

The giving back edition... investing in our community – can we make a difference?

Damaged Democracy?

■ Jenny Pettenger

How can South Africa's infant democracy thrive in the face of apathy and a general lack of political awareness?

This question was brought into sharp focus by the recent presidential elections. Voting station officials in Grahamstown observed several questionable practices while monitoring the proceedings last month.

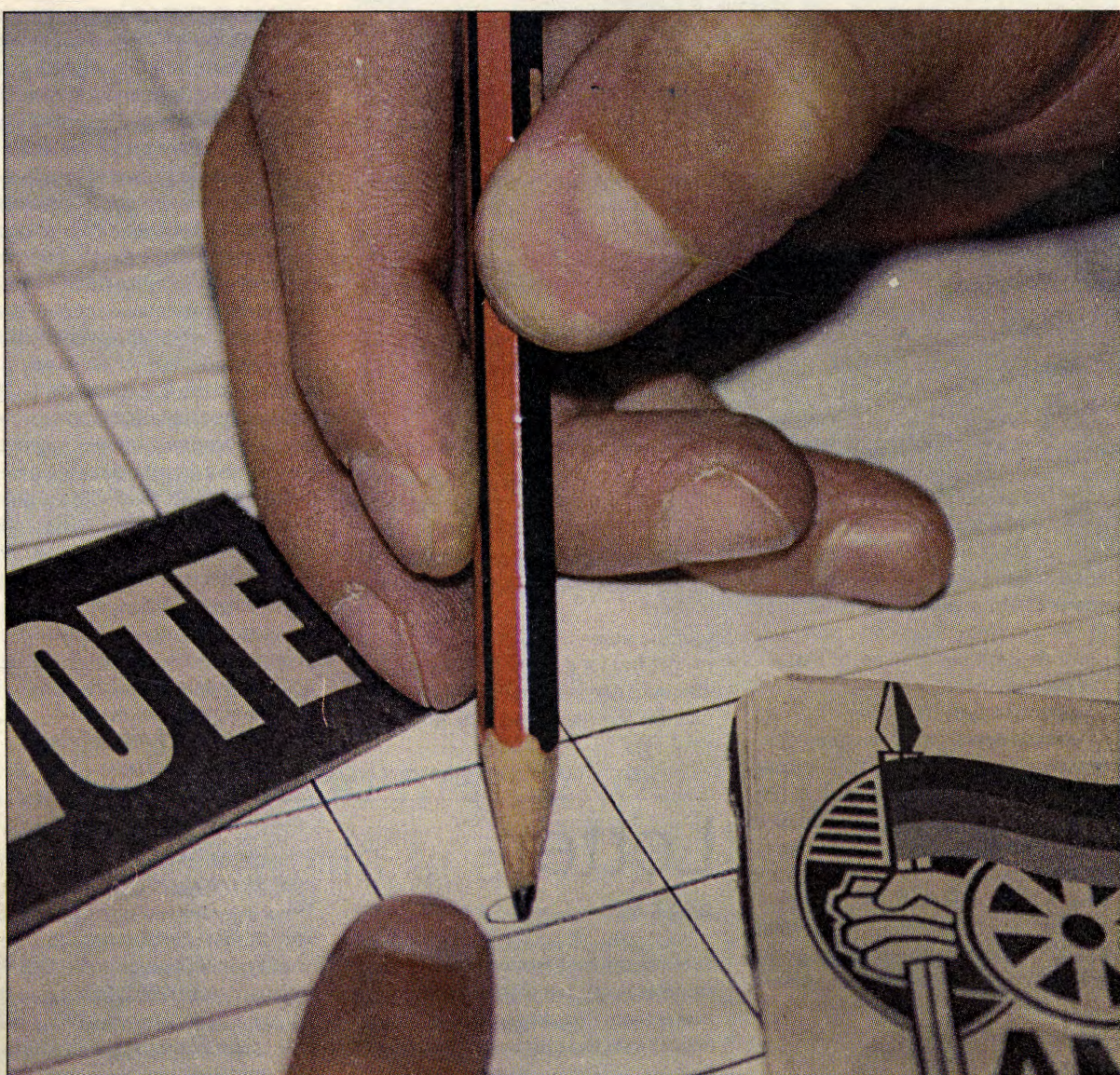
Timothy Othieno, a Rhodes student pursuing his PhD in International Relations, worked as an election observer at an Extension 6 voting station. He said: "Overall, I think the election went well, and there were no major security issues," but goes on to describe a few suspicious activities. At the station, he was observing, there was excessive practice of 'vote canvassing', which he explains is the act of last minute campaigning on behalf of party representatives to potential voters waiting in line at the stations. In addition, everyone was casting their votes in pencil which, as he says, "is unreliable", and encourages corruption, allowing for the possibility of ballot manipulation.

Perhaps a more concerning issue is the fact that many voters, particularly those from townships, came to the voting stations with the intention of making their mark next to the name of Madiba.

Charlotte Gait, another election observer at a different Extension 6 voting station, said that several elderly citizens, many blind or disabled, made long, difficult trips to cast their vote simply out of devotion for Nelson Mandela.

"They couldn't read or write, so a third party agent had to mark the ballot for them. When he asked who they wanted to vote for, they said 'Nelson Mandela'. Many didn't even know that Thabo Mbeki had taken over as president," Gait explained.

Upon further investigation, it was found that this confusion over Mandela has become a trend in the townships, where people are



Some are questioning the outcome of the recent elections.

■ Cindy Stocken

often not sufficiently politically informed. Campaign strategies seem to differ in rural communities. In urban areas, election signs featuring President Mbeki's face abound, while signs in the townships are generally limited to 'Vote For ANC' emblazoned across the banner of green, black, and gold.

An interview with Phaki Habongwana, spokesman for the ANC's Eastern Cape Headquarters, produced the following quote:

"Yes, it's true. People are voting for

Mandela. People will vote because they like Thabo, and people will vote because they like Mandela. He is no longer an individual. He is seen as a party and people will support him."

When asked to justify this quote in accordance with the fact that Mandela no longer maintains ANC affiliations, and hasn't done so for some time, Habongwana had no further comment.

Informal interviews around campus showed that many students did not care enough to participate in the

election, having resigned themselves to an ANC victory. However, poll results provided by Othieno showed that the ANC dominated the township voting stations, while the majority of the votes cast at the Rhodes Theatre station were in favour of the DA.

Thus, the question remains: would the results of the election be different, if the masses were better politically informed, and if more youths exercised their voting privileges? We have another five years to decide.

Empowerment through take-aways

■ Victoria John

Grahamstown residents will be exposed to different kinds of traditional Xhosa

fast foods from the 17th to the 28th of May. The food will be served as take-aways only.

South African Breweries recently donated a portable kitchen to the Unthathi Training Project, which has

hired five previously unemployed women from Joza Township to cook and sell the food.

The kitchen will be set up under or near the Drotsdy Arch and according to Susan Murray, Interim Project

Manager for Umthathi Training Project, the food on sale is "really tasty and healthy" and "reasonably priced" – an attractive factor for students.

The Umthathi Training Project supports the "home economies" of vulnerable groups such as women, children, the unemployed and HIV/AIDS sufferers. The five women from Joza are part of the catering unit of this Training project.

This project is an experiment that will run for a week and a half and aims to bring food, security and capacity building skills to these five women and their families through appropriate skills and vocational training.

Murray emphasized the point that by buying the Xhosa take-aways, you will be empowering five very capable women, which will inevitably result in support for their community.

The traditional food is now on sale near the Drotsdy Arch.



These ladies will no longer be sitting outside as plans for the new kitchen are being finalised.

■ Danika Marquis



Independent Student
Newspaper at Rhodes University

Issue 07
May 20, 2004

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11 Investigating violence in movies, have you seen Kill Bill?

next 10 days

22 Redbull Mini Boxcart Race. Join Redbull and the SRC outside the Union from 1pm until 4pm.

28 The Activate new-look 'A-List' party will be happening at the Suite. Live bands will be playing outside while the best of G-town's DJs will be mixing it up inside. Be there!

29 RUMC open bouldering compo will be held at Alec Mullins Hall. Registration starts at 8:30am.





Giving back

Editorial

■ Lesley Odendal

Activate recently visited the Amasango School. Basically it's a school for the children living at the Eluxolweni Shelter, a haven for street kids. So, there we were, twenty umlungus* on a mission to 'give back to the community' or something like that. We wanted to share what we know, we wanted them to learn to write about their own problems, to give them a voice, to make their stories heard.

We had had meeting after meeting to discuss what it was we were hoping to achieve – the usual admin: we were prepared. Except not one of us could talk the talk. That's the problem with South Africa if you ask me. As long as the haves can't speak the language of the have-nots, we're pretty screwed. I'm not talking a mere, 'Molo bhuti' here and there; I'm talking about some real communication here.

You only have to look at most national newspapers and you will know that the people suffering the most in this country are voiceless. What the scholars at the Amasango School had to say was interesting. Their stories were as important as anything else that would be considered 'news' and they have nowhere in which to plug their microphones.

We wanted to help, but how can you understand anyone's problems if you can't even understand them when they are greeting you? And how much can you achieve through doing community projects?

