

## Eyes Open:

### Choosing sides of the fence of involvement in upcoming war

In the past two weeks I've emphasized the ill effects of ignorance and apathy of the student body, calling on the members of the campus community to heed the warnings present in such vices. After examining my position, however, I found myself to be somewhat hypocritical.

In the previous months, the dark cloud of war has loomed over the nation, igniting hatred, doubt and fear in the hearts of its citizens. Information regarding our present crisis has trickled throughout cities, states, and towns via the media, assaulting us with propositions of strategies and political negotiations, with questions of morality intertwined with self-gain, and with a call to arms for patriots of the nation. It has embedded itself in our daily lives, acting as a constant reminder of what it means to be free, as well as what the cost of that freedom is. It has caused us to question our practices of government, to reexamine our religions, and to broaden our fields of knowledge to a global scale.

Yet, some remain in the dark. It is in this right that I am guilty of apathy, willingly choosing to turn an eye with a lid half closed on the matter of our present crisis. Somehow, amidst the streams of headlines

and political debates, I became numb to the issue, aware that there were injustices going on yet unwilling to confront the ever-present responsibility of being a citizen of this country.

I found myself stumbling when confronted with questions regarding my position on the recent activities involving the weapons inspections in Iraq, unable to provide a valid argument because, simply put, I had none.

Rather than choose a side of the fence, I attempted to pretend it wasn't my position to choose, and failed miserably. As a matter of fact, I assumed that it wasn't my fence to begin with, and, as such, kept as far from the property as possible. It was this misconception that lured me into the realm of willful ignorance, and likely does as much to others in the campus community.

Confronted with an issue that does not directly call for attention by the individual, but instead by the masses as a whole, the lone student may find himself, as I did, compelled to simply adhere to the herd mentality, accepting the ideas of the majority as those which are correct, ignorant of the ramifications of such passive agreement.

This is the wrong course of action or, more pre-

cisely, inaction. By approaching the political and ethical crises that we currently face passively, we relegate our rights and toss them in the hands of individuals who are likely, as are many, motivated by self-interests rather than national ones.

By ignoring the morning headlines, by changing the channel, and by prioritizing our personal lives over the fate of the nation as a whole, I have made a grave mistake. In the coming months, those who have, until this point, managed to avoid the fence may be forced to examine their responsibilities and make a decision. Let us hope that it is an informed one.

I include myself in this group because I too am guilty of such apathetic regard. I assure and encourage you, if you find yourself in the same position as me, make yourself knowledgeable of our present situation so that you may fight for what is right, whether it be to protest or to support military efforts. Our freedoms have come at a heavy cost, and it is our role to preserve them.



John Budgick

### Letter to the Editor: Baraka's back

If only Baraka's poem, "Somebody Blew Up America" was a piece with the excremental vision of life, then this nonpoem could at least belong to serious scatology. Alas, it has neither vision nor life, leaving it more like peristalsis and less like poetic movements of the passionate mind.

Sadly too, Frank Rusciano's two letters are a lesson in the unintended consequences of playing fast and loose with time-honored values that have been debased under cultural relativism in order to assist politically correct judgments. But first, let's try a thought-experiment.

If we'd been told that the poem had been written instead by David Duke, would liberals have been equally eloquent in claiming protection for Duke's stinkeroo under the First Amendment? Would they have maintained that "our ideals hold that all ideas have an equal opportunity to be expressed, debated and tested to see which are the most valid?"

More likely such splendid idealists have a blind spot only for black anti-Semites on the left and biased leftists (preferably Marxists) of all shades. Curiously, the blind spot disappears when the cultural relativists deal with the likes of David Duke, when all of a sudden time-honored measurements of what constitutes good and acceptable poetry are resurrected. Would they have dared to dignify Duke's crap as being worthy of "ideas?"

Here's an example of the double standard operating under the cloak of political correctness—tough standards when judging poetry or garbage written by whites, but a relaxation of values to the point of ludicrousness when involving a notorious anti-Semite and black Marxist like Baraka.

