

Lending a Hand:

Construction nearly spoils senior year

Construction sucks. It does. This year my room was probably the worst place to live on campus because there's now a "pod" right on top of it. I cannot see out past the lovely gray cinder blocks that the construction workers have slammed down so diligently.

Last summer, I listened to both presentations on construction and reassurances that it would not start until 8 a.m. each morning. That was the biggest bunch of crock I have ever heard. I have been woken up to the sounds of a construction worker cutting down and shredding trees at 5:59 a.m. I am convinced that this is why people go crazy. Granted, this didn't always happen and I usually get up around 7:30 a.m. anyway, so this wasn't too big of a deal. But heaven forbid if I wanted to sleep in one day! If I were sick, I could forget sleeping at any time during the day because it just wouldn't happen. Or maybe I wanted to sleep in on a Saturday. Nope, they apparently work on Saturdays too, and their favorite spot is outside my window.

I am paying a fair amount of money to live here. I feel as though Rider should be cutting me a break for dealing with this all year. It should suck it up and do something for those of us who lived around the construction, as our quality of life has really been unbearable.

Not a day goes by that I am not awoken to the sounds of pounding, sawing, drilling and hammering. My bed shakes as they connect the future hallway of the pod into the wall my headboard faces. In fact, as soon as I leave, my room will most likely be junked and the hallway will be built.

So yes, whoopee. The pods will be great places to live, I am sure. However, I will not be here because I am graduating. So I have put up with this for the school year so that I can graduate and not reap the benefits of these lovely add-ons.

All of this aside, what gets me even more ticked off are the construction workers themselves. Can you imagine being woken up to a man standing right outside your window hocking a lugee as loudly as possible? Another great time is when they stack their supplies over my window so that I cannot see out of it. They also throw things down from higher up and, when the stuff hits my window, it's like the glass is going to break. My personal favorite is when they all gather around the outside of my window and chat. They're talking because they are not really supposed to start work until eight in the morning, so they have a nice loud talk for a good 30 minutes while sitting on my windowsill. They will take turns roasting each other about their "women," talking about how much fun their jobs are and how they didn't have to pay tuition to get to where they are. They joke about us silly college kids and say, "Isn't it so funny?" how we have to go to classes. Yeah. It's so funny.

It seems that these construction workers have no regard for the fact that the students, who are the reason why they are building these buildings in the first place, live here. I don't go stand outside their window at early-o'clock in the morning and have a shouting match with my best buddies. Nor do I throw all of my coffee cups, McDonald's bags and whatever else I happen to have on hand wherever I feel like because I just can't seem to put trash in a can where it belongs. So I hope that anyone who decides to become a construction worker also decides not to be rude and obnoxious. Undoubtedly, wherever you are working, someone lives there, so be considerate.



Melissa Borotto

The Issues Explained:

Conservatives claim suppression

Research suggests that 72 percent of faculty members at American colleges and universities lean to the left, politically speaking. Conservatives complain that their free speech is suppressed on college campuses across the country because of the large population of liberal thinkers in colleges. ABC anchor Charles Gibson introduced this movement by saying that conservatives "claim they are victims of a double standard on college campuses." He went on to say, "There certainly is evidence to suggest that colleges are bastions of liberal thinking."

ABC correspondent Dan Harris reported, "Many academics say conservatives are blowing a few isolated incidents way out of proportion in order to launch a McCarthy-esque witch hunt, which is designed to intimidate professors, limit academic freedom and promote a sort of affirmative action for conservative professors."

Yet, "many academics" were not included in the report. Harris stated an example of the conservatives being threatened at Foothill Junior College, "where a freshman, Ahmad Al-Qloushi says he was told to get psychotherapy after refusing to write an essay criticizing the U.S. Constitution." The student eventually came on ABC and said, "I was attacked and intimidated because I love America."