The truth is, we are a student newspaper, not a community development project. The problem with South Africa is that what society sees as valuable has been turned upside down. People who talk crap on the radio all day or produce magazines about what the new cool is, get paid in the thousands for what they're doing and are seen as the height of success. It's not really making that much of a contribution to society. Meanwhile, people who run places such as the Eluxolweni Shelter or the Raphael Aids Centre don't get paid very much at all, despite the strenuous hours they put into making a real difference in the world.

Activate wanted to make a difference at Amasango. Most people felt enriched by the project while some argued that it was a waste of time. Fair enough, we tried. But as long as there is no incentive for people to do good in this country, the divide between the haves and the have-nots will resemble the Grand Canyon. It all starts with a little communication. We need to learn how to talk to people and relate to them in a way that they understand and we need to start giving people the praise (and cash) that they deserve for giving back to society. We need to do something to uplift those suffering in this community, because until then, we are only as strong as our weakest link.

Ed

Ps. How cool does this newspaper look now?

*If you don't know what this means, it's the word for whiteys. Point proven.

Luxury hotels the order of the day

■ Tafadzwa Taruvinga

"This place is amazing – I would never have thought a place like this existed in Grahamstown". This is one of the more common reactions from first time visitors to Grahamstown's newest upmarket guesthouse.

8A St Aidans is a guesthouse with superior accommodation in three spacious suites and two double rooms. It is beautifully furnished with stylish, classic pieces and by using only top-of-the-range beds, duvets, pillows and linen, guests are guaranteed a great night's sleep in a more than comfortable environment.

After visiting the establishment, one client had only pleasant things to say: "I doubt I will go to another hotel after staying here. We've looked for quite a while for a suitable place to stay in Grahamstown while visiting; now there is one."

All the amenities that one would expect from a guesthouse of this standard are in good supply, including satellite television and fully stocked mini bars.

But it is the sumptuous breakfast on

a gorgeous patio with its magnificent views over Grahamstown that will have you searching for a reason for your next visit to 8A. Afterwards, one could happily relax into the comfort of the big sofa and gaze about for the rest of the day listening to the birds enjoying the peace of the pretty garden.

8A St Aidans is owned by a local farmer's wife, Tracy Mills, who also runs the well-known and ever popular 137 High Street, a guest house and restaurant which has been going strong for over four years. While a full-time manager is employed at each of the businesses, Mills is very much involved in the day-to-day running of each – "the challenge is to provide quality accommodation, excellent service and great food using only the best ingredients available – and to do this consistently in a very competitive market," she says when asked what the secret to her success is. Judging by the buzz at 137 High Street and the repeat business 8A St Aidans is already enjoying, she is obviously getting this right more often than not.

For more information contact 046 - 622 3242 or e-mail 137highstr@xsinet.co.za



Grahamstown tourism will be boosted by new luxury accommodation.

■ staff photographer

Letter

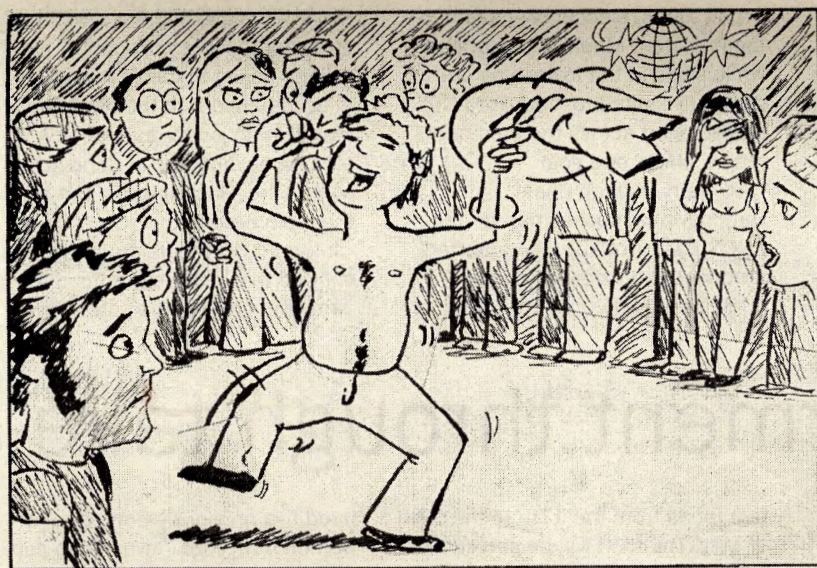
Dear Editor

Often in the fast moving business world of today the small courtesies are overlooked. I would like to take this opportunity to say how very impressed I am with Rhodes University's students.

The East African and Zimbabwe Society of Rhodes University recently held a get-together at my pub

[Homewoods Restaurant & Jeremiah's Pub] on the evening of Saturday the 1st of May. I must admit I was a bit wary at first and was not too sure what I had let myself in for! But, I was pleasantly surprised. Of course, there were the usual shenanigans, however, they volunteered to tidy up afterwards and even paid two of my staff members for assisting them with the braai. What a pleasure it was to deal with such well-mannered students.

John Wootton (Owner)



LAW OF INEVITABILITY #1: On an average night this will be the only memory that alcohol will not repress.

■ Matthew Ackermann

(For more Matthew Ackermann cartoons, visit <http://activate.soc.ru.ac.za>)

Is small town life as safe as it seems?

■ Peni Dodo

The battle of the bands is being held on consecutive Mondays at Die Taphuis. This venue is rather far for students without cars to walk and has proven to be a safety hazard as far as muggings are concerned.

Monday the 3rd of May, the first round of the battle of the bands, saw four Rhodes University students being mugged and assaulted on their walk home. This could have been avoided if the SRC used the Rhodes busses to transport students on nights of these types of events.

Chairmaine Jelbert, a Councillor of the SRC however claims that they have "undertaken to get statements from students who have experienced any form of violence, harassment, aggression, muggings or anything

where their physical being has been threatened in any manner. We are planning on using these statements as a means to ensure that the University employs more security campus guards and so that the Oppie Bus can run more efficiently." She also believes that availing more Campus security guards would provide a safer route home for students.

The safety of students does not, however, lie solely in the hands of the SRC and the CPU. Each individual should assess the situations they find themselves in and use their common sense as to which options are safe or not. If students find themselves in the unfortunate position of becoming a victim, the SRC implores students to report the crimes not only to the police, but to them also so that they can follow through with their plans of increasing campus protection.



Activate is the Independent Student Newspaper at Rhodes University, Grahamstown. The paper is published every two weeks during term time.

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Comment

Potch stands up for their values

■ Bruce Dixon

Students at WITS University took two days to protest against the slashing of financial aid recently. Last week it was the turn of Potchefstroom University to gather and voice their collective opinion. At WITS students were trying to secure their future, whilst at Potch they were trying to preserve their past. Should race have been an issue in either case? Probably not. Yet it certainly seemed as much.

The Potch students gathered at the "amfi", their outdoor ceremony venue in the middle of campus, under the auspices of the "Waarde Wandeling". Directly translated this means "the values march", but in essence the students were walking for about five kilometres to demonstrate that the University of Potchefstroom is still based on values; values which the students live by.

Some of the values being marched for were non-violence, responsible use of alcohol, no swearing and all the general guidelines of Christianity. This is, after all, a university that has church on a Sunday as part of its orientation week programme for first

years. But Potch has essentially been a Christian university based on morals and values since its inception.

Up until three years ago, Potch was known as the Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education. The Minister of Education Kader Asmal, then changed the name simply to Potchestroom University to restore the freedom of religion, which appeared to be infringed upon at the institution. Then last year, Asmal once again announced a change and this time Potchefstroom University was instructed to merge with the University of the North West to become the North West University.

In creating the North West University, the government has taken one of South Africa's wealthiest, predominantly white, Afrikaans universities and merged it with one of its poorest, rural black institutions. Many people in Potchefstroom are worried about what might happen to, and what people might perceive about their sacrosanct university. In the words of the march organisers: "With the march we want to reassure the PUK's niche market that parents can still send their children to a value-driven university. We want to proclaim to the world

the values that drive us: love, respect, service ability, integrity and tolerance".

