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Are you a SNOB?

By John Boyden ’94 and Rich Vanderklok ’95

The new Olin Science Hall:
(a) will enhance Denison’s academic reputation.
(b) means I can’t drive to class from the Row.
(c) will draw more brainy students who will make my GPA look worse.
(d) will cast nasty shadows on Curtis East’s courtyard, a prime sunbathing location.

When Mary Schilling in the CDC stresses the importance of “networking” to secure a job for after graduation, I know it’s time to:
(a) make dozens of copies of my résumé.
(b) phone Denison alumni in my intended field.
(c) call Daddy’s friends.
(d) call Daddy’s friends from the car.

If wishes were fishes, I would:
(a) dig up some worms to use as bait.
(b) buy a new fly reel.
(c) make a reservation at Red Lobster.
(d) smear caviar on a Triscuit.

Granville:
(a) is a quaint, picturesque village that looks like it was transplanted straight from New England in the early 1800s.
(b) has a lot to offer for the spiritual Denison student.
(c) thankfully, is no longer a ‘dry’ town.
(d) doesn’t have a service center where I can get my Saab fixed.

Beverly Hills 90210:
(a) promotes materialism and elitist behavior.
(b) is a story ‘bout a man named Jed; poor mountaineer, barely kept his family fed.
(c) is basically harmless.
(d) is so much like my life—it’s like they’ve been peeking in my window.

For my undergraduate education, I chose:
(a) to take a pass and work my way up in the challenging world of fast food.
(b) to get a solid education at an affordable state university.
(c) to work hard at a reputable, preppie Midwestern college up on a hill.
(d) to slip Larry Murdock a grand for a guaranteed four-point.

Leona Helmsley is:
(a) a criminal.
(b) like all people, fallible.
(c) correct: Taxes are for the little people.
(d) followed nicely by truffles and a very dry Chablis.

Which choice best describes the number of Polo shirts you own?
(a) none
(b) between one and six
(c) more than six
(d) “By Polo shirt, do you mean those Ralph Lauren ones or the actual shirts I play polo in?”

Pâté is:
(a) far too expensive to justify in a world in which people are starving.
(b) the top of the head, if you remove those two little accent marks [Middle English].
(c) short for Patricia.
(d) followed nicely by truffles and a very dry Chablis.

Which choice best corresponds with your views on premarital sex?
(a) “Here I am, come and get it.”
(b) “Not in the car—someone might see!”
(c) “Mother told me never to kiss on the first date.”
(d) “Pas devant les domestiques.”

When I drive on campus, it’s usually because:
(a) I’m collecting cans for DURP.
(b) I’m too drunk to walk.
(c) I’m late for aerobics.
(d) my chauffeur is ironing my laundry.

Relying on your father to get you a job in his company after graduation is:
(a) nepotism.
(b) justifiable in these difficult economic times.
(c) sadly, a thing of the past.
(d) the only way to preserve social stability.

The addition of a baseball cap to my outfit:
(a) covers my hair if I don’t have time to shower.
(b) is my way of showing support for a national team.
(c) ties the color of my shirt and socks to the rest of my ensemble.
(d) makes me look like the model on page 57 of the J.Crew winter catalog.

Which choice best corresponds with your views on pornographic sales?
(a) “I don’t watch it.”
(b) “I watch it myself.”
(c) “I buy it for others.”
(d) “I buy it but only when it’s on sale.”

When I go to a party on Fraternity Row:
(a) Hell will be frozen over.
(b) I usually make it home by the next afternoon.
(c) I’m respectful of the house I’m in—I go outside if I need to throw up.
(d) I enjoy myself without drinking, but I bring my pocket mirror “just in case.”

A MÔYO SELF-IMPROVEMENT QUIZ

A MOYO SELF-IMPROVEMENT QUIZ

Paté is:
(a) the Midwest is to the Bible Belt.
(b) the West Coast is to the Midwest.
(c) the East Coast is to the Midwest.
(d) a 375 is to a 325.

Although the correct name for our campus food service is Marriott, I prefer to call it:
(a) “A stomach-turning, blood-thirsty cow kill-a-thon.”
(b) “Saga.”
(c) “Le Sah-jah.”
(d) “The Club.”

When I go to a party on Fraternity Row:
(a) Hell will be frozen over.
(b) I usually make it home by the next afternoon.
(c) I’m respectful of the house I’m in—I go outside if I need to throw up.
(d) I enjoy myself without drinking, but I bring my pocket mirror “just in case.”

Give yourself zero points for each (a) and three points for each (b).

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Drugstore Cowboy, which had a definite message.

RP: I’m not much for message films, and we did our best not to have any of that in this. But I know what you mean.

JH: What did you learn from playing a character like Mike?

RP: It was definitely a humbling experience. When people watch it, I’m sure they’re going to think ‘down and out’, but as far as the ups and downs, I went through the same with my character as I do in my own life. What’s really terrible for me isn’t nearly as terrible for a Mike character, but once you adapt to that it’s just relative. So basically I’m just as tragic as anybody, and the most tragic is as lucky as you, you know, the Prince of England. It ain’t no big thing. Everyone’s the same, you know. That’s what blows me away. Because [playing a character] I really do feel this altered state experience and, in that, I’m just as comfy as I am in myself — but that’s because I’m not in denial

JH: You’ve played a lot of modern-day tragic heroes, lost young men courageously searching for truth and dignity. What I think makes your characters heroic is their perseverance despite seemingly hopeless situations.

RP: I really haven’t found any of them very heroic, actually. There is perseverance, a will to survive and cope with dignity, sure, but certainly no heroic qualities in my opinion.

JH: The Mosquito Coast and Running on Empty seem ironic in terms of how they mirror your unconventional upbringing. Do you have any regrets about how you were raised?

RP: Not at all. It’s strange: I feel a bit alien as far as the high school experience, and yet even if I had had the high school experience, people would seem alien because of my movie set experiences. One thing that I don’t have is this paranoia, the defensiveness because of all the hard hits that people give each other in high school.

JH: Out of all the diverse characters you’ve played, which one has been closest to the real River?

RP: I identify with all of them equally pretty much when I’m working. But it’s more a question of whether or not my characters can identify with me. It reverses. When you’re finished with itall, the hardest work really is getting back to yourself. It takes time for a character to dissolve. Sometimes you come back to yourself and find that you’ve changed a lot. I met Fugazi when they were playing in Florida. I had some time off, and I had just finished Idaho. I was still wearing the same garb, my hair was exactly the same. That was me in their opinion. And then they saw Idaho while they were on tour, and it blew them away because they thought that who they had met before was, in a strange way, who I was in the film, also. Then they met me recently, and they had to get to know me all over again. We hung out in Los Angeles for a couple days together. They said I was completely different, and they were so surprised. I didn’t even really notice. They said that my whole way — the way I talk and who I was as a person — was light years away from who they had originally. But they approved of that rather than attacking it, you know, like ‘Who are you? Why were you holding on to that person?’ It was really interesting.

Quite flattering, actually.

JH: I really admire your environmental awareness.

RP: It’s become such a big, publicized issue now, which is wonderful in some ways, but the thing is, the environment, that big word...

JH: It’s almost become an advertising slogan.

RP: Exactly. The thing is, it’s not an issue to me. It’s the foundation from which all other issues stem, the life pulse that makes our consciousness available. What’s pitiful is when we don’t give back what we get, like the air that we breathe which enables us to think straight — and there’s little of that nowadays. Perhaps that’s why we’re not thinking.