Too much of today's high school education is in the belly of cultural relativism and political correctness, which then actively encourage students at the college level to equate fart with art, making it that more difficult to tell art from fart.

—Dr. Fred Lasser  
Adjunct English Professor

### Letter To The Editor: Rider "Tradition of Excellence" ends at graduation

I am a Rider graduate, and recently received my 2002 yearbook last week. The book was filled with tons of surprises. But before I get to my yearbook story, let me take you back almost five years ago. I was a senior in high school, looking for a college to go to. When I came to Rider I was bombarded with logos and shirts with the slogan "Tradition of Success and Excellence." After visiting the University I knew I wanted to attend their campus. I wanted to continue their "Tradition of Success and Excellence."

Now, back to last week. I received my yearbook, and as anyone who receives it, the first thing they do is check out their picture. There I was, on top of the page, couldn't miss me. Great spot for a picture—wait a minute—I thought my last name is supposed to be spelled Rosenbaum, not Rosenbuam. Damn, they spelled my name wrong. As I continued looking

through the yearbook, I looked at the graduate list. Hold on, where was my name? They sent me a diploma, but they left my name off the graduate list.

So I started thinking—Why me? How can they mess up two important parts of my yearbook? But it gets better. My mother asked me what I thought of the letter in the back of the book that she, my father and sister wrote to me. I was thinking, I looked through it, and didn't see any letter from my family. That's right! They forgot to add the letter my parents wrote—and paid for!

I decided to contact Rider and ask them what happened. I contacted *The Shadow's* Advisor, and he told me that he just took over the position. He explained that they had left a bunch of people off the graduate list. He also made it a point to restate that *The Shadow* was free.

First off, this yearbook was

not free. It cost me approximately \$100,000 and four years of my life, and second, a free yearbook doesn't make up for misspelling my name, leaving me off the graduate list, and forgetting to put in my parent's letter.

If the school wanted me to pay \$200 to have my name spelled correctly, been added to the graduate list, and had my parents' note added I would have gladly paid whatever they asked.

Hell, I paid \$500 for a fake gold and diamond Rider University class ring, I would have paid at least \$200 for a yearbook with all my correct information.

I guess the "Tradition of Success and Excellence" ended when I graduated.

— Scott Rosenbaum  
Rider Alumnus

### Letter To The Editor: Did he graduate, or did I just pay for it?

My wife, myself, and my daughter went to Rider 's class of 2002 graduation. My son Scott Rosenbaum wore a graduation gown. I have \$100,000 missing from my checkbook. My son was gone for four years. A diploma hangs on my son's wall—but his name was spelled wrong under his graduation picture in the yearbook, his name was left off of the graduation list, and the beautiful letter that

we paid to have published in the yearbook wasn't there.

I pulled out tuition bills which we had paid for over the last four years, and it's funny, his name was spelled correctly. So I ask again, did he graduate?

—Michael Rosenbaum  
Parent of a Rider Graduate

### Web from page 8

[www.xanga.com](http://www.xanga.com). I tend to favor livejournal, but xanga seems to work just fine for many people.

A weekly newspaper that is for anyone with a good sense of humor is [www.theonion.com](http://www.theonion.com). *The Onion* is great for its headlines such as, "Fox News Reporter Asks The Questions Others Are Too Smart To Ask." The articles are full of brilliant sarcasm and the infographics are great.

Some interesting animations can be found at [www.rathergood.com](http://www.rathergood.com). This site is also known for its cute songs with kittens playing guitars and drums. Not actual

kittens, but its pretty funny at first. If you visit the site, they're worth taking a look at.

Quick games including a somewhat challenging mini putt can be found at [www.candystand.com](http://www.candystand.com). The entire site is an ad for candy, but I get a real kick out of the games.

And, although it seems everyone has heard of this last one, I feel I have to mention it or I will be shot by its loyal followers. The website is [www.homestarrunner.com](http://www.homestarrunner.com), and a favorite on the site seems to be the Strong Bad e-mails, though the entire site is hilarious. There are numerous cartoons to watch with great and original characters.

Have fun and enjoy the break. These websites should help if you're stuck at home.