This story has become popular on right-wing websites and you can view his essay online. Conservative blogger James Joyner, who edits the journal Strategic Insights at the Naval Postgraduate School, read Al-Qloushi's essay and said that it was "an incredibly poorly written, error-ridden, pabulum-filled essay that essential-

ly ignores the question put forth by the instructor."

The conservatives' claim that their free speech is suppressed because more people happen to be liberal thinkers at colleges is absurd. Regardless of your political affiliation, everyone has the freedom to have his or her own opinions. It just so happens a large majority of American universities are homes to liberal arts colleges. Conservatives claim that they are being dominated by liberal thinkers in the classroom, but the college classroom is supposed to be a safe learning environment where one can freely express his or her own views. It is understandable that conservatives could feel uncomfortable expressing their views in the classroom. Professors should not be using their classrooms to push their own political agendas. Discussions should be left up to the students.

Conservative students who feel that their school and its faculty are too liberal can always transfer if they're too uncomfortable expressing their views in the classroom. But it seems that the conservatives are starting this movement against mostly liberal colleges just because they are frustrated by the fact that they can't change the way other people think. If this is indeed the case, then this movement is a losing fight for the conservatives in the United States.



Nicholas Ballasy

Congratulations

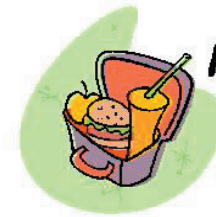
To The Winners of the 2005 Spring Dining Styles Survey



Drew Novelli

Rider Student

American Airlines Voucher



Michael Rutkowski

Rider Faculty

20 Block Meal Plan

**Thanks To Everyone Who Participated
in our 2005 Spring Dining Styles
Survey**

The World Observer:

Cochran deserves praise

Arguably one of the most important lawyers of the 20th century, the legendary defense attorney Johnnie Cochran Jr. passed away a few weeks ago.

Cochran's death received wide news coverage on the day that he died, but his legacy was overshadowed by the deaths of both Terri Shiavo and Pope John Paul II. One should take a stroll down memory lane and look at the many lives Johnnie Cochran touched.

Understandably, Cochran will be remembered primarily for his role on the defense team for the O.J. Simpson case. After all, most people can quote Cochran's own words, "If it doesn't fit, you must acquit." Besides his crowning victory in the Simpson case, Cochran also represented Elmer "Geronimo" Pratt in a battle to gain his rightful innocence for a murder he did not commit. Twenty-seven years later, and with the help of Cochran, Pratt gained his freedom. Cochran, on the release of Pratt, exclaimed, "[It's] the happiest day of my life practicing law."

Yet, Cochran did so much more during his life. He was a champion for victims of police abuse. Cochran also worked on cases where clients had their civil rights violated. Most of all, he cared about fighting for the common man. Cochran stated, "The clients I've cared about the most are the No Js, the ones nobody knows." He also emphatically believed in the Martin Luther King Jr. quote that said, "An injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

Nancy Grace, a former co-host with Cochran, remarked, "He won my respect. Before then, I wouldn't give defense attorneys the time of day." The Rev. Al Sharpton added to the outpouring of praise for Cochran when he stated, "Johnnie was to this era what Thurgood Marshall was to the era before him." Los Angeles city Mayor James Hahn said, "He didn't love justice or admire justice—he did justice, he fought for justice, he made it happen." Most fittingly, Jesse Jackson pointed out that Cochran was "the tallest tree in our legal forest. The national stage did not make Johnnie, it revealed him."

Diagnosed with an inoperable tumor in December 2003, Cochran died March 29, 2005, at the age of 67. Cochran was the first to admit, "It was the Simpson case that put me squarely in a position to make a difference. And that was precisely the reason I became an attorney." Most of all, as Cochran explained in his book, *A Lawyer's Life*, it was the Simpson case that "gave me the platform to try and change some of those things that needed to be changed in this country." Indeed, Johnnie Cochran lived a life dedicated to the pursuit of justice for all. Overshadowed? Possibly. Yet, both the life and legacy of Johnnie Cochran stand alone as a testament to and a reminder of his significance and importance.



Jamie Papapetros