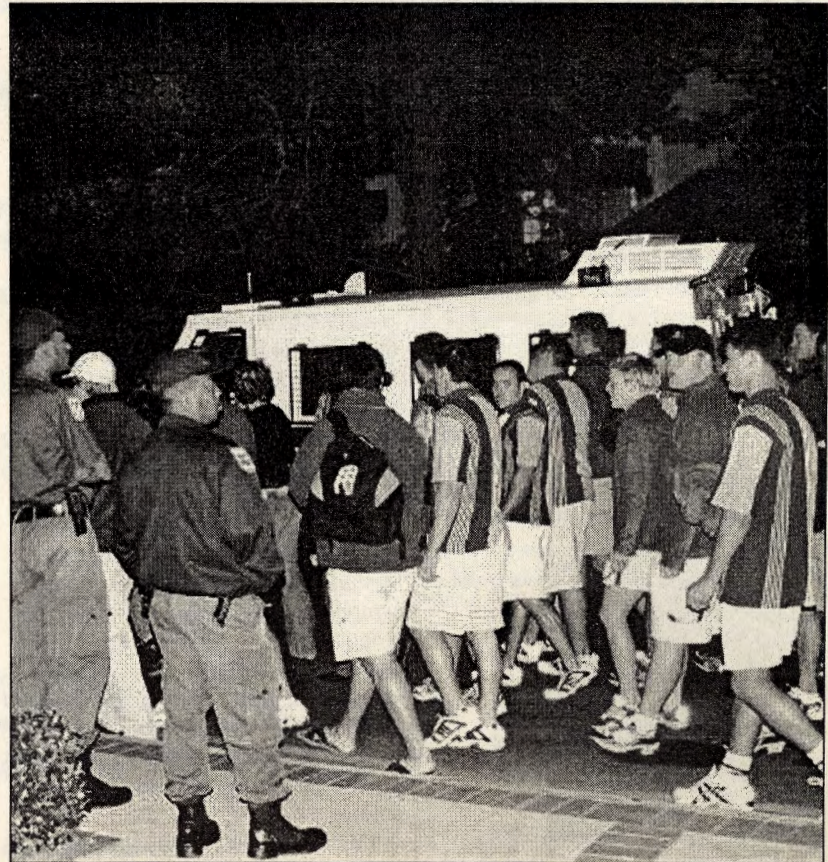
Do the staff and students at Potch think that maybe the introduction of the University of the North West would somehow eradicate those values and morals which Potch holds so high? Although they may not be as ardently Christian, can the newcomers not also be committed to love, respect, service ability, integrity and tolerance?

Were they marching simply to reaffirm their values, or because they feel they are in danger?

This may have no racial connection whatsoever, but is simply a Christian university trying to uphold its religious standards.

The ANC Youth League was specifically invited to attend the march but did not attend. Instead a small group of black students dressed in ANC colours, danced and sang outside their residence as the 100% Caucasian procession went past. Evidently, there is no love lost between the races in Potchefstroom.

An interesting difference to note between the rallies at WITS and that of Potch is that Potch students had to pay R30 to march and had a free music concert afterwards.



Students at Potchefstroom University marched for the protection of their values recently. ■ Bruce Dixon

Petty theft syndicate operating on Rhodes campus

■ Karabo Sekhoto + Sally Evans

"Oppportunistic" thieves have apparently been taking advantage of the new Dulcés says David Brown, of the Campus Protection Unit.

Since the opening of the Dulcés, four cases of petty theft have been reported. Thieves pretending to be students have been targeting bags, cell phones and wallets of unsuspecting patrons of the Dulcés and the library area.

Two bags were stolen within half an hour of each other last week Tuesday and with immediate response, the CPU arrived on the scene. A man, who was neither a student nor a worker at Rhodes, was detained for questioning in connection to the theft. He was later released as he had had an alibi that was able to verify his whereabouts at the time of the incidents. The

man was in fact a friend of a painter at Dulcés, and was there to meet him when the bag had been stolen. Mr Sweli from campus security said that of late they had been "experiencing people losing their bags and cell phones."

Again on the following Thursday, CPU was called to the library where another incident of petty theft had been reported. With the help of Closed Circuit Television (CCTV), which monitors the library, CPU was able to identify two suspects. The following day, one of the suspects appeared in the library, wearing the same shirt that he was identified as wearing the previous day. He was arrested and a case has been opened against him.

Mr Nogqale said that students are leaving their bags on the tables outside Dulcés in order to "book a place to sit" while they go inside to order their food, thus creating the perfect

opportunity for thieves to grab the bags and run.

These thieves are blending in with the students so well that it is becoming increasingly difficult to tell them apart from students. They have gone to such extremes as to carry prescribed Rhodes textbooks to look the part.

Brown said that with "no excess control on campus and as well as the library being open to the public," it is very difficult to keep thieves out, thus making their efforts in controlling petty theft harder.

Yet CPU guards have been placed in plain clothes in order to try and catch more thieves.

Students can also prevent their things from being stolen by keeping their bags on them at all times and not leaving their belongings unattended. "Campus Security is here to protect the students," said Ngqale.

'Yebo Gogo' fever hits Rhodes Centenary celebrations

■ Serena Chaudhry

Professor Kole Omatoso of the Drama Department at Stellenbosch University, delivered the third lecture in the Centenary series at Rhodes University on the 5th May 2004. Entitled "Is white available in black?" the lecture examined the idea of the possibility of establishing a multi-cultural and multi-lingual society in today's world.

Speaking to an auditorium full of students, lecturers and people from the greater Grahamstown community, Omatoso jokingly began the lecture with the words: "I hope followers learn too [at Rhodes]", which was a direct pun at Rhodes University's motto. Dressed in traditional attire, Omatoso spoke of the need to establish a new culture, which accommodates many different beliefs, values and cultural systems. He stressed the need for people to move away from focusing on

establishing their own cultures in different areas, but rather for everyone to incorporate the other prevalent cultures in that society into their own culture.

Paying specific attention to Africa, Professor Omatoso used 'trickster' stories to enlighten the audience about Africans' struggle to represent their people through their literature because of language and identity issues. These stories showed how victims do not try to become the victors, but rather focus on outwitting their oppressors.

However, he concluded that making white available in black is not possible, and left the audience with the question: "can transformation take place without socialisation?"

Most famous for his role in the 'Yebo Gogo' Vodacom advertisements, Professor Omatoso is also the author of five novels, three historical narratives, two plays, and a short story collection.

Pick'n Pay

FAMILY Supermarket



Coca-Cola
2 litre

849



Braai Packs

999



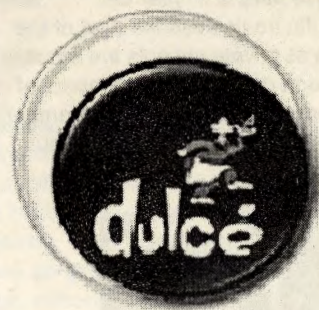
St Anna
• each

1399



Cream Doughnuts
• each

199



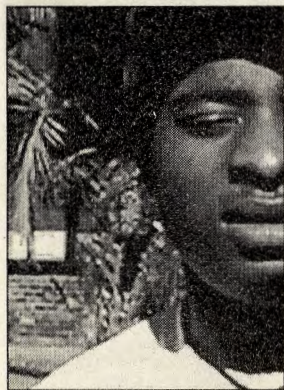
Cut this out, bring it to Day Kaif and then buy anything for more than R15 and get a free cup of coffee.

Dulcés also does catering for private functions.

What you said

■ Michael Salzwedel

What do you think about about the closing of private schools in Zimbabwe recently, and the government's refusal to offer student loans?



Jay Kelipa 1st year BSc:
I think the government should provide some funds for the students because a lot of students need support.



Bronwyn Jacobs 2nd year BA:
It's grossly unfair and infringes on people's rights to a great extent.



Candice Mills 2nd year BA:
It's quite ironic because a lot of the pupils at private schools are actually sons and daughters of members of parliament, so they [the government] are not doing themselves a favour.



Moses Bailey 3rd year Bcom:
Zim has had problems for quite a while now and they're not going to solve any by closing down the schools.

The economics of gossip

The Beckham affair had generated so much attention that it has got to actually mean something... but what?

■ Verashni Pillay

Okay here's the sad thing. I type in "Beckham affair" into the Google search engine and – misspelling and all still end up with 341 results. "Did you mean 'Beckham affair'?" the insipid machine politely asks. Ah, this is more like it – 194 000 results. Now what this impromptu experiment reveals (besides the dismal literacy level of Beckham fans) is a tiny bit frightening. Is there really this much web space being dedicated to the philandering of one man? From *The Times* in India to *The Scotsman* in the UK, back to *Xinhua* in China, we have reporters wrapped up in the now mandatory 'media frenzy' – did he or didn't he?

So we all know why this is newsworthy. The combination of big names and dirty deeds makes sure that this is up there with election news and the latest Iraqi update. What I'm wondering is: should it be?

It's undeniable that the public has need for these kinds of stories. Reports on the Beckhams' life read like the plot to a soap opera – and it's probably exactly that quality that has people hooked. The impossibly rich and beautiful people from TV land with their dramatic lives were hard enough to resist on the box. But come to life in flesh and blood Posh and Becks were bound to have the public weaned on the stuff and begging for more. The media is only too willing to answer that need, with synopsis, analysis features and news stories that would put the coverage on any third world country to shame.

