.



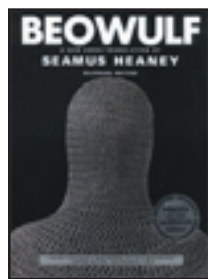
10. Anthem, by Ayn Rand—Full of characters with names like Equality 7-2521 and International 4-8818, Rand's novel explores a society in which using the word "I" is punishable by death. Rand's writing, concerning issues such as individuality and creativity, is deep but penetrable. At the close of this

book, your head may be spinning, but you will definitely view the world in a different light.



9. The Harry Potter series, by J.K. Rowling—Sometimes you should read purely for fun. Traveling through school with Harry Potter and his posse of wizards and witches is a great way to simply enjoy good writing. Every book culminates in the classic battle of good versus evil and those who secretly yearn

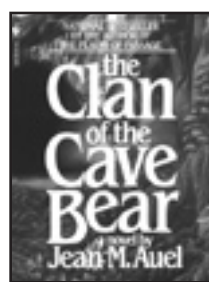
for every book to have a happy ending will not be disappointed.



8. Beowulf—Preserved in a single surviving manuscript, this story is often referred to as the cornerstone of modern literature. Beowulf, the hero, goes on a quest to slay some seriously evil monsters. Even more interesting than the battles, however, are the themes, such as the conflict between "pagan" and

Christian ideals found in the work, which was probably passed down orally for decades before it was ever

written down.

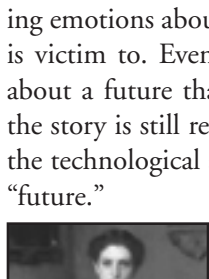


7. The Clan of the Cave Bear: The Earth Children Series, by Jean M. Auel—The first in a series of five (soon to be six) books about people living during the Ice Age, the story is more about people than history. Auel's hero Ayla is orphaned at five years old and adopted by a clan of Neanderthals, who fear Ayla's Cro-

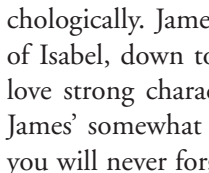
Magnum kind. Although Auel can explore tangents a bit too long and takes some liberties with her characters of 35,000 years ago, Ayla's journey is both enthralling and touching. Upon completion, you'll be eager to leap right into the next one.



6. Fahrenheit 451, by Ray Bradbury—This is a futuristic bit of science fiction that depicts a world where books are illegal and people are isolated in their censored worlds. The story revolves around a fireman, whose job is to burn the homes of people who are caught possessing books, and his conflicting emotions about the quiet oppression that his world is victim to. Even though it was written a while ago about a future that hasn't occurred (not yet anyway) the story is still relevant and eerily accurate in some of the technological advancements that are present in the "future."



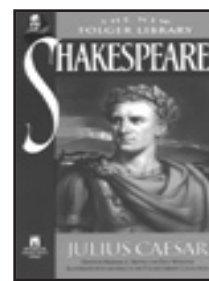
5. Portrait of a Lady, by Henry James—As in most of James' novels, the different cultural identities of Americans and Europeans are explored, in this case through Isabel Archer, a young American lady. Strong, willful and intelligent, the stubborn Isabel makes a compelling journey, both physically and psychologically. James painstakingly composes every inch of Isabel, down to the smallest quirks. For those who love strong characters and who can make it through James' somewhat intimidating writing, this is a novel you will never forget.



4. Great Expectations, by Charles Dickens—Perhaps Dickens' most enjoyable novel, *Great Expectations* is, in some ways, a simple love story. Pip, the main character, meets a girl named Estella and falls in love. The real heart of the novel, however, is in Pip's evolution from boy to pseudo-man to his true self. Dickens' lyrical writing makes the reading quick and easy.



3. On the Road, by Jack Kerouac—This is the definitive novel of the so-called beat generation that gives an insight into what a portion of America was into when most of the country was drowning in the conservative 1950s. Kerouac said that he tried to do with words what improvisational jazz musicians of the time did with notes. His free-flowing stream of consciousness tells a hectic tale of a man traveling across the country in search of America and the strange people he meets in every corner of the country.



2. Julius Caesar, by William Shakespeare—OK, it's not actually a book. Still, this play, one of the most underutilized of Shakespeare's tragedies, has everything that makes Shakespeare great: beautiful words, interesting characters and an engrossing plot. Look for Antony's wonderful speech, in which the phrase "And Brutus is an honorable man" changes every time it is used within the same speech.



1. To Kill a Mockingbird, by Harper Lee—Most have read this in high school, but it is truly worth a second look. Lee's extremely accessible novel contains the most noble yet believable character in literature, Atticus Finch, and manages to teach without being preachy. This book, although interesting and thought

provoking, is, simply, a pleasure.