

**Faculty Column:****Does anyone want Baraka?**

Amiri Baraka will be featured as part of the Educational Opportunity Program's "Distinguished Speakers series on Dec. 6....If that's the title of the series, why was Baraka invited? He is a minor poet at best and hardly in the same category as Ernest Gaines, Derek Wolcott, and Edwidge Danticat, the three previous recipients.

Baraka has been accused by several individuals and organizations of being anti-Semitic and anti-American. Does that make him distinguished? He has tainted the truth at best and outright lied at worst. He

himself admits that his information about the Israelis and the World Trade Center came from the Internet and from Cynthia McKinney, the discredited congressional candidate in Georgia. Baraka admits that he did not check his sources when he wrote about the Israelis and the World Trade Center attack. Students at Rider are not allowed to submit poorly documented Internet sources. Freshmen are taught how to use Internet sources correctly, but Baraka, the poet laureate of New Jersey, has not. Instead, he uses information passed to him from biased Middle

Eastern sources who know for sure that 4,000 Israelis worked in the World Trade Center and were warned ahead of time not to show up on Sept. 11.

Under the guise of academic freedom he spouts untruths. Neither I nor any professor on this campus should be allowed to lie to our students or use improper Internet sources. Academic freedom protects the right of individuals to espouse unpopular ideas, but does not give anyone the right to intentionally misrepresent and distort the facts.

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**Political Perspective:****Black Panthers, unfair portrayal**

Last week's issue of *The Rider News* featured a letter regarding the appearance of Amiri Baraka, by Professor Dr. Ralph Gally, which I feel I must comment on. Dr. Gally starts his article by stating that Baraka was a member of the "Black Panther hate group."

First of all, the Black Panthers were not a hate group; if Dr. Gally actually read the teachings of Huey P. Newton, he would know that the Panthers stood

for peace, and called for all people regardless of race to unite to overcome their problems. The Panthers also provided clothing, vaccinations, and food to struggling black families. Perhaps Dr. Gally should do some research before making statements regarding groups he knows little about.

Secondly, Dr. Gally refers to Baraka as anti-American and an enemy of the country. After reading Baraka's

poem several times, although I disagree strongly with his opinions on Israel, overall, I feel Baraka makes many important points, and if anything he is a patriot. The focus of the poem is not to say what happened on Sept. 11 was right, (Baraka states before the poem that he doesn't support terrorism), but rather an expression of how he feels about the motivation behind these events.

I believe that Mr. Baraka loves the United States of America; however like myself as well as many other Americans, Baraka is angry that the Bush



Joe Rotkowitz  
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**Letter To The Editor:****Somebody does want Baraka**

Rider's decision to allow Amiri Baraka to speak on campus is a redeeming quality for a university that at times can expose us to close-minded faculty.

It must be said that the concept of ensuring freedom of speech in America should not be considered a "bleeding-heart Liberal" perspective. The freedom Baraka demands when he takes his minute in the limelight is the same freedom that gives you a voice in *The Rider News'* letters to the editor, and to *The Rider News* itself.

It may be that Dr. Ralph Gally would like to see Baraka stripped of

his title as poet laureate for the state of New Jersey as Gerald Stern indicated in Sunday's *Trenton Times*. That is a more reasonable demand, as he could mislead an audience to believe that he speaks on behalf of the state government (which he is certainly not doing). If that is the case, contact your state representatives. We cannot allow a majority of people to suppress the voice of an unpopular opinion; to do so would be a sin against our Constitution and utterly un-American.

You referred to Baraka/Leroi Jones as an intellectual terrorist. The purpose

of terrorism is to ultimately deprive its victims of freedom. Therefore, if you demand that his freedom of speech be suppressed because you do not agree with what he says, you are the intellectual terrorist, not him.

Voltaire once said, "I do not agree with what you say, but I'll defend to the death your right to say it." It takes strength to stand on the unpopular side of freedom. We should applaud those members of Rider's community that encourage true academic freedom in the face of controversy, particularly Dean Anthony Campbell and

the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP). We should emphasize that these people are not un-American for doing so. On the contrary, professor, they are as American as apple pie. The Rider Political Science Department offers an excellent course in American civil liberties; I encourage you to take advantage of it.

Juan Nuñez  
Political Science student  
Class of 2003

**Teeny Tiny Freshman: Enter sandman**

Sleep problems have haunted me since the sixth grade. My roommate is lucky. Within ten minutes of hitting the pillow she's out and nothing below the sound of the fire alarm will really wake her up. I, on the other hand, have trouble falling asleep and then staying asleep. Back home someone walking through the halls would wake me. But since college has started, I've built up

some kind of tolerance for low amounts of noise, simply due to exhaustion. Falling asleep remains a chronic struggle for me though. Anxiety over school or stress over tests and papers seems to hit everyone at some point in their lives. And then there are those who are up all night thinking about completely random things.

For several reasons, I have never

been a big fan of the over-the-counter sleep aids. I think that the main reason is because I would definitely become addicted due to needing them every night. Many times people take things like Tylenol PM and Nyquil to help them sleep. That's not a particularly good idea, either, because you're taking medicine you don't need. Plus, they're expensive and easy to build up a resis-

tance to. So I have been forced to find other ways to calm down and slip into unconsciousness.



Nancy Wilensky

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**The Unknown News: Valedictorian Taxidermist**

By Michael D. Lovullo

Dusty Roads, KY - Months after the yearbooks were signed and the gowns returned, a Shelby High graduate has finally found his calling.

On Tuesday, after four and a half months of working himself into a drunken stupor, Shelby High School valedictorian Mark Andrews enrolled himself in taxidermy school in an effort to further his education.

Taxidermy, defined by *The Merriam-Webster Dictionary* as the art of preparing, stuffing and mounting

skins of animals, has proved to be the one occupation Andrews can see himself sticking with.

"With all them choices for me around and about, it was just plain hard to find my niche," admitted Andrews. "Finally it hit me, like a pellet in the rear, stuffing them varmints."

Despite his lack of artistic talents, clearly represented by a coloring book finished by Andrews mere hours before he was named valedictorian, he feels he has a lot to offer the community in regards to taxidermy.

"Everyone around here's always fixing to mount their kill, so how better to help the folks out than doing it for them?" said Andrews.

Friends and family agree that attending The Glen Phillips School of Taxidermy will suit Andrews' potential for post-high school studies, as he is the first valedictorian to graduate Shelby High with a grade point average that exceeds a C.

"Mark Andrews has set a new standard for Shelby [High School]," said school principal Rory McDaniel, taking

a break from his part-time mail route. "Not only did he break the mold with a 2.05 GPA, but he's got the grit to stick out anything."

Past valedictorians of Shelby High have gone on to manage various Dairy Queens and Wal-Marts in the Dusty Roads area.

*The Unknown News is a parody column and should not be taken seriously*