But no, I'm hardly going to engage in the redundant pass time of blaming the media. Let's take a look at

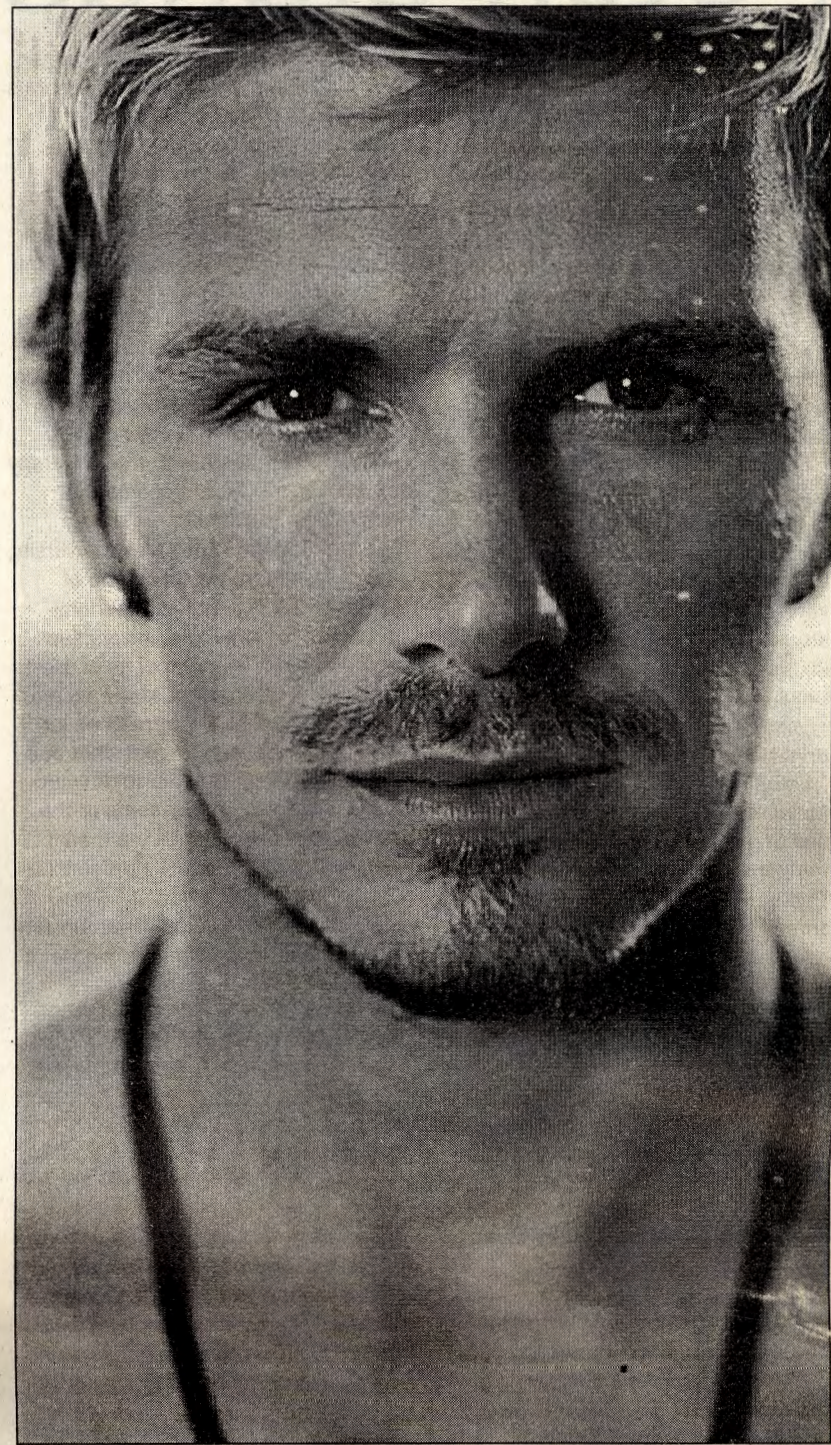
the facts. Most celebrities prior to the Beckhams never orchestrated their fame in quite the same way. Celebrity status is usually a by-product of other activities. However Posh and Becks turned being a celebrity into a full time position. For example, a special trip to the States was planned last year to 'raise their status' in the land of the free, where they had not quite achieved the position of royalty conferred upon them by an adoring British public.

For a solid two years or more, we were treated with naff photos of their matching outfits at events out and about, usually entirely inappropriate to the weather. What on earth was all this attention-seeking about? If you were to put it down to good old narcissism, you'd be playing it safe.

We forget a crucial component when drooling over the fabulous lives off the Beckhams...where does all that money actually come from? The Beckhams \$90 million fortune last year is estimated to have increased to \$117 million this year.

The Beckhams are not quite so elegant when it comes to moola matters... they have proven to be shrewd and aggressive in their accumulation of wealth. Income from actual 'work' (music, soccer) constitutes a fraction of their income. Beckham's annual salary with Real Madrid is \$6.7 million, while endorsement products constitute a hefty \$20 million a year.

So what does this tell us? That if the Beckhams were smart, they would stay firmly in the spotlight. Because the continued adoration of millions equals continued endorsement – as long as companies can see that there is still a demand for them. And whatever defences, accusations, denials or confessions are made, really doesn't matter. Because the Beckhams are still right where they want to be – in the limelight.



Why bigger is always better: A city-boy's approach to farming

■ Leon Schnell

One thing most of the politicians of the smaller parties promised during all their campaigning was free land for all should they come to power. Now hang on just a minute! Farms are South Africa's main source of food. Grain products are the staple food of most of South Africa's citizens, and if you start screwing around with that supply you are just asking for problems (Zim...cough...babwe). Okay, so we are all clear that unplanned, random and violent land-grabs will be the last straw for South Africa. Is there then any way of peacefully buying commercial farms, redistributing that land to black farmers, AND maintaining production levels? Well, the first one is as easy as passing a few agricultural laws. The second one is the problem...

In all fairness to land-redistribution, I am not against the idea. I am however against cultivating (excuse the pun) false-expectations. Where farmers do have "excess" land that they wish to sell to the government for redistribution...fine. But how many farmers have "excess" land? And how much will they be paid for it, or are they going to be forced to sell for a government-dictated price?

If the land doesn't come from existing farms, where does it come from? There are only two other areas that it can come from – either the government distributes land that it owns itself, or previously unfarmed land is cultivated. As for cultivating other

land, it just isn't that simple. You don't have to be a farmer to realise that you can't just plant mielies in your back-garden.

When you split up a farm, you suddenly require the duplication of every implementation on that farm. If two farmers subdivide one farm, they now need two tractors, two houses, two granaries, two water-sources... That is unless they happen to share everything – but what happens when two farmers both want to use their shared tractor at the same time? A game of rock/paper/scissors? I mean, we all saw what happened to the communists. More importantly, there is always the space issue.

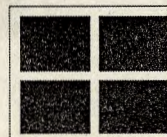
Pretend that the black block (below) represents a commercial farm, and that it has been subdivided into four pieces and reallocated to black farmers. All that white space between the four new plots represents the new boundaries, fencing and open-space between crops. All this space represents lost productivity from the original size. With a few numbers, squares and a calculator, I proved that the subdivision would lead to a minimum of an 8% loss in production. The key word is minimum.

Simply put, lost productivity means less food, higher prices due to scarcity, and unemployment due to retrenchments caused by firms attempting to retain profit margins. This naturally leads to hunger, poverty,

crime, foreign disinvestments, currency devaluation and rising interest rates...(I'm a half-empty glass kind of guy). Whatever benefit gained by the handful of new farms and new ownership will quickly be nullified by these factors. Sure, a few may benefit, but at what cost?

Lastly, and many claim most importantly, there is the issue of education and proper farming techniques amongst the new farmers. If the new farmers don't apply the correct farming techniques, not only will production decline even more, but the land could be damaged to such an extent that it soon won't be of any use to anyone (leaching and over-grazing ring any bells?). The support network that would be necessary to support new farmers – and constantly inspect their farming methods – is too large a project for South Africa to even contemplate anytime in the immediate future.

So what more is there to say? Politicians spread lies like the redistribution of land for votes. While I don't really think that anybody (including them) will ever be crazy enough to actually implement these mad-cap schemes, sometimes I am forced to wonder. It scares me because the people that hear these lies don't see them for what they are. In South Africa we are looking for quick-fixes for poverty. We have only been democratic for ten years, and countries' histories are measured in centuries. Don't expect miracles. Right now just hope for, and accept, progress.



Pens, paper and preconceptions

We took our *Activate* staff to Amasango Career School with the intention of watching two completely removed realities engage with print media. The project aimed to generate awareness about newspapers, but for many of the children, the black text and greyscale photographs were foreign and strange. For many of the students, the language barrier and necessity to engage with those that are different was intimidating and overwhelming. Despite the various challenges faced by all, the event ran smoothly. Here are some reflections from the experience that some of our *Activate* writers would like to share. I feel that they accurately represent what worked and what did not. I would also like to thank everyone who joined us: your enthusiasm is priceless in the age of apathy.

■ Carly Ritz

■ Alex Westcott, Benita Langner + Stacey Nel.

We arrived at the school armed with pencils, paper and mixed feelings. The school is the epitome of the divisions between the "haves" and the "have-nothings." It runs parallel to the train line, separated only by a barbed wire fence. The buildings had never been intended for educational purposes, yet they were filled with children making the best of their desperate situations. We encountered this attitude in the form of a young girl who had a lot to share.

Nomaxabiso, who allowed us to call her by her English name, Christelle, upended everything we thought about township children. None of us could speak Xhosa. The aim of the workshop was to teach a bunch of children about the construction of a newspaper. We approached our "apprentice" with a slightly patronising attitude. We were also uncertain as to how to go about teaching her to write a feature story. Maybe it was this uncertainty and our previous expectations that developed a condescending manner towards this girl. We were supposed to teach her, but she ended up teaching us.

As she explained her story to us, which she had written in Xhosa, our preconceived notions were chucked

out of the window – except that there were no windows.