JH: Especially in Los Angeles.
Generation? Do we deserve that title?
RP: Absolutely. We speak for ourselves. We deserve that title, because, you know, ‘by their fruits ye shall know them.’ In some ways, we don’t deserve that title, because that wasn’t here when they started burning fossil fuels. I know there are alternatives. I didn’t ask for this, and I’m not the selfish bastard who has a monopoly on the truth. I’m a world citizen, and I’m not in support of starving Iraq to death and giving them no medical aid. It’s been so disheartening to see this alternative stuff that’s been done to the people of Iraq, the innocents. It’s so sad, so sucked up. Use the stock market as a truth gauge: ‘Is this right or wrong? Well, the stock market says it’s right, let’s do it.’ Meanwhile, we’re still in a slump. It didn’t do anything. This is like the truth trying to level and balance things out, redistribute the energy, and we’re fighting it. We’re saying, [mincing a yappee] ‘This is wrong. We should have 10 cars per family.’

JH: Yeah, it should be the bitch.
RP: And ‘Oh, things are so hard over here.’ My God, if they’re hard here, and if America is slow, then Peru is dead. We make millions of dollars off these innocent, struggling countries and leave them with cholera, leave them disease, leave them with weapons so they can kill each other.

JH: Who can we look up to these days?

RP: Or because he killed his own people. [imitating a war-monger] ‘No, don’t kill your own people. We’ll come in and kill your own people for you. And we’ll still blame you, and then we won’t take you out. You can just stay there and remain the same. It’s one big lie is the saddest thing. There’s just so much ignorance.”

JH: Can you really be proud to say you’re an American?
RP: Well, as I’ve said, I was born in this country, and I think the American Constitution is something I would stand by, but it’s no longer America. It’s multinational, controlled by class greed, and big, big, and numbers and people who sit at the board of directors on different corporate levels that inhabit the world. It’s corporate completely. Bush’s whole New World Order was really frightening. I think. Unity is one thing, but what we’re really talking about is—let’s make it simple—if we suffer they suffer, if they suffer, we suffer. What motivates them is controlling the entire world, it’s really, really frightening.

JH: I still don’t understand how that hypocritical wave of patriotism swept through the country and blinded everyone to the real tragedy that was the Gulf War.
RP: Well put, well said, man. Do you want to put my name under that quote?

JH: Who can we look up to these days?
RP: People who either understand and look to your own thinking to change things—and by action. Consumerism is the habit the world. It’s corporate multinational, corporate. It’s frightening, I think. Unity is the American Constitution is something that’s been done to the people of Iraq, the innocents. It’s so sad, so sucked up. Use the stock market as a truth gauge: ‘Is this right or wrong? Well, the stock market says it’s right, let’s do it.’ Meanwhile, we’re still in a slump. It didn’t do anything. This is like the truth trying to level and balance things out, redistribute the energy, and we’re fighting it. We’re saying, [mincing a yappee] ‘This is wrong. We should have 10 cars per family.’

JH: What about the afterlife?
RP: With the laws of metaphysics you really can’t escape. I mean if a spirit is close to vapor in some controlled way, there’s been the same amount of water in our atmosphere and on our planet much ignorance.

RP: Independent studies. Use public libraries. Work hard, independently, and get together. Here we are, the students of today, right now. When we’re 40, most likely [the powers that be] aren’t gonna be dead, hopefully—hopefully they’ll be dead tomorrow. You know what I’m saying? And we’re left with this—this is ours. We should claim it back. We should stand next to the gorilla and the python and the grasshopper and say, ‘Hey, man!’ Instead of all this human guilt that we have because of the destruction, we should shout, ‘Hey, we are just as fucking amazing and supernatural as these animals.’ And we need to recognize what it is that this high self-esteem, all of us, because the more you know, the more you can do, the more you can administer the new information, the more we need communication. And people need to feel free with talking about what’s alternative, not waiting for the Queen to approve it—because we’re not going to approve it. I feel like there will be this peaceful revolution, and a lot of things will come from people just believing in what they know—what they know—not what they’ve been taught. You can learn from people, but I don’t think anyone can really teach you. You have to teach yourself.

JH: Are you that optimistic about the future? It looks rather bleak.
RP: Let’s put it this way, I’m not gonna be a fool and have this utopian dream shattered, OK. And I also don’t believe that Man has any place to present with arrogance: ‘I can change the world—’

James Herman ’93 is an associate editor at ELLE magazine.
Arbor Vitae Victories

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Zit Cover-Up
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Embarrassing Statistics

Problems on the Row

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By S. Fischesser '97

I excuse me. but did you say a black orientation? Black, as in the exclusion of whites? What? They came early to learn about life at Denison as a black person? Yes, you naive cracker, a black orientation. Imagine it. Black people arrived on campus two days before you did. Incredible, isn't it?

By now, everyone knows about the special orientation session for incoming African-American students held this year, organized by the Black Student Union. An article in The Denisonian gave the student body all the facts they could ever desire about the event in an editorial on the subject. Period. End of topic? Not really, although I guess a lot of people hoped the quiet debate on the subject would end.

When I was assigned this article, I had the idea that the concept of a special orientation was not advantageous. Should black students be isolated from the rest of the community before school even starts? Why do they need someone to tell them how to be "black at Denison?" Is this another PC issue we are going to be pelted with? It's obvious enough after school starts that there is a dichotomy between black and white students. Is it necessary to propagate this gap so early?

I began talking to a couple of people who attended the program. I got mixed reviews. One student I talked to acknowledged the orientation program was really worthwhile; the next one didn't. Everyone admitted that some areas were more helpful than others, but they had very different opinions about the holistic program.

Then I was informed of the orientation's content. The organizers distributed to each participant a packet and a schedule of events. There was a section about financial aid, one about time management and some about social issues. Of course, I assumed it was the social aspect that would be focused on, but study habits? I read through the packet the students received and it's the same filler we all hear about, only in writing: "Being An Active Learner" and "Choosing Study Partners." It's all valuable, but I'm sold news. There was one page about "Social Life." It listed on-campus organizations and gave some information on Greek life, including a list of the Black Greek organizations. It also pointed out the lack of ethnic personal products and their "outrageous" local prices—prices that even shocked me.

Certainly, all these things are helpful, but do black students need to know more about study habits than white ones, or Hispanic ones, or Asian ones? Where did this idea come from?

I decided there was only one person to ask: the person who initiated the program. I set out to talk to Randy Williams '95 about this little adventure. I had never met Randy; all I knew was that the orientation was "his" pet project, as other people had told me. I also knew that one of the freshmen I interviewed said they thought Randy was a little racist against white people. This will be fun. I promised myself. I interrupted his lunch one day and wound up having an educational meeting.

When I asked Randy where the concept for the orientation originated, he said that it was the child of a committee in response to the "Blueprint to Diversity." That was really not something I knew anything about. I wanted to know where the idea came from—I wanted to know the motivation. Randy was ready. He explained to me that black students do have a difficult time adjusting. He equated it to the international experience. If you really think about it, the "rules of survival" for many students at Denison are different from those where they're from.

It all made sense to me, but I was still curious about the comment I had heard from one of the freshmen—that the program made it seem like "white people are out to get you here." So I discreetly asked him if there was a lot of discrimination at Denison. He said, "No." My jaw almost dropped, but I controlled myself while trying not to think, "What do you think I am, a hermit?" He said there wasn't much overt racism. A-ha! There is the key word.

Then Randy talked about individuals. We talked about what everyone at Denison could do to improve the retention rate of black students. He simply said to "look at ourselves first, before we criticize others." Then Randy said something that really made me smile: "The concept of diversity at Denison can work."

