

## Editorial:

### Library books that can read you

**D**on't open that book! Believe it or not, the materials that you take out of the Moore Library may aid the government in investigating you for terrorist activities.

Prior to 2001, government investigations into an individual's library records were allowed. However, there was no gag order in place. This order, a result of the U.S. Patriot Act, prohibits library officials from informing suspects that an investigation is taking place. Furthermore, the government no longer uses a subpoena to demand access to library records. The Patriot Act allows agencies to obtain a warrant, which cannot be challenged in court. So, even if you do know about the investigation, you can forget about defending yourself. If the government wants your information, there's not one thing you can do to stop it.

However, Moore Library officials have been taking steps to protect the Rider community from these secret inquiries. When a book is checked out, a record is created that contains the name of the person who has it and the date it is due back. If the material is returned on time and does not incur a fine, then the record is destroyed, leaving no trace of that person's reading habits behind. However, if the book is not returned or a late fine not paid, the record remains until the problem is corrected. So, while it is still possible for investigations of members of the Rider University community to take place, the chances of such an occurrence have been made as small as possible.

This effort by the library is to be commended. While abiding by the law, they have also found a way to let the community sleep a little easier at night knowing that their privacy is not being secretly violated. In a time when many students feel that Rider does not care about their wants or needs, it is refreshing to see a University institution stand up and fight for each community member's individual rights.

Despite its vast shortcomings, however, the Patriot Act was inspired by a good cause. Immediately after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, national fear was at an all-time high. Something had to be done. When the Act was passed, it seemed to be an excellent way to deter terrorism and no attacks have occurred on U.S. soil since. The government reacted quickly and efficiently and they deserve respect for doing so.

However, suppose you are asked to write a paper about terrorism for one of your classes. Obviously, you will have to do some research on the matter. Say your teacher requires the use of four sources, only two of which may come from the Internet. Now you are forced to take out at least two books from the Moore Library or print out two articles from its databases. This information, under the Patriot Act, could then be used by the government if they suspect you of terrorist activities. Even the Act's honorable initial purpose cannot account for this breach.

The "sunset clause," which is contained within the Patriot Act, mandates that it be dissolved in 2005. However, many government officials are lobbying for the provision to be removed, thus making the Act permanent. This has outraged a large portion of the population, who have fought back just as hard to save this provision.

We must collectively fight against the abuses that this document has made legal. Previously, this issue seemed far off. It was confined to Washington, D.C. and certainly would have no impact on college students. After all, we would know if we were doing anything that could be considered a terrorist action, right? Not anymore, but now we have the power to change all that.

*This weekly editorial expresses the majority opinion of The Rider News editorial board and is written by the Opinion Editor.*

## QUOTE OF THE WEEK

**"The only valid censorship of ideas is the right of people not to listen."**

— Tommy Smothers



## A Student's View:

### Players, fans responsible for NBA brawl

On Friday, Nov. 19 at the Detroit Pistons-Indiana Pacers game, the most embarrassing and humiliating events occurred in NBA, and possibly sports, history. When I watched the highlights of the fight between Pacers players and Detroit Pistons fans, my stomach began to churn. Although the players were provoked by the fans, running into the stands and attacking them was more than uncalled for. While this was a disgraceful event and most would like to forget it ever happened, it must be remembered and learned from.

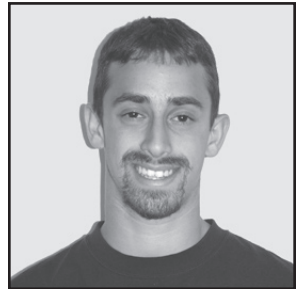
As a result of this humiliating event, the NBA suspended Pacers players Ron Artest for the entire season, Stephen Jackson for 30 games and Jermaine O'Neal for 25 games among other suspensions in a crazy night of fights and debris flying onto the playing floor. These suspensions were all more than justifiable. The NBA needed to punish these players enough so that this event will never happen again. By suspending these guilty players for such a long period of time, Commissioner David Stern and the NBA have set a precedent for players involved in this situation in any sport.

As I have previously mentioned, the fault lies not only with the Pacers and Pistons players, but with the fans as well. As a general rule, fans

are not to get physically involved with players and the game. Even though I have used my voice to lash out at athletes while I am in the stands, it never crossed my mind to toss objects at a player. The night of Nov. 19 has not only been humiliating

to the city of Detroit and the Detroit Pistons and Indiana Pacers organizations, but to sports fans and athletes all across the world, including myself.

With the Rider University basketball season here, I would hope that nothing like that will happen at Rider. We, as students, athletes, faculty and fans, need to learn from the events of the Detroit-Indiana game and take the Rider basketball games for what they are: friendly fun games of competition. Let us remember the long-forgotten concept of sportsmanship and enjoy this Rider basketball season without the disgust and humiliation that the fans and NBA players brought to the game on the night of Nov. 19.



Ari Bluestein

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