Ukusendihlale Eluxolweni. Kubandandiqiba etawuni. Umama engenamali yondifundiso. Ndapheta ndihlala Eluxolweni. Ndafunda nge-Holide ndiye ekhaya ndibuye ndiye Eluxolweni. Ndafunda I ndafikelela kufafivu. Utata ma wasweleka ngo 2001. Ndahlala nomama qa. Ubrother wam wayeqekeza etawuni. Wabajwa userongeni. Ndiyavuya ndihlala Eluxolweni. Ndihleli enandi.

Translated by Ms Kate (Grade 7 teacher): Nomoxabiso is staying at Eloxolweni Children's Shelter because she was begging in town due to the fact that her mother does not have money to pay for her schooling. During the holidays she visits home and comes back to the shelter. She is doing Grade 7. Her father dies in 2001. She is only left with her mother and her brother. Her brother is in jail because of housebreaking. I'm glad that I'm staying at Eloxolweni Shelter. I'm enjoying everything.

We sat outside and watched her write what you have just read. Instead of producing something "simple", she described our worst nightmare: a broken family and an empty stomach. Something that a child should never have to live through.

■ Erin Veldsman, Lauren Clifford-Holmes + Jacqueline Nurse

The team consisted of about 30 *Activate* members, with a mission to teach the children about some of the processes of producing a newspaper. Trying to decipher words of English from the hum and clicks of Xhosa surrounding us, we drew deep breaths and smiled with all the appearances of cheerfulness. At this point we realised that this was not going to go as smoothly as we had anticipated. The school gates opened onto their realm of existence, and suddenly we had to abide by a new set of rules.

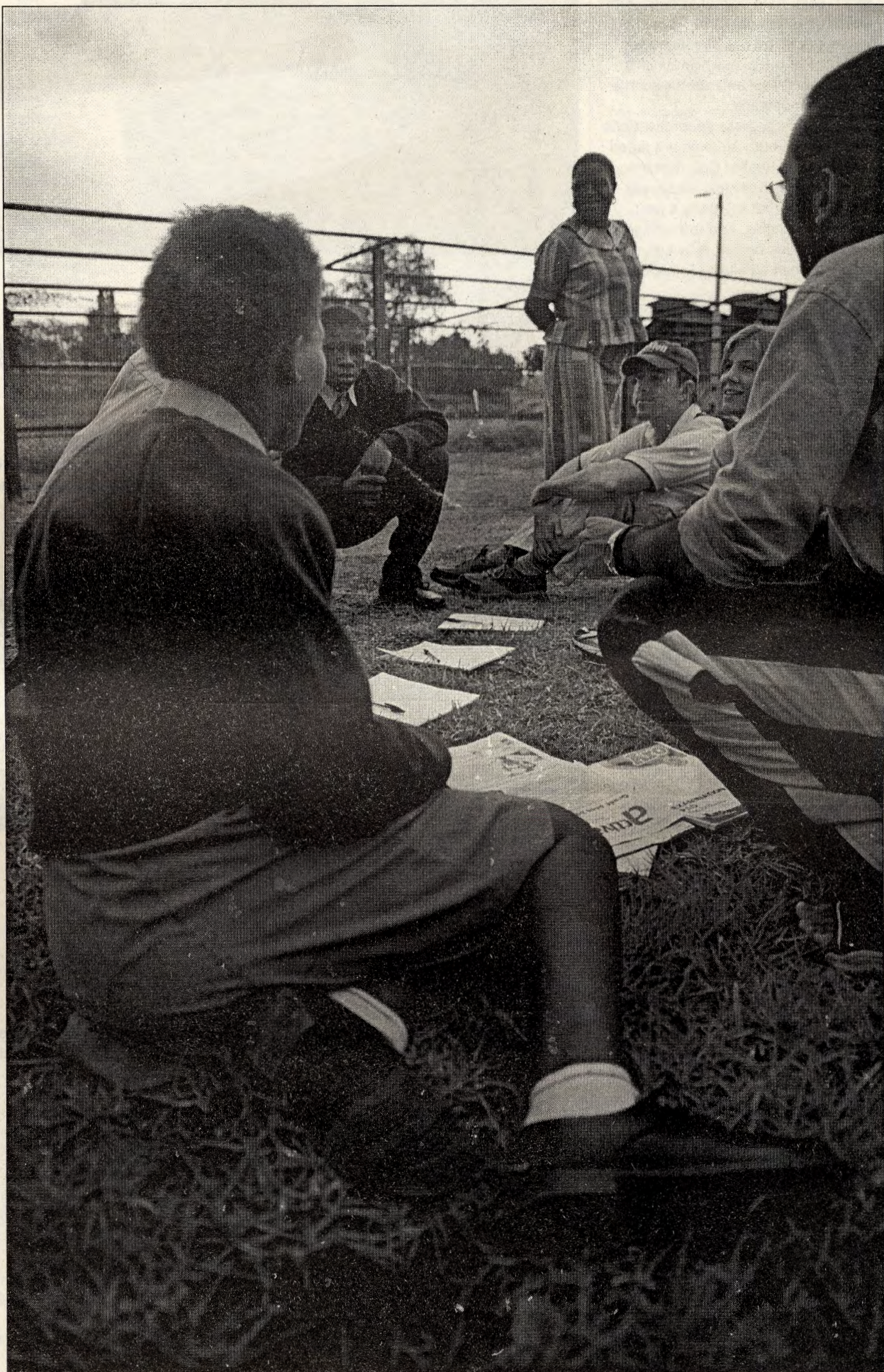
Our entrance into their world caused less of a stir than we had expected. A little interest was shown to the signifiers of our privileged positions, such as cameras and cellphones, but they soon became bored with these and were keen to get back to their innocent play.

We were presented with Luvuyo, a 16 year-old boy who proved to be more willing than some of the others. As part of the Features team, our ambitious hope was to extract a gem of interest, perhaps even tragedy on which to base a story within the confines of two hours. After some thought, he chose to write about his daily life, which surprisingly proved to be similar to that of any other school child of his age, only the context was different. He walks to school each day, leaving his small house and five family members behind. He spoke of after-school activities like homework and

daily chores such as fetching water. The real problem arises as the sun goes down. His house has no electricity and the candles are not sufficient for him to do his homework. This means that Luvuyo is often over at his friend, Siyabulela's house, who does have such basic amenities. Having already addressed the mundane and daily activities of his life, we hit a wall. What to write about next? Everything was suddenly so surface-level, and by no means the deep revelations we had secretly hoped to uncover. We grabbed onto the topic of hobbies, and thankfully his eyes lit up. He talked of the two things he seemed really animated about – his donkeys and his singing.

As we bundled ourselves out of the barbed wire surround, amidst the calls of goodbyes from the children, our thoughts returned to Rhodes. With the lush green campus, light switches, full-sized bathrooms and three cooked meals a day waiting for us, we had to wonder what real impact we may have had in this place. It struck us that all the time spent on expanding our minds through university, in the hope of one day being capable and in the position to effect change is actually useless.

To do this, it is necessary to face the reality with which the majority of our population is faced. Was this short afternoon in the township enough to make a difference; could it even qualify as 'community service'? Or was this about being humbler than all our misconceived pretences, and about learning something new... out of our bubble.



■ Lionel Faulk

Far from leaving Amasango Careers School with that warm glow of achievement and self-congratulation inside me, I instead felt cheated and depressed.

The irony is, this sentiment sprang from what *Activate* had tried to achieve. We visited the school to teach some of the pupils about newspapers, journalism and how to write basic articles.

This was part of *Activate*'s plan to meet SRC stipulations that Rhodes societies must engage in community service to justify their financial grant.

It was a great idea, and one that was met with a great deal of enthusiasm. Paper and pens were sponsored by *Grocott's Mail*. But it soon emerged that not nearly enough groundwork had been done.

Admittedly, this was *Activate*'s first attempt at this project, but I have never spent such a fruitless morning. *Activate* volunteers received

insufficient preparation for what was expected of us. Neither had the school children, that much was clear. Neither – it seemed – had the staff at the Secondary School. The result was a thoroughly disjointed morning, no indication that *Activate* intends to build on what very little was achieved, and no tangible result.

As long as we continue to approach noble causes with token enthusiasm, social and cultural gaps will become chasms, despite the best efforts of a painfully small few.



Reality

Tomfoolery

■ Tom Mapham

Even students experience the cold, hard slap of Reality, from time to time. Of all life's challenges this is the Big One. Reality is at the top of the pile, while minions like loser-complex and apathy scuffle at its feet for scraps.

I'm not one for gross generalisations but I reckon South Africans are jaded and fearful of Reality. But after ten years of fun and games, we should acknowledge that the party's over and we're hanging. And the best way to conquer this demon is by embracing it and then smashing it: Face Reality.

There's a kiff advert from our national telecommunications company on TV at the moment. It says something like: "even though we're a diverse collection of allsorts living in this part of Africa, there are some truths that we can all hold onto, even Laingers. Not to bring us together into a beer-advert rainbow nation, but just to help find the sense in South Africa, and direction in life."

This comes at a good time, 10 years into democracy and a month before the evil spectre of exams rears its hideous head and slowly stalks universities and schools in its bliksemse hard hiking-boots.