When I started out, I thought, "May be I can't understand this concept because I'm white." I know I can'tathom what it's like to be black, especially in a place like Denison. I guess now I just wish we didn't need a special orientation for black students to feel like they belong, but I understand why we do. I wish all students could come here and find a niche without the white majority, or the wealthy majority, or any majority you pick, detribalizing them. Call me an idealist. Here's an interesting thought: Many times black people are forced to "assimilate" with whites long before they reach college level. How many of the white kids here went to school with black kids? I went to a middle-class, Catholic, all-female high school. There was only one black girl there in four years. If my circle of friends had not extended beyond that, how would I know not to treat black people differently? May be what we need at Denison is an orientation for white kids so they can learn how to relate to someone who is not exactly like them.
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Have you ever heard of a church in which women head up most of the committees and in which feminism is one of the church's main thrusts? How about a church that sets out to make the repression of scientists, the oppression of women, pogroms and anti-Semitism, imperialist missions, slavery, discrimination, subjugation, torture, slavery and death. By un
question aside, the fact remains that Williamson and the congregation into becoming increasingly progressive, or did an increas-
ably progressive congregation choose Williamson to carry out
his research are tales of hatred, prejudice, discrimination, subjugation, torture, slavery and death. By uncovering religious evil as it has occurred in the past, and by studying and understanding the history, Williamson hopes to learn how one can take the first step in eradicating the religious evil, which is to identify and call it by its name. He believes that such history is being made today.

Both agree that mainstream Christianity has a hidden history—
a history plagued with religious evil. Williamson is writing
a book about the evil that historically has occurred in the
name of Christianity—what he calls "religion on the wrong
side." Included in his research are tales of hatred, prejudice,
discrimination, subjugation, torture, slavery and death. By
covering religious evil as it has occurred in the past, and by
learning how to recognize evil as it begins, the First Baptist
hope to avoid falling into the same traps.

As his church struggles to find out how to avoid and combat
religious evil, Williamson researches how religion gets involved
with the evil in the first place. By studying and understanding
its history, Williamson hopes to learn how one can take the first
step in eradicating the religious evil, which is to identify and call
it by its name. He believes that such history is being made today.

As many prophetic voices that dared to speak up before him,
he believes much of it has.

Williamson has a hard time relating these stories, and he
explains that he had an even harder time uncovering them. As
he speaks, he is visibly saddened, repulsed and full of rage.

Profoundly Evil
Religious evil has always occurred, and it continues today
saying Williamson: Religion is on the wrong side of gay, lesbian
and bisexual issues. Discrimination against gays, lesbians and
bisexuals can be traced back to nearly every period of recorded
time. Along with women accused of being witches, many gays,
lesbians and bisexuals were also burned at the stake. And tens
of thousands of homosexuals who would not deny their sexuality
were slaughtered by Hitler's Christian-backed regime.

What is important to realize, says Williamson, is that some of
the Biblical passages charging that homosexual acts are sinful tend to be misinterpreted, but their
intent is still evil. He says the Bible often commands evil.

The Story of Creation, the Hebrew Laws and the story of
Sodom and Gomorrah are cited by literal interpre-
tors as the three primary places where homosexuality is
banned in the Bible. But if one insists on a literal inter-
pretation of the Bible, then Williamson thinks common
sense would dictate that one must embrace the whole book,
including passages that even the most fundamentally reli-
gious would have a hard time accepting.

In addition to the condem-
nation of homosexual acts, in the Bible women are routinely
and acceptably ignored, por-
trayed as sexual objects, beaten and raped. It is said
that a man cannot play the role of a woman, in a drama or
otherwise, because to do so
would degrade him. Among
others, to be kept out of the
Church are the blind, lepers,
the lame, midgets, the muz-
lated, those whose limbs are
too long, those who have club
feet, and men with crushed
genitals. The Bible dictates
that if a woman touches a man's genitals, her hand is to
be cut off. The Bible con-
demns to death runaway slaves, rebellious teenagers, and
those who participate in the religion of Palestine. And the list goes on.

What is important to realize, says Williamson, is that some of
what the Bible teaches is, in fact, evil.

While Williamson insists that much of the evil people get out of
the Bible is really there, he claims that a common mistake made
among those who invoke the Bible in a political or
ideological conflict is misinterpretation. All too often a person
with a preconceived agenda will consult the Bible looking for
the truth, but for a validation of what that person already
believes. And in this way, one deforms the Bible to a predetermined
ideology. Some slave owners used the Bible to justify a
system (while others found slavery presented as inherent in the Law of
God); some racists used the Bible to promote segregation and
discrimination (and some became racist because the Bible is racist; sexists used the Bible to prolong the subjugation of women and some became sexist in imitation of the Bible). Religious fundamentalists and Biblical literalists today follow the Bible to keep gays, lesbians and bisexuals in the closet, to keep them out of the military and to prevent them from getting equal rights and protection under the law. On this issue, lamented Williamson, the Bible is on the wrong side, and its literal followers are also on the wrong side.

Sunday-Feel-Good

While Williamson teaches a Bible class, a small group of children runs around laughing and playing outside at the First Baptist Church, and the children are in a newer building next door to the sanctuary, primarily used for Sunday school classes. Across the hall, the laughter of the children lightens the mood of a theology class led by Denison's own Professor David Woodward. A group, comprised primarily of elderly people, has read Peter Berger's _The Sacred Canopy_ and is discussing whether the Christian Church should act as a stabilizing or destabilizing influence in today's society. Members of the group challenge each other on what the Church's role should be.

Woodward asserts that the goal of the Christian Church ultimately should be destabilizing. Mainline, or what he calls "good" churches tend to lose track of what the fundamental aims of Christianity are. They become obsessed with financial gain and maintaining the status quo, thereby conforming to and becoming reflective of society in order to attract more members. First Baptist, by contrast, aspires to exist in a certain tension with the society, rather than conforming to being the embodiment of the popular values of the day.

It is the role of the church, says Woodward, to side with those who are the outcast, the oppressed and the poor. All too often, mainstream religion sides with the privileged and the powerful, and the less fortunate. So First Baptist, in its determination to avoid errors often made by the mainstream, sides with the oppressed and the underprivileged, often the enemies of the powerful. By existing in such tension, admits Woodward, they have lost members who believe their church ought to be compliant and conform to the status quo. But what is left is a more active group, at least as demonstrated by its involvement and increased financial contributions (while not financially privileged by any means, the congregation manages to cough up almost twice as much money per person as any of the other churches at the Broadway and Main Street intersection). But in the midst of this grain, the congregation is not alone: After all, Jesus, too, historically was critical of the established church and the society that governed the land. It was the unprivileged he helped and defended and with whom he lived.

The Other Holocaust

After the choir breaks up, the singers disperse, but some remain to stir things up by causing people to question fundamental beliefs—by exposing what it sees as the most recent in a long line of most brutal examples of sex discrimination, what Williamson would call "redesigned" the chaplain's job in a way Williamson couldn't accept. Finally, he wound up at the First Baptist Church in Granville.

The first visual image I had of Williamson was of a single button on his blue collared shirt. Before I could get a good look at the button, I was met by what seemed to be two of the longest and lankiest arms in the world. His humongous hands in his bosom, and only when released from the embrace did I get a proper look at him at the meeting, and was then struck by whom both energetic approbation and caustic disapproval had been directed.

Williamson stands 6 feet 1 inch tall and has a receding hairline. His gray hair hangs a little longer than one might expect a Baptist minister's hair to hang. His office is always a bit cluttered. Central to his desk are pictures of family, friends and church members. A blue cloth hangs on the wall, and on it, stenciled in yellow letters, is the word "Shalom," Hebrew for "Peace." On the side of his cabinet is a pink triangle, a symbol for gay, lesbian and bisexual pride.

Recalling growing up in a conservative, upper-middle class family that was actively involved in the Southern Baptist Church, he has always been intrigued with the idea of preaching, and after attending public schools in Atlanta, he went on to Wake Forest University in North Carolina and then to Yale University divinity school. He eventually completed a doctorate in Christian ethics from Vanderbilt University.