The ad says we should recognise the difference between pride and arrogance, be less concerned about what happens on Saturday afternoon and think about 9 o'clock on Monday morning more. We should lift the enormous pressure from our national sport teams, and push ourselves to win our game. At the same time remembering everyday heroes who battle fearsome opponents like HIV, poverty and other kak stuff.

In the spirit of striving to exceed our potential, a collection of Rhodes students have been battling incarceration-by-apathy for months. Two Sundays ago all of their activity paid off when more than 150 students, locals, out-of-towners and one soldier took on the third Founders' Challenge. The event was a fine example of what students can achieve when they get off the couch.

But enough dwelling on the past, present Reality is what this is all about and looking at that ugly face now, it's pockmarked by things that I'd rather ignore (exams). But this is becoming harder and harder to do with a clear conscience.

I'm not one of the 0.86% super-race who learn throughout the year and walk through exams wondering what the fuss is all about. No, this is the time for super-intelligent alter-egos, sudden bursts of over-achievement and hiding from digsmates.

I won't be the only exam-time schizo. The roads of Grahamstown will fill with runners, cyclists, early morning walkers and their dogs. Overnight the library will become a buzzing social hub, full of the most unlikely characters. Intelligent conversations will break out on Thursday mornings. And when the locals creep into the empty spaces at CJs and the Rat, the turnaround will be complete.

For a month Rhodes will be Cambridge, minus the bicycles and the tourists.



■ Angy Youssef

What's in your food?

There's a lot of talk about the state of residence food in the campus dining halls. Where does it actually come from and is it really that bad? It is an issue on which it seems everyone has a stance. Recent events have cast some doubts on the quality of the food, and the care taken in its preparation.

■ Jeremy I. Freed

There is a smell you may be familiar with. It's not a bad smell, but not a particularly good one either. It can smell like fries or casserole or chicken, often all three. It hangs in the air around the dining halls on campus in a heavy, strangely tantalising fog. This is the smell of res food, the only choice for hundreds of students who call campus their home. The quality of the food has been the topic of many a discussion in the dining halls, and has recently come under scrutiny in the wake of several alleged cases of food poisoning last term. Love it or hate it, res food is an institution as old as the university itself, and continues to be a controversial issue on campus.

"I like the food here. It's not fancy, but it's good," says John Miles, a 1st year BSc student, tucking into his second helping of mashed potatoes in Drosty Hall. Over at Oriol, the food is exactly the same, and students were also generous with praise for the catering department.

"Obviously some improvements can be made," says Vauldi Carelse, a 3rd year BJourn student. "But they're doing a great job, considering. They can't provide gourmet food for hundreds of people," she added.

At Jan Smuts Hall, Petro McPherson, 3rd year BA student praises the variety of meals available. "They really cater for everyone," she says.

Overall, the students' opinion of the food, like Monday's venison stroganoff, is lukewarm. Trays are often returned piled with untouched food, and the fast food spots on New Street are visited by res students every night. Most students have a complaint or two about res food, and are eager to offer suggestions as to how it can be improved. Complaints range from the shortness of mealtimes, to the strange taste of the tomato sauce. Many students complain about the quality of the meat, and express concern about where it may have come from. One thing they all agree on, however, is the price. Call it what you

will, but one thing res food is not, is expensive. For the price of a minimal fast food breakfast in town, students eat three balanced meals a day. This makes many wonder what corners are being cut to make such cheap food available.

Mrs. Jay Pillay is the head of the Catering Department. She is soft-spoken, enthusiastic, and eager to answer questions about the food here at Rhodes.

How does the catering staff manage to provide three whole meals a day for the extremely reasonable sum of R26? Mrs. Pillay's pride in this value is evident as she explains: "The only way to manage costs is to enforce strict portion controls." We're not a profit-making service. Our staff's salaries are subsidised by the university, so all the money you pay goes directly into the ingredients of your meals," she adds.

When halls run under budget, excess money is put aside to subsidise formal dinners and other catered events.

Staff training in hygiene and first aid is conducted yearly in Xhosa and English, and the facilities themselves are inspected twice a year by the Grahamstown health inspector, which is more frequently than most commercial kitchens.

In the storeroom, which is housed in a building next to her office, we discuss the importance of quality ingredients. It smells fragrantly of spices, tea, and cardboard. It is bright, clean, and bursting with food.

"It's all of the highest grade," says Mrs. Pillay, indicating the familiar brand names adorning the boxes, bottles and tins. Apart from the mass quantities of everything, this looks more or less like a normal pantry.

Two walk-in refrigerators along one wall contain meats and other perishables. Meats are wrapped in plastic, and stored separately from milk and vegetables. Pillay is adamant about the freshness of her ingredients. "Bread, milk, vegetables, and meat arrive fresh daily, and nothing is held in the kitchen for more than three days." The only exception to this is Halaal meat, which arrives weekly

from P.E. and is stored frozen.

"We use a strict colour-coding system to avoid contamination. Chopping boards and containers are all colour coded to keep meat separate from other ingredients."

She is aware of the students who were reported sick in March, and claimed to have had food poisoning from eating in St. Mary's Hall, which was closed soon afterwards. She is confident that the students' illness was not due to unsanitary conditions, and asserts that the closure of St. Mary's was unrelated.

"It couldn't have been food poisoning. I looked on the computer and cross-checked their meal bookings, and saw that they all ate different things. I've been here for five years, and in that time there haven't been any incidents of food poisoning."

Regarding the closure of St. Mary's she adds, "We had been intending to upgrade that facility for quite some time. Last year we closed Hobson for repairs, and there are plans to upgrade other dining halls in the future."

One St. Mary's diner, who asked to remain anonymous, is still fairly sure she was food poisoned. She is suspicious about the reasons behind the closure of the dining hall, and convinced that the illness and closure are less coincidental than the catering department would have us believe.

"I think it probably was food poisoning," she says, adding that she much prefers the food where she is now. "I think it's just better prepared, and the place is better staffed," she said.

Despite her experience, her faith in the catering department is unshaken. "I'm looking forward to the changes. After the renovations I think it's going to be much better."

At the San, there were no confirmed cases of food poisoning. "We had about fifteen or twenty students come from various res's with gastrointestinal symptoms," says Sister Val Donnachie. "It could have either been from a stomach bug or food poisoning," she says.

She has not seen any confirmed cases of food poisoning in her years

at Rhodes, and is confident in the catering department's handling of the matter.

She concludes saying: "They sent someone to survey patients in the ward. They would never take that sort of thing lightly."

Addressing some other common complaints, Mrs. Pillay is forthcoming on the issue of accommodating students with special dietary needs. Although she admits that in such a large-scale operation, it is difficult to cater specifically to individuals. Many students have requested having fruit more frequently with meals, but that, she says, is unfortunately limited by the cost of fruit. Pillay strives to accommodate students with special dietary needs, and encourages anyone with any such difficulty to contact her.

"We have had several students in recent years who have had very restrictive food allergies and I always try to work with the student one on one to provide a solution. Just come speak to me and we can try and work it out."

Responding to the question of why there are Halaal and African options, but no Kosher menu, she replies "To create a Kosher menu would require a separate facility and staff, and there is just not enough demand for it." The same is true of a possible Vegan menu option, which she says she has had requests for, but not enough to make it feasible.

Student input is extremely important, and students' concerns are discussed at monthly meetings with campus food reps. She encourages anyone with comments, criticisms, or suggestions about any aspect of the food to speak to a food rep or come directly to her.

On closer inspection, the catering department is not as suspicious as it sometimes seems from the dining halls. There are many people behind the scenes working hard to make sure students are fed and happy every day. The food may not be that great, but it is reliable, affordable, and sometimes even delicious. And at least we never have to wash dishes.

Hamba kakuhle, MaBrrr

Brenda Fassie, one of South Africa's most celebrated musical artists, died peacefully at Sunninghill Hospital after a severe asthma attack and cardiac arrest two weeks ago. ARETHA PHIRI takes a look at her extraordinary life and how she became one of the most widely recognised singers that South Africa has ever produced. Additional research by Sean Naidoo.



Best known for her powerful voice and passionate, somewhat amusing performances, Brenda came a long way. Born in Soweto in 1964, her move to Johannesburg led to her discovery at the tender age of 14. After success with the Big Dudes, she released the hit single "Weekend Special". Fassie always said that she would make it, and Weekend Special put her firmly on the map and also earned her a legion of international fans. Although she earned ground-breaking musical success, she still maintained that her fans were her number one priority and this drew fierce loyalty and protectiveness from them.

Known as the "Madonna of the townships", she was always in the headlines, be it for her music or her personal life. She openly admitted to drug addiction and in 1995 was found in a Johannesburg hotel, in a drug-induced haze, next to the dead body of her lesbian lover, Poppie Sihlala, who had died of an apparent drug overdose. These setbacks soon started to interfere with her personal life but when critics were about to write her off, she bounced back with the hugely successful album, "Memeza" (Shout) which sold almost 750 000 copies, which is unheard

of in South African music sales. Other songs that became extremely popular include "Vulindlela" and "Nomakanjani".

According to Brenda, she was here to create controversy and she once said: "I am a shocker. I like to create controversy. It's my trademark." Despite her bad-girl image and sometimes eye-popping behaviour, Fassie's popularity remained firmly cemented within South African pop culture.

She was the recipient of many awards including the African equivalent of the Grammys, The Kora Awards, and also won numerous South African Music Awards. Some of her fans included high profile politicians such as Thabo Mbeki and Winnie Madikizela-Mandela. This was evident when Mbeki said: "Brenda's voice made souls rise whenever she sang."

According to her producer, Chico Twala, she died peacefully with one of her nephews at her side. He also said that her family believes that fans should not mourn Brenda's death but rather they should celebrate the extraordinary life that she led.

Her lawyer, Leslie Sedibe said: "Death has this time robbed this country, Africa and the world of one of

spread a smile across my face. I'm shocked to hear that she is gone." This was echoed by Usman Manga of The Gambia who said: "We have sincerely lost a true star of the continent, a sister and indeed a great artist and performer. May her soul rest in peace."

■ Information courtesy of BBC News

the greatest musical talents."

This was evident by the sentiments of her many fans. Edmund Paul Kalekyezi of Uganda said: "She was an inspiration to many and we should not let her death make us all despair. She left behind a remarkable legacy." Brendan Kearney of Baltimore, USA said: "The vibrancy and energy of her music sent shivers down my spine and



A 'real' problem

Patriot Games

■ Justine Cottrell

If I were foreign and educated and all that and my country was considered economically and politically stable, a shadow of sympathy would cross my powdered brow when the topic of South Africa was raised at a cocktail evening. "Those poor South Africans, I mean the crime!" "And what about Aids?" "It's sad but they're just going to follow the rest of Africa into a state of anarchy, poverty, disease and political plundering."

It's true that the signs could be argued to point in that direction. We have massive problems. Our government is inexperienced by global standards, our population is extremely unequally advantaged, Aids has reached epic proportions, crime is all over and illiteracy presses in on us at every turn. I'd call that a pretty impressive list of problems.

Yes, I really mean impressive. It may sound ridiculous. The world is constantly evolving, striving, trying to perfect and improve. How can I say that our problems are impressive? Well... they're real! The troubles S.A. faces are real. They're everywhere. No thousand dollars a night game lodge can mask that. All you have to do is take a drive to Bright Lights to stock up on quarts and African issues assault your senses. These are serious problems. It's overwhelming but I know these problems are real and my efforts to solve them will make a difference in a real world.

We all worry about something. Stress is what drives us and keeps us alive!

So if these problems are what separate us from the first world, what do those countries worry about? They have governments, legal systems and taxes so they must have things to solve. Well let me enlighten you.

This story appeared in an English newspaper, The Daily Mail, a year ago: People who throw out old documents containing personal details are putting themselves at risk! Criminals are searching dustbins for items, which can be used to 'steal' identities. 'Experts' discovered discarded documents that contained signatures, debit and credit card numbers and application forms. The process of stealing these documents has been coined 'bin-diving'. Experts encourage families to buy shredders in order to render all paperwork useless.

Well apart from being made aware of how possessive first worldians are over their garbage, I can't help but kick up my heels and laugh! Is that what makes the papers over there? Is that what you spend your days worrying about? Gosh, let me get a pen so I won't forget to pick up a shredder on the way home from lectures!

I choose our real problems over those. Remember the story about the little girl and her bag of troubles? She was given the chance to swap her problems for anyone else's in the world. After looking through everyone else's sack she chose her own to carry. I would rather deal with tragedies that affect daily life here in SA than open a well laid out paper to find bin-divers making the headlines.

Africa In Focus

■ compiled by Bianca Camminga

- 10 000 people have been reported missing after torrential rains caused flooding in Kenya.
- A student at the University of Addis Ababa has died due to grenade injuries. The attack has been attributed to racial and ethnic tension.
- 500 Rwandan refugees are voluntarily returning to Rwanda from a refugee camp in Namibia.
- The families of the suspected mercenaries detained in Zimbabwe have called on the South African government to help bring them home.
- 13 premature babies have died in an Algerian hospital over the last 45 days. An investigation is under way to determine whether negligence was to blame.
- Botswana may be suffering from a Polio crisis. Massive plans are underway for an immunization campaign.



Profile: Malawi

■ compiled by Vanessa Berger

Capital: Lilongwe
Population: 11.6 million (2003)
President: Bakili Muluzi
Area: 118 484 sq km
Currency: Malawi Kwacha
Official languages: Chichewa and English
Other languages spoken: Tonga, Yao and Tumbuka
Major religions: Christianity and Islam
Main exports: Tobacco, tea, sugar and peanuts
Average annual income: USD \$160 pa (World Bank, 2001)
Internet domain: mw
International dialling code: +265

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National Arts Festival 2004

Fire the senses and feed the soul

The 'Black Hole' gets festive

■ Bianca Camminga

There is only one place to be from the 1st to the 11th of July and it's a little Eastern Cape town called Grahamstown. What started off as a local event for South African artists to come together and show their wears has turned into an international calling.

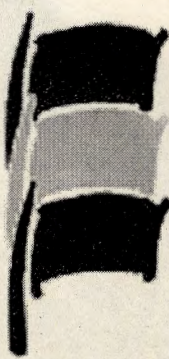
For a week and a half in July, close to 100 000 people descend upon this little town forcing it to become the centre of the festival universe. It all started in 1974 with about 60 shows including Shakespeare, ballet, opera and indigenous art (a tall order for the government of the times). These days there are close to 600 events and 1800 performances. The modern day festival has something for everyone from theatre to dance, opera to cabaret, fine art to craft art, classi-

cal music to jazz, poetry readings to lectures, every art form imaginable is represented in one of the most diverse festivals in the world.

With techno raves, craft fairs, cyber cafes, carnivals, buskers, walking tours and live bands, one is spoilt for choice.

There is more to do than you could fit into a single lifetime or a three year degree. If you're planning to escape from this little town we fondly refer to as the black hole, I say stay. This year marks 30 years of the Standard Bank National Arts festival, 10 years of democracy and the Rhodes centenary.

According to festival director Lynette Marais, 2004 will be a celebration of all of the above with Rhodes presenting and co-presenting some of the shows at the festival. If you're South African or not, this is something not to miss.



■ Moagisi Letlhaku

Why would you want to be stuck in malls, when you can surround yourself with hundreds of stalls at the 2004 National Arts Festival?

Food, clothes, arts and craft... the list is endless.

The Transnet Village Green Fair, one of the main attractions at the Festival each year, draws large crowds with its beautiful display of stalls. Vendors from all over the country, unite in trade under the Grahamstown sun.

According to Village Green Fair Director Selina White, last year the Village Green Fair hosted 246 arts and craft stalls, 25 food stalls and numerous informal trading stalls. That's not all. The Grahamstown Church Square will be transformed into a wonderful spectacle to appeal to all your senses. It will be sponsored by dairy giant Clover and for obvious reasons, be known as Clover Square for the duration of the festival. Features include a

marquee where good old family entertainment such as sand art demonstrations, fabric painting and games, can be enjoyed. There will also be a cheese exhibition, milkshake demonstrations and for the brave and daring, a "Milk the Cow" competition. Other features include the Reptile Park and the Wheel of Death. Live broadcasts from Algoa FM, will keep the festive mood going steady.

It was interesting to note from the National Arts Festival website, that the initiative of the activities that will be taking place at the Church Square and Village Green Fair, is to raise funds for community service and education projects in Grahamstown. Now there is your excuse to blow your wallets - a good cause!

Don't forget to be a proud Rhodent and support some of our Fine Arts students, who will have their art works on exhibition during the Festival. The students, from first year right up to fourth year, will be showing off art works from across all mediums.

Transnet Village Green Fair and Clover Square will be open from the 1st to the 11th July, for an "extended shopping experience" with fabulous specials, and remember, the early worm snatches the fattest bargains.

Dulcé's on campus

Opened for business: 3rd May 2004
Location: Where the day Kaif used to be, i.e. opposite the GLT.
Manager: Christina Taylor
Open: 8:30 until 18:00 from Monday to Friday and 8:30 until 14:00 on Saturdays
Atmosphere: Lively without the hoity-toity coffee shop fundi pretence. In other words, studentish.
Favourite menu items: Chicken Mayo tramezzinis
Price Range: Sandwiches start at R7.50, burgers start at R12.50, wraps R14.00, soups R9.00, salads R8.00, beverages R5.00
Catering: All menu items are halaal and vegetarian-friendly meals are available. No pork is served.
Seating: Indoors - marble floors and tall bar stools. Outdoors - student-style benches and tables
Most ordered drinks: Filter coffee and cappuccinos.
Coffee: Strictly Ciro
Other than food and drinks, the following are available: Sweets, chocolates, airtime, etc.
Busiest hours: 8:30 until 14:00 Tuesday to Thursday. Fridays are quiet.
Other services: Private catering.

Restaurant review

Evolution

■ Trishana Hanuman

As I plonked myself down on the chair, exhausted from a mixture of flu and heat, I was met with the pleasant smell of freshly brewed coffee and a friendly smile

ready to take my order. This health bar is discretely tucked in a corner of Peppergrove shopping complex and is the perfect venue for anything from a midday meeting to dinner before a Friday movie, as it has extended trading hours over weekends.