Williamson recalls an enlightening experience while watching the evening news one night in 1966. Having grown up in segregation, he hadn't realized that he'd been treated unusually. He recalls being taken back, though, when a black student participating in a sit-in explained on television that his being prohibited from being taken back, though, when a black student participating in a sit-in on behalf of black students in his school was arrested by the local authorities— the black and white students were caught off in "separate but equal paddy wagons." This experience, coupled with the teachings of Martin Luther King Jr., helped Williamson realize his way of living had been "wicked."

Eventually, Williamson became the chaplain and a professor at Vassar College. His tenure was described by one of his students as "standing firm...in the face of the grain, the congregation is not pressured to quit largely because of his vocal and liberal political activism. When he began to voice complaints about the school's reluctance to diversify its holding, Vassar officials "redesigned" the chaplain's job in a way Williamson couldn't accept. Finally, he wound up at the First Baptist Church in Granville.

They have lost members who believe their church ought to be compliant and conform to the status quo. But what is left is a more active group, at least as demonstrated by its involvement and increased financial contributions (while not financially privileged by any means, the congregation manages to cough up almost twice as much money per person as any of the other churches at the Broadway and Main Street intersection). But in the midst of this grain, the congregation is not alone: After all, Jesus, too, historically was critical of the established church and the society that governed the land. It was the unprivileged he helped and defended and with whom he lived.

Williamson (center) conducts a Bible study class. Photo By Emmons.
SHOULD DENISON HAVE SEPARATE ORIENTATIONS FOR INCOMING MINORITY STUDENTS?

I think these students have different collegiate experiences for which they must prepare. A separate orientation, organized by these new students' minority peers, seems necessary to best prepare these students for what lies ahead.

—Christina Juergens '94

No. Everyone is the same. Minorities shouldn't have special treatment, nor should they be treated as though they need or deserve it.

—Brian Deem '96

HAS YOUR OPINION OF RIVER PHOENIX CHANGED SINCE HIS DEATH OF A DRUG OVERDOSE?

River was an incredible actor and should be remembered as such. We have a tendency in this country to place emphasis on the personal lives of our celebrities and leaders, often expecting them to be the perfect symbols of morality that we know we'll never be.

—Margi Petersen '96

I always considered him to be a wholesome, earthy person. When I found out he overdosed, I thought he was just stupid.

—Orli Even-Nur '96

SHOULD DENISON STUDENTS START SOME KIND OF STREAKING TRADITION?

Why not? If there weren't a law, I'd be naked every day and be about $200 richer.

—Jill Jeffrey '97

A friend of mine goes to a school that is completely closed off on May Day, and everyone goes naked—that would be really great here!

—Juliet Ward '94

Sure, then maybe people would be less tense and conservative on the campus.

—Meredith Simmons '95

No, because it's unfair to all involved. I live with a minority student, and she arrived two days before I did, so we didn't get to know each other well at the beginning of the year. It was really uncomfortable because she had two days to get to know people—but we get along well now.

—Lauren Watson '97

If the regular orientation will not prepare minority students for the unique situations they will face at Denison, then why not?

—Steve Durbin '97

Groups of different nationalities and backgrounds need an orientation that addresses the specific needs, concerns and problems of that particular group.

—Vernell J. Bristow '94

I was involved in the first pre-orientation this past August, and I felt it gave those involved valuable insight from a minority perspective.

—Francine Grace '95

Yes, the reason being that it may take longer for some minorities to integrate than others.

—Najmus Saquib Faruqui '96

The pressures of life just got to him like anyone else. He was still a great actor.

—Craig DiGiulio '94

No. You could always tell that he was high; people just wanted to believe he was a model citizen.

—Chris Smith '95

Yes. Although I really had no prior knowledge of his reputation, I find it hard to look at his death in a mournful way because of the circumstances surrounding it.

—Janey Martin '94

He grew up in the spotlight, so he was under a lot of pressure and undoubtedly had many chances to screw up his life.

—Bill Correll '95

I now see him as a victim. He was just a normal person in a cruel world. He should not be looked up to or down upon: just let him rest.

—Kay DoBox '95

Yes. He was seen as a role model for many kids, and because he used drugs, he will mislead many. It is as if he betrayed his fans' trust.

—Sacheen Davis '96

What the hell for? Would this clinch our reputation as an excellent liberal arts school? I think not....

—Charis Brummitt '96

Why not? Relieve some stress, give people a few laughs and get some people used to nudity—they're uptight about it.

—James Smith '97

I'm not sure I see any purpose in this—but if you want to do it, fine with me.

—Carin Miller '96

Now, I've seen one too many naked bodies here at Denison and have no desire to see more. It would probably start a whole new wave of anorexia and a bulimia epidemic—God knows that's bad enough already.

—Theresa Tiedman '94

There's nothing like a stark naked body in the middle of winter to keep those academic juices flowing! More naked is good naked!

—Marc Jacobson '95

Definitely. There's a lack of tradition at this school.

—Sadi Chhoa '95

WHAT IS THE STRANGEST PHONE SEX FANTASY YOU CAN IMAGINE?

I won't be graphic, but it involves Michele Myers, a SAGA worker and a large tool stolen from the pit of the Olin Science Building.

—Ryan Dobkins '95

Listening to the Slayter Desk recorded message over and over until you reach orgasm.

—Jennifer Seeds '96

Fax sex!

—Eric Bono '95

Calling my roommate from Slayter, and having him imitate heavy breathing and farm animal noises.

—Pam Haines '97

WHAT PURPOSE SHOULD THE BULLSHEET SERVE?

It should allow power-hungry, lonely, repressed editors to make up for a lackluster social life. But that's only what I've heard.

—Paul Rinkes '94

I used to think The Bullsheet was a forum for stimulating campus discussion, but now I realize what a cockeyed opinion I've been. Any well-developed arguments about campus issues worth reading are now usually found on the Denisonian's Quorum page. The Bullsheet is now, frankly, often a waste of paper.

—Dan Meyer '94

It should give information and announcements and possibly put a little comedy in the pitiful lives of Denison students.

—Zac Swartz '97

It should be a form of communication among students. I don't think it should be a medium for the personal bashing of other students.

—Juliet Ward '94

The Bullsheet should have two purposes. First, it should enlighten Denison students about campus events. Second, it should be a voice for intelligent dialogue among members of the Denison community. I do not think it should not be used as a tool to express the unwanted views of the editors.

—Vernell Bristow '94

The Bullsheet should inform students about the world beyond Denison. Not every student has the time to read Newsweek and other weekly journals. The Bullsheet should not just summarize daily events in four to six sentences; I want some background as well. Besides that, The Bullsheet should promote student activities as well.

—Dang Vadsirisack '96
Talking dirty (when touching turns to touch tones)

By John Boyden ’94

Not all students can earn money for school by giving out phone numbers at Slatery Desk; in their pursuit of book money, some college students reach out and touch a little more than a Directory.

Known as "Lolita" to the callers who request her, this Ohio State junior let her fingers do the walking to a part-time job as a phone sex entertainer (although her resume, reads "telemarketing representative"). A candidate for an MBA in creative writing, she puts her skills to work creating phone fantasies, earning up to $23 an hour.

The Columbus agency for which she worked placed ads in magazines such as Juggs and Hustler, for everything from a scary place if all of these men actually went out, and they did the things they were fantasizing about doing. To be sure, the whole time during a call that I'm encouraging them to act out their fantasy, I'm reminding them that it is just a fantasy: "Oh, do you want to fantasize about that?" And once they're getting off, you talk to them a little, "You know this is just a fantasy, right?" Yeah, I would never do that.

L: I'm wearing a pair of pink panties and a cut-off T-shirt. "Lolita":

L: I'm a little more comfortable now. Just little things, that's all it is.

L: Actually, that's the one thing I would never do. It came up a couple times. There was a man who lived in Indiana, and he was just really lonely. And he would want me to tell him that he loved him, "Please tell me that you care about me; please tell me that you love me." At times I would say it just because, at times, he sounded borderline suicidal. I am pretty sure, in some small way, there were girls who worked there who saved some lives in some loose sense, just because they were an ear and gave these people someone to talk to.

JB: What is Lolita like?

JB: So phone sex makes the world a better place?

JB: Yes—I was very nervous. It was a guy from Bermuda. It was

L: Big breasts [laughs]. Innocence. She has an edge of innocence to her that I envy—I have a warped sense of everything now.

L: I'm wearing a pair of pink panties and a cut-off T-shirt. "Lolita":

L: No, actually, that's the one thing I would never do. It came up a couple times. There was a man who lived in Indiana, and he was just really lonely. And he would want me to tell him that he loved him, "Please tell me that you care about me; please tell me that you love me." At times I would say it just because, at times, he sounded borderline suicidal. I am pretty sure, in some small way, there were girls who worked there who saved some lives in some loose sense, just because they were an ear and gave these people someone to talk to.

JB: What is Lolita like?

JB: Is part of the appeal that phone sex is the perfect affair?

JB: Oh, yeah [she laughs]. Actually I think it does. We had something like 10,000 to 20,000 callers, and the world would be a scary place if all of these men actually went out, and they did the things they were fantasizing about doing. To be sure, the whole time during a call that I'm encouraging them to act out their fantasy, I'm reminding them that it is just a fantasy: "Oh, do you want to fantasize about that?" And once they're getting off, you talk to them a little, "You know this is just a fantasy, right?" Yeah, I would never do that.

JB: Do you remember your first call?

JB: By John Boyden '94

JB: Would you more closely associate doing phone sex with being an actress or being a prostitute?

JB: With being an actress, because you're constantly in character. While a prostitute sells her body, I'm just sitting there on a fucking pillow, reading a magazine, saying, "Oh yeah! Oh yeah!"

L: Or if you start to tell a guy about your private life—well not so much your private life—but like, "I'm studying this and blah, blah, blah. Oh, and what do you do?" and act like you're genuinely concerned about their well-being when you may not care a flying fig-fuck about it. Or if he's used to one thing, I'll throw in a little variety, like I'll tell him to give himself the big finger wish for you.

JB: If a caller asked, would you tell him that you loved him?

JB: If you start to tell a guy about your private life—well not so much your private life—but like, "I'm studying this and blah, blah, blah. Oh, and what do you do?" and act like you're genuinely concerned about their well-being when you may not care a flying fig-fuck about it. Or if he's used to one thing, I'll throw in a little variety, like I'll tell him to give himself the big finger wish for you.

JB: If a caller asked, would you tell him that you loved him?

JB: That's really heartwarming.

JB: The cliché single rule of prostitutes is that they won't kiss on the lips. Are there things you wouldn't do?

JB: What are some of the tricks you used?

JB: They're not all perverts?

JB: What do you think men call?

JB: Oh, no! We have celebrities!

JB: You recognize their voices?

JB: No, if they're called before, we have their name and all their pertinent information on their life on the computer. Their name is right there! We have actors, screenplay writers, accountants, doctors, lawyers—and we have truck drivers! We have everyone from every walk of life. We have one guy who lives on the really nice part of the West Side, in a townhouse in New York. You type in his last name and his social security number, and it will list his address, his kids, what he's into, a few choice words to get him off (based on the last ten calls he's had, and what he last spoke to). They call in, and if you have some woman who would like one call for 60 minutes who's really cool, you could give him a smile—and you have $23! They get off, and you had fun.

There are some guys who are just great when they call. We talk about absolutely everything: the sun, books, and magazines, and politics, religion, abortion: I never want them to think Lolita's stupid. I've really met some of the nicest people in the world on the phone. If ever get to their city, I'd love to look them up just to see how they're doing. Or just talk and say, "Hi—fooled ya, I'm not a sex goddess, but hi..."

JB: Do you think that part of the appeal of phone sex for a married man is that you'll do things his wife won't?

L: Absolutely! Absolutely [she laughs]. That is very appealing. I wouldn't want to be with the same man, day in and day...
out, for the next 90 years screwing him in the same position. You
know, you get these guys who are 25, 35, sometimes 40, and
they come home, and their wife is lying in her sweat pants
with her feet propped up on the coffee table. The next day, the last
thing she’s gonna want to do is screw you. So you can go in
her den, sit in your big chair and jack off to someone wearing panties
and a bra—the hottest chick in the world. If you really
would never let their husbands screw them in certain positions
and certainly won’t entertain their fantasies. We’ve had women
who’ve called, and we’ve had husbands and wives who have called...

JB: Together?

L: Yeah. That was pretty fun. The wives would totally take over,
and the husbands would sit back and watch.

JB: Who was your most memorable caller?

L: There was this one guy they called Candy Ass because
he would call up, and he would have like matted milk balls,
Hershey’s Kisses, hot dogs, Polish kielbasa, mustard,
pickled relish, Butterfingers. And the whole point of this
15-minute fantasy is you’d tell him to put these items up his
ass, and then he’d have to push them out, and then you’d say,
‘Now you have to eat it you dirty bastard.’

JB: That’s gross!

L: Isn’t it? Then I’d say, ‘Now put the Snickers up your ass.’
I don’t think this is what they mean in the commercials when
they say, ‘Snickers really satisfies you.’ He’d say, ‘Oh, please
don’t make me do it, Mistress.’ Then he’d push it out and
eat it; it’s a great way to get your sex and your meals. There was another
guy from Chicago who had a shoe fetish. He would put his cock
in the base and jack off in women’s shoes—and they had
to be leather. And he’d chew and bite at the leather and
would come all over the shoes, and he’d tell you about his
different adventures, how he met this girl who was also into
shoes, and how he went into her mom’s closet and jacked off and
then how he went in and showed them. And this guy wore
shoes like 30 and then there was this one asshole from Florida, and
he’d say, ‘Oh how is my little piggy doing?’ And he’d want
you to put your mouth around his cock, and then you’d go
over her shoes, and how her mom caught them. And this guy was
obsessed with leather. And he’d chew and put the Snickers up
on his cock and then your on his too, it’s like you’ve jumped
a whole leg.

JB: Were all of the calls masturbatory?

L: Not all of them. Some callers were just very lonely people
who didn’t have anyone to talk to. We would get guys who called
up who were widowers. There was this one guy who was
like 80 years old, and his wife had just died of cancer.
And he would talk for like an hour, and tell me about how much
he loved his wife. He would just cry, and then you
might have a fantasy with him, and it was just really sad.
Sometimes I’d cry on certain calls like that.

JB: When callers did masturbate, in the brief seconds before their orgasm, how does your role change?

L: I become louder [she laughs]. The louder I come, the more
I know they’re getting off. Most guys complain to me that their girlfriends
or wives don’t make any noise when they come.

JB: Do men want a sincere, sensitive woman or a sex kitten?

L: They want both. They want a whore in the bedroom and a
man I can’t give them the cook, but I can give them a mind and sincerity, and I can also give them the sex kitten. The guys who usually requested me were of a little higher
intelligence.

JB: You were one of the better-educated women there?

L: There was probably 20 girls who went to Ohio State, and
the others were just like a few blocks down the road. After
the interview, they’d call you and try to set something up. I’ve
always thought that the most erotic movies are the most psychological ones, not the ones with the most flesh.

JB: You’re more into playback than PlayBoy, X-rated videos and
peepshows?

L: Absolutely. In your mind you can be whoever you want. The
guys don’t tell me exactly what they looked like, and we
certainly didn’t. And I’ll admit it, there were times when I got
turned on. You sometimes click with certain people, and you
find yourself being aroused by certain ideas—in this picture you’re
giving him, and this picture he’s giving you. It’s a hell of a lot
sexier than the real thing.

JB: That’s nicely put, but a lot of feminists will say a fantasy
like that undermines the women’s movement, reinforcing
the idea in the minds of male callers that women exist solely
for men’s sexual enjoyment. Is it OK with you if a male caller’s
view of women changes for the worse because of a
fantasy?

L: No, it’s not OK. I doubt that a man’s view could change
that drastically in a single call, but a lot of the time I’d try to turn
it around. If a guy wanted a really submissive woman... I’d be
submissive in the beginning and then as things heated up, I’d become
the dominant one. I’d tie him down and fuck him in the ass
with a big dildo and ask him how he liked it. You’re leaving
him with a new perspective, and hopefully he’ll think, ‘Man, I
wouldn’t like this to be done to me.’

JB: As a straight woman, what was it like to do lesbian fantasies?

L: Well, actually, it made me not question my sexuality,
but—I’ll be honest—I’ve experimented. I think phone sex
does make everyone a little bi-curious.

JB: Creating fantasies and hearing others’ fantasies showed you
more possibilities?

L: Yeah. If a husband and wife called in, I sometimes found
myself being turned on more by the woman. The guy would
interrupt, and I’d think, ‘Shut up.’ We had this one woman
who was like the Miss North Carolina runner-up. She would
call in, and there was like no way she could tell people she
was a lesbian because she had been predetermined to be a
beauty queen. She could either move to another city where
no one knew her, or she could call me on the phone.

JB: Did you treat female callers differently?

L: I treated them the same way. Because when you get past our
exterior coating, we’re basically the same inside. So many
women have been conditioned to think that sexuality for them
should be more sensitive. That’s total bullshit! When you boil it
down, we all want the same thing in bed.

JB: What was the working environment like?

L: If you could see the people who work the lines—it’s pretty
funny, actually. We give ourselves these sexy descriptions—
there’s one girl whose character is 5’4” and blond with this
little high pitched voice like this [laughs]. She’s very
husky, or husky-looking. Her other education was that she
was like this 450-pound black woman. People just sat
around, ate dinner, read books. We did our fingernails and
our homework. We had a lot of students. There was one
woman who didn’t go to work, she was working there, too.
In the heat of the moment she’d say to her
caller, ‘Now lie back on the davenport....’ A fucking davenport!

(continued on page 37)
ANGST
By Rich Vander Klok '95

I'm a member of Generation-X. I recently turned 21, putting me at the lower end of a generation that has nothing to look forward to, nowhere to go, nothing to do and doesn't care. I have a year and a half of college left costing me $30,000 plus living expenses, and then I enter what college students refer to as "The Real World." And from what I understand, it's not like the show on MTV.

This piece is not supposed to be depressing, contrary to the impression you may have. It's more of an analysis of what I'm feeling about the future—which, according to the pundists, is what you are feeling, too. We can't do drugs, have sex or make money. Drugs and sex were for the '60s and '70s, and making money was for the '80s. The '90s look like they're going to be for the people who snorted, licked and spent their way through those 30 years to sit back, flashback and gloat.

What that leaves for me is a managerial position at Taco Bell, Sega, alcohol and masturbation. Overseeing the construction of 59-cent tacos isn't going to pay for my college loans, however. Sega gets my adrenaline flowing, but it's a short-term rush. The improvement in hand/eye coordination is useful only for getting those tacos made faster.

The alcohol speaks for itself. I drink for the same reason people drank thousands of years ago—to get drunk. It's the one constant in the universe. Masturbation comes in because it's easy, cheap and doesn't require me to please someone else. At least it won't kill me like AIDS could. But then again, masturbation can't keep me warm at night.

The Wall has fallen, the evil empire crumbled and Beavis and Butt-Head are the generation after me. There are no more dragons to slay, no worlds to conquer. God has decayed into a semi-dead animal while the other finished cutting off its head. I did not believe, as the men had said, that the cow was unable to feel anything until I saw its brain separated from its body. Afterward, one of the men put a coin in the heart to save it at the owner's request.

To my surprise, this particular business travels to its customers' farms and butchers cows on site, rather than herding cattle into a truck, driving them to a huge pen, and killing them in larger quantities. I rode with the workers in their truck to the first customer's farm. They spotted the soon-to-be slaughtered cows, or as they say in the business, "to do a beef." They thumbed through the yellow pages and located a meat processing business that I contacted by phone. They permitted me to accompany two employees and observe them slaughtering a cow, or as they say in the business, "to do a bee.

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Believe it or not, they do it at Princeton. It's called the "Nude Olympics," and the sophomores have been doing it for years. Last year 400 students ran through the streets in the buff (well, some wore hats and tennies), and 100 of them ran through the center of town.

Or recall the "Naked Guy" at the University of California at Berkeley last year. For the entire fall semester this student walked around campus and attended all of his classes in only his sandals. His apparent reason was to protest social repression in America across campus and through Granville—TOTALLY NUDE! Assemble at the flagpole at midnight, sans clothing. It'll be cold, but boy oh boy, won't it be a riot? Can you imagine this happening here at Denison?

Let's imagine what might happen here at Denison if we shed our J.Crew flannel boxers and threw our baseball caps to the wind. By Lisa Stillman '95

Let's examine what might happen if we shed our J.Crew flannel boxers and threw our baseball caps to the wind.

By Lisa Stillman '95

The problem is that many of those citations are issued under the individual feels as if he's done something wrong, so he accepts the charge. If they'd have fought it, we'd probably have had to drop the charges." But the new law may change all that—at least in on public property.

On private property, anything goes. Nudist camps, for example, are not be prohibited if the inmates take reasonable precautions to ensure their privacy, since their lack of clothing is not likely to offend those who live there.

So Denison, if we all decide to bare it together, maybe we can convince the administration we're a nudist camp and escape punishment (we'd just have to put up some high fences).

There are some types of public nudity, though, that may be openly tolerated by Denison. President Michele Myers says, "If students were to get together and streak, we would do nothing. Some things are just not worth pursuing. It doesn't hurt anybody."

Some behavior might be unacceptable, though. For example, says Myers, "If someone were to go out here completely nude in front of Slayter, we would probably send security in to cover them up and to say, 'Please don't do it again.'" According to her statement, an individual doing such a thing probably would not be fined or punished, but merely discouraged from repeating the action. Similarly, she adds, "I don't consider sunbathing topless, for women, obscene." She says that if a couple of female students were to go out and sunbathe topless, as long as they were in a relatively inconspicuous area, they would probably not meet with any opposition. "I don't think we'd go out of our way to do anything," Myers said. "The more you ignore things like that, the more they keep from mushrooming into something big."

Some cases of nudity just draw more attention and more public response than others: The Naked Guy at Berkeley, for example, was dismissed from school because those involved judicially felt his nudity constituted sexual harassment. That charge could apply here as well if the administration was willing to stretch the policy.

Denison does have a section under sexual harassment that prohibits conduct "that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with the individual's performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive University environment." (p. 21). Yet there is a problem with enforcing this policy. The policy states that sexual harassment is "any unwelcome sexual advance... and/or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature." (p. 21). So how has it come about in our society that any form of nudity is considered sexual?

Issues about the naked body being seen as a sexual object

Photo by Moncrief.
have come to the forefront recently in court. Many women are refuting the notion of the female breast as an object of sexual gratification. They are concerned that the sexual function of breasts has overpowered their natural functions, namely, lactating and breast-feeding. The only thing sexual about a woman baring her breasts is in the minds of viewers, not in the breasts themselves. And the same is true for a man’s nudity, as in the case of the Naked Guy. People clearly were shocked at first (judging from the press he received), but somehow thousands of students attended class with him every day for months and found nothing deserving of judicial action. Berkeley administrators probably anxiously awaited a move on the part of a student because their policies didn’t directly cover nudity.

The fact is American society does find nudity sexual. Dean of Students Scott Warren, referring to a general trend of thought during the sexual revolution, explains how public nudity at this time in our society could actually be more repressive than liberating. He says, “Liberation of the erotic … can end up creating a situation that doesn’t liberate the whole person. Instead, the person becomes objectified, not seen for who they are, but rather for their nudity.” This sort of objectivity is almost always repressive, since the person becomes less important than his or her nudity.

Dean Warren also says he believes that “sexual politics and gender politics” play a strong part in considerations of public nudity today in America. He points to the fact that often in our society, “women are … objects of the male gaze. Women walking around without clothing will be seen by men as sexual. Men can walk around naked without the same problem because of their power status. Because of that political reality—that gender reality—it’s problematic.”

President Myers agrees that our society has a difficult time seeing nudity as anything other than sexual. She says, “If everybody does it—if it becomes commonplace—then there may be no arousal. But when it’s extraordinary, it’s hard to believe there won’t be some kind of sexual overlay.”

It’s unfortunate that we are conditioned to believe the human body is something to be covered and hidden away. Thank goodness somebody comes along occasionally to challenge our repressive conditioning. People all over the country seem to be progressing toward new ideas addressing the body and nakedness. But the change is slow, and that makes it difficult for people to step forward and challenge the system. Let’s face it, most Denison women would feel self-conscious bra-less, much less topless. College is the time to explore. Although I’m not encouraging anyone to go to class nude this year, I do hope we might all think a little more about how we view the naked human body. And if someone were to decide it was important to feel at one with the elements (or wanted to protest America’s repressed sexuality), he or she could probably do so and build a strong case against any negative repercussions.

Perhaps the best way to go about this would be simply to start having little nudist gatherings in dorm rooms. You know, a couple of beers, a couple of smokes, a lot of skin. It’d be like the nudist camps. Anyone who’d show up there wouldn’t be offended—it’s a self-selecting group. As long as you kept the shades down and the lights low, probably no one would care. Or maybe we could swing a coed naked dance party as the next big event on the third floor of Slayter.
By Dave Bussan
Assistant Professor of Cinema

I admit it, I once was the editor of The Bullsheet. Actually, Chris Casey '81 and I co-edited Denison's daily news-sheet during the spring and fall semesters of 1980. Our stewardship of the school's "forum for news and community opinion" came on the heels of the

dining hall and Doune. This two-hour morning ritual was supervised by the editor-in-chief. In looking back at the beginnings of The Bullsheet, it is interesting to note the reasons for its founding. In its present-day configuration, one might conclude that the 'Sheet, as some now call it, was established solely to foster dialogue on a variety of subjects. But Brad Bishop did not believe that creating a community forum for opinions was the only reason for establishing The Bullsheet.

He wanted Denison students to have easy access to national and world news. Keep in mind that this was 1979: There wasn't cable television in every dormitory room—and even if there had been, CNN had not yet debuted. TV news was on just a few times a day and mostly local in nature. Newspapers were not available on campus as easily as they are now. There were no boxes outside of Slayter selling USA Today because it did not yet exist. Brad thought The Bullsheet could fill Denison's news void, he believed it was important that Denison students have a sense of what was occurring in the world around them off the "hut." In a sense, Brad was right when he called us news compilers. Sure, as a daily editor and, later as The Bullsheet's co-editor, I was responsible for deciding what news and which letters and announcements got printed, but during the first three years of the paper, the editors did little more than type and physically print the paper. By design, we kept a low profile. I'm sure that most people on campus didn't even know who was responsible for publishing it. We saw our task as distributors rather than as makers of news and opinion. Of course, times changed and so did The Bullsheet. From 1983-85, T.S. (Tom) Elliott '85 was editor and, though I was no longer at Denison, I sense that Tom did much to change the role of editor-in-chief. The first editor to include his name in the paper's masthead, he felt that editors should be held personally accountable for what was and was not printed. Though Tom was much more of an editor than a "compiler," he was aware of the responsibilities inherent in his role. He stated the following in his guidelines to future Bullsheet editors: "Use Editor's notes sparingly. Only when pithy and genuinely funny or for clarification no one likes a wiseguy." Tom was the first editor to ask for submissions to The Bullsheet in the form of jokes, poems, favorite quotes, stories and drawings. In his first issue as editor, he explained that such items would be used as "filler." He also began the practice of placing a famous quote on the front page. While by no means a regular feature during the Elliott years, I believe this practice can be traced back to Tom's fourth issue. On Sept. 2, 1983, a boxed item read, "Hope you like vodka and fish eggs." —Women to men in TV lounge after learning about the Soviet

attack on 077.

Not unlike Orson Welles' Charles Foster Kane, Tom Elliott was not above creating news. He penned many letters of his own under the pseudonym Bolivar Shagnaski, some of which were critical of Tom's own editorial skills. When not contributing to the paper under aliases, Tom would send out "fake letters," either as satire or to inspire controversy. One from the father of a prospective student explained how he suffered a coronary in Curtis dining hall caused by the malfunction of his pacemaker because of the microwave ovens in the building. Tom's satirical letter was taken seriously, and "microwave oven in use" signs were promptly placed in appropriate buildings on campus.

Certainly, Tom Elliott changed the path of The Bullsheet. What had begun as a forum for news and campus opinion under Brad Bishop was now a vehicle for an editor's voice. The paper continued to transform during the 1980s as true news stories became fewer and announcements proliferated. The back page was first called "Opinions" then "Commentary" and later "Etc." The masthead itself changed frequently. However, what has not changed over the years is The Bullsheet's capacity to allow for community dialogue.

In recent years there has been an ongoing public debate concerning The Bullsheet. We have overheard and taken part in conversations in which The Bullsheet's editorial judgment was called into question. In looking over the past 13 years of the paper, I can't help but feel the adage "the more things change, the more they remain the same" somehow applies. From the beginning, one of Brad Bishop's great fears was that on any given day there would be no letters to print on the back page. Indeed, some issues have entirely blank back pages. Others have only announcements.

Much to my own chagrin, I'm afraid that The Bullsheet's editorial judgment has not changed over the years. It would seem that all editors have begged for "reasonable dialogue" at one time or another. Letters have ranged from the crude and sophomoric to the insightful and clever. It may sound trite, but The Bullsheet is no better or worse than the submissions contributed.

The power of well-crafted satire should not be underestimated. Two of my favorite satirical letters printed in the early years of the paper were penned by Jeremiah McAuliffe '80. In response to perceived apathy by the student body, he suggested forming the Denison Terrorist Organization. The purpose of this school "club" would be to create controversy on campus through the use of grenades and automatic weapons. Another of his submissions responded to a letter suggesting that campus-wide smoking be curtailed: Jeremiah called for the formation of the Denison Smokers Club. He thought the club could annually present a scholarship award to the Denison smoker with the highest grade-point average.

Over the past thirty semesters The Bullsheet has managed to survive under the leadership of 18 different editors. Only when Denison students cease to have opinions will the paper lack a reason to publish. And, of course, the hope is that these opinions, when juxtaposed, will create "reasonable dialogue," leading to a better college for all of us. So take the "bull" by its horns, put ink to paper and let the campus know what you think. After all, it's almost a Denison tradition.
The New Victoria’s Annex, as Conceived by the F.W. Olin Science Hall Architects

By Aaron Webb ’96

It’s here, it’s here!” I screamed excitedly as I unfolded the tan letter with the words ROOMMATE ASSIGNMENT typed and centered on the page. I carelessly dropped the envelope as I frantically analyzed the name “Troy Archer” and wondered where exactly Caldwell, Ohio was located.

My family stood around me just as eager as I was, trying to decipher whether my roommate was black or white. Though the ratio of blacks to whites at Denison is disproportional at best, I was hopeful that fate would intervene and grant me a black roommate.

Being from Chattanooga, Tennessee, my geographic knowledge of Ohio was limited. Hurriedly, I thumbed through an atlas to see if I could find Caldwell. It took me quite a while, and when I finally did find it, it turned out to be a small, sparsely populated, rural, corn-growing, hog-contest kind of town.

I decided to call him. Nervously picking up the telephone and with shaky fingers dialed the number. The phone rang three times until a voice properly answered, “Hello?” My heart sank as I realized that the voice on the phone did not sound black. Remembering that a lot of my friends thought my mother was white by the way she answers the phone, I shrugged off the notion and asked to speak to a Troy Archer. She answered, “Troy is not here. He’s working at the State Library today.” (State Library! I thought. He can’t be black! I mean, maybe a black guy might work at a regular library, but never a State Library!) After the conversation ended, the smile was still on their faces.

About two weeks later Aaron answered a letter I had written, and he sent me a picture, just as I had done. My supposition was correct; now I had to face the proverbial music.

Before I knew it, the summer of 1992 was over, and it was time to do the college thing. Daily, I reassured myself that everything was going to be fine with my new roommate and me. Upon arrival at Camp Denison, I became a little more apprehensive. In fact, it hit me like a brick. I had never formally met a black person, let alone lived with one. But I was here now; I had to “just do it.”

Everything was hunky-dory at first—at least for me it was. I’m somewhat shy, so I gave him his space, and he gave my mine. We conversed casually, mostly about our home towns while looking at each other’s yearbooks. I kept wondering how I could compare Caldwell, Ohio, population 2,000, Appalachia, USA, to Chattanooga, Tennessee, a city with ten times the population of Caldwell and its own song (the one about that Choo-Choo). The only similarity? Caldwell and Chattanooga each shared the Golden Arches of Mickey D’s—our first and only McDonald’s opened a month before I left for Denison.

After about a week, I experienced my first culture shock—at Denison of all places. It had been a long day, so I looked forward to retreating to the peaceful confines of my dorm room. Trudge...
In his letter Troy informed me that the total population of Caldwell was at about 2,000—my high school had an enrollment equal to the size of his whole town! I was truly worried about being comfortable around him since my high school was 98 percent white, but I had the notion that my roommate would be some white guy, who would be close-minded and racist because of the sheltered environment in which he was raised.

On the day we arrived, I made it a point to talk to this guy to see what his general attitude was toward me. I wanted to determine whether or not it would be safe for me to fall asleep in his presence—I figured I had better find out well before nighttime! I wasn’t sure what subjects I should talk to him about to break the ice. I practiced: “That George Bush is really something great, huh?” and “Did you know that Hip Hop?”

After our first couple of freshman roommate conversations, I felt pretty assured that Troy was not going to call in the Klan to look no further than the top bunk. As it turned out, Aaron felt the same way (except, of course, he had to look in the bottom bunk). Later I noticed Aaron saying one of my catch phrases: “Catch ya later man.”

I opened the door and WHOOP—there it was! Troy and Aaron and six other guys would come into our room at all hours while he pledged Alpha Phi Alpha, or when I would insist on typing my papers at four in the morning at my desk. When it came right down to it, we really did get along. So when it came time to pick a roommate for my sophomore year, I had decided against the idea because I feared Caldwell may not be as open-minded as my roommate. But there comes a time when a person has to be willing to take a risk and try something new. So Troy, the next time you go home, I’ll be with you! 😊

To know one other, but we didn’t discuss our “unique” rooming situation until the night with Rashida that Aaron mentioned in his article: They discussed interracial relationships, and they wanted my input.

After that, things loosened up. We would take turns listening to my Brooks & Dunn, Travis Tritt and Garth Brooks and to his Babyface, Take Six and Boyz II Men (actually that one is mine). Soon I found myself saying things like “Fa Real?” and calling Aaron’s friends “G,” the equivalent of the Denison “dude.” Later I noticed Aaron saying one of my catch phrases: “Catch ya later man.”

We started eating together in Saga, breaking that invisible barrier that everyone says seems to exist. I got to know the real Troy, and he got to know the real me.

True, we’ve put up with our share of each other’s crap, like when Aaron and six other guys would come into our room at all hours while he pledged Alpha Phi Alpha, or when I would insist on typing my papers at four in the morning at my desk. When it came time to pick a roommate for my sophomore year, I had to look no further than the top bunk. As it turned out, Aaron felt the same way (except, of course, he had to look in the bottom bunk).

Rooming with Aaron has been more than just a roommate experience or a college experience. For me it has been a window into another part of American culture. I have learned that being color blind is not just a trite expression—it’s a possibility. And in between all that learning, we’ve had a lot of fun. I leave you with one more expression I’ve learned from my roommate: “PEACE OUT!!” 😊
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Phone Sex from page 23

Who the hell says davenport anymore?!!

JB: When you're having an orgasm, separated from your co-workers by a two-inch divider, didn't you get self-conscious?

L: You get over it really quickly. It's pretty funny: If someone were taking a tour of the office they'd just hear all of these fake orgasms! There was just no shame. There were some girls who just really hated to come—this one sounded like a fucking bucket. I would feel sick. Sometimes we would ask another girl hook up on the line (she could be in an entirely different room); I found that the majority of guys really like two-girl fantasies. So we'd pretend that we were screwing each other, basically. And we'd make noises with our fingers, pretending we were eating each other out, making noise with our hands imitating wet sounds.

JB: After you and this coworker perform this fantasy, what do you talk about during your break at the water cooler?

L: We talk about it. Like, 'He was so weird. [In desperation] I wish he would have talked.' And some of the time we're just cracking our heads up afterwards. It's pretty funny work if you can get it.

JB: Do you have a boyfriend?

L: Yeah.

JB: Were your dating him when you were doing this?

L: Kind of. It's a long story. [She laughs.]

JB: If I'll just be between you, me and Ma Bell.

L: OK, the secret's out. I met the guy I'm dating now through phone sex. We started talking in January of 1992—this will be our second year of knowing one another. We just had a great time talking. He's just like my best friend in the entire world. He's very special to me. I think because we met in such an odd way [click, click]—oh, shucks!

JB: Is that your Call Waiting?

L: Yeah. Hold on a minute. [I wait.] Sorry. I'm back. He's older than me by about seven years—an accountant. He lives on the West Coast.

JB: How often do you see him?

L: Only every couple of months. He flies in. We've talked about doing the Big Thing, but I don't think I'm ready. It's the longest relationship I've had with another person in my life—and the best one I've had, too. More than likely, I'll end up marrying him. Watch, we'll be on Oprah in the year 2030 [minicking an old lady's voice], 'Well Oprah, we met during phone sex.'

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The opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of Denison University, of our writers, of our editors or of those overly enthusiastic lip-sucking kids on Barney.

Questions? Comments? Write to MOYO Magazine, Denison University, Slayter Box 816, Granville, Ohio 43023. Or call 614/587-9232. Or e-mail to 'MOYO@ccDenison.edu.' Or send a carrier pigeon.

A STUDENT PUBLICATION OF DENISON UNIVERSITY
College is full of difficult decisions