Health fanatics will approve of the large selection of food and salads. The cappuccino is the perfect companion

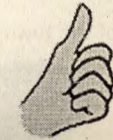
for a delectable cheesecake, which everyone should try!

Although the price range may not be affordable on a regular basis for the average student, it could be a monthly treat.

A complete meal with dessert and a beverage may set you back between R40 and R55, but for the quality and quantity it's not too bad.

The service is the most impeccable that I have received in Grahamstown. Not only was the waitress incredibly friendly, but quite helpful.

Evolution is definitely a hit on the list of restaurants to try this festival. Some others are The Red Café, The Calabash and the Cock House, whose reputation is well renowned for being one of the best in Grahamstown.



Hot right now

- Beckham alic band hairdos
- Flash sticks
- Wordplay hooking up with SRC for Rape Week
- Dulcé's on campus
- Values and Morals
- Colourful scarves



Cold right now

- Dreadlocks
- Floppy discs
- Ignoring G-town hip hop
- Friar Tuck's
- Mugging
- Speeding down the hill



Silent Utterances



■ Olerato Moreosele

Gardening At Night by Diane Awerbuck is a novel that every South African should read; if not for mere support of Proudly South African goods, then at least for reflection. Apart from Zakes Mda's *Madonna of Excelsior*, this is undoubtedly one of the most sincere books to come out of South Africa and sincerity has never read as good as it does here, thanks to Awerbuck's unforgiving humour. A Rhodes graduate, she took a moment to let us in on her thoughts...

Q: Who is Diane Awerbuck?
A: That's right. Bring on the existential crisis, why don't you? I suppose I am a 'postwoman'. Post-feminism, post-apartheid, and post-sex. (hehehe, she's funny.)
Q: How much of this novel is autobiographical?
A: All of it. If you tell the truth - regardless of how shameful it is - no one can beat you over the head with it at some future point. Men still haven't realised this. (Ouch!)
Q: You wrote this as part of your

UCT Masters in creative writing. What motivated you to write about your life and share it with the world?
A: My mother is dying of bone cancer. There were things I wanted to ask and say that weren't going to be cleared up in an afternoon before 'The Bold and the Beautiful.'
Q: How long did it take you to write Gardening At Night?
A: Nine months. Go on. Say it. (Whew!)

Q: The main figures in your novel are your mother and Gordon. How have they reacted to the way they have been portrayed?
A: My mother: 'You made that part up, didn't you?' Gordon: 'Can I play myself in the movie?'

Q: Your first year at Rhodes was in 1992. How was life here as a student for you?
A: Lots of burning tyres and showering in the men's reses - these two things are unrelated. Politics opened my eyes and also bored the pants off me.

Q: How much of an effect has Rhodes had on your life seeing as it's an important element in your novel?
A: Any liberal Arts education facilitates a certain amount of critical

thinking. History and Linguistics ought to be compulsory. And working as a bartender at the Union certainly taught me things about people that would have taken years otherwise.

Q: The title of your book was taken from an REM song and music is mentioned throughout your novel. How significant is music to you as an individual and how has it helped you throughout your life?
A: Individually, music provides the articulation of desires and frustrations, the way poetry does. It is a kind of language accessible to everyone.

Q: Your book speaks a lot about South African culture. What has the response been on the international front?
A: Very little marketing has been done internationally, but the book tours and readings generate such an amazing response - these flabby housewives who still care about literature. They are my favourite audience members, because they are struggling against being stagnant. Lots of people aren't.

Q: Your literary inspirations?
A: Ray Bradbury - such beautiful, yearning prose. Oscar Wilde - florid and sarcastic, but utterly sincere.

Antjie Krog - my super-favourite writer in the universe. Alice Walker - for waking me up when I was fourteen.

Q: Any more novels in the making?
A: I'm currently working on 'The House of Bread', which looks at women and poison - the literal and spiritual kinds. But my three jobs don't really leave me a whole lot of time. I don't know how women with children ever write.

Q: Your novel has been reviewed in various media and has won you the Commonwealth Writers Prize 2004 award. Did you ever think your book would be this successful?
A: I've only won the African Region First Book Award so far - and no, in no way did I expect this sort of thing. Writing the novel was a private exercise, but if they want to shower me with praise (and pounds) I'm not going to argue. (Who would?!)
Q: What words can you leave aspiring writers with?
A: Writing is like anything else - the more you do it, the better you get. Practise. Read Jonathan Morgan's 'Finding Mr Madini.' Cross out every cliché you find in your own work. But mostly you have to read other people's work. Writers are readers.

CD reviews

Top 20 CDs going for R99.95 or less. All new releases, like Usher, Janet Jackson, Black Eyed Peas, Norah Jones and Now 36.



Kanye West - The College Dropout
Kanye West is the massive producer/MC dubbed to fill the shoes of Jay-Z, and his debut album has sparked a revolution in hip-hop. Lyrically and musically gifted, West looks past the bling-bling to the true meaning of what hip-hop should and once did represent. With guest spots by artists such as Jay-Z, Ludacris and Mos Def, and its diverse 70's soul sampling, this album might even convert the most cynical of listeners. Impossibly catchy and thought-provoking, this is one of the greatest releases this year, and Kanye West is definitely an artist to keep an eye on. Genius.

■ Bianca Camminga
@@@@ out of 5

Derek The Bandit - Big Tunes with Funky Remixes
Call me old-fashioned, but I believe that remixes draw the whole intention of original music artistry away. Be that as it may, Derek 'The Bandit' delivers 21 pumping hit remixes which still manage to retain that original quality and beat found in (often very good) originals, but with more of a user-friendly, rave-bunny vibe. With tracks such as *Sound is Shocking* by Psycho Radio featuring LC Anderson to JT's hit *Cry me a River* (Remixed by Johnny Flasco's Electric Karma) it's easy to party it up solo. Not a bad effort at all from the Bandit.

■ Meghan Greenberg
@@@ out of 5

Dead Prez - RBG
Dead Prez has moved from celebrating hip-hop, as proven in their classic debut *Let's Get Free*, to something that seems to be whining about social-ills. Lyrically, their poetic form is still alive; the problem is the message behind the lyrics. The whole 'black struggle' utterance has been overdone, and here, Dead Prez kills it. With monotonous beats and morbid lyrics, they've definitely taken a step backwards: featuring Jay-Z in the thrice-repeated track, *Hell Yeah* shows a lack of creativity, and fails to save the album. This CD won't hit the spot, unless you're a staunch supporter who is undergoing the same bitterness that they express.

■ Palesa Mopeli
@@ out of 5

Arno Carstens - Another Universe
"There's nothing new about porn or music, but life in itself and the passing of time is new." Thus, Arno Carstens begins his New Porn project, *Another Universe*. The album serves as a showcase for his new band, and a good one at that. It does however have some flaws, and suffers from 'so-now-what?' syndrome, where for all intents and purposes the album has climaxed but there remain three substandard tracks. Fortunately, the artwork notably adds to the tone of the album, an area that seems to be ignored often. Overall, this is a worthy addition to any rock fans collection.

■ Conrad Feris
@@@@ out of 5



Just Say Know

Gig guide

■ Margot Knight

Thursday 20th May

- Join Bubbahoons and Boo! are at Taphuijs for the next Battle of the Bands night.
- Wordplay is at The Suite for the regular poetry, singing and rapping open mic event. Get there.

Friday 21st May

- Soul Proxy will be at Taphuijs with local bands.
- The Shindig House Event is coming to the Suite. No charge for members, R10 pre-sold tickets & R20 at the door.

Saturday 22nd May

- The Red Bull Box Cart Race after party is at The Suite with Max Normal's DJ Sibot. Members have it free, R20 pre-sold & R30 at the door (still to be confirmed).

Wednesday 26th May

- For a free party, go to The Suite for the DGB promo. Loads of specials, still to be confirmed.

Friday 28th May

- The *Activate* New Look Launch Party will be happening at The Suite so show your support. There'll be a fireside jam in the back area from 8 to 12, and on the main dance floor there will be a DJ Battle from 9pm to 3am, with The Real Macoy, Wigga, Elvis, Monks and Daniel. Members of The Suite get in for free and non-members pay R15.

Saturday 29th May

- Soul Candi is having its CD launch party at The Suite, and the producers Mbuso, DJ Harael and DJ Miles will be playing. There will be big CD, T-shirt and cap giveaways. Hear more about this event from RMR.

Does Killing Bill pay off?

■ Maire Bonheim

The debate has existed as long as movies have been made, returning to buzz around our popcorn every time a film gleans enough public interest for someone to count the rolling heads. And, with the release of *The Passion of The Christ*, *Monster* and Quentin Tarantino's *Kill Bill* movies, this has been an eventful year for those people who have nothing better to do than drag the old dispute, kicking and screaming, back out of the pit. Luckily, it has mutated slightly, giving us something a bit more interesting to dedicate column space to.

The question of violence in films is no longer one of simply deciding whether watching Uma Thurman slicing off Lucy Liu's scalp with a samurai sword in *Kill Bill* will prompt impressionable school children to scamper off and attempt to replicate the scene. In fact, according to Chris Wolski, a communications professor and newspaper editor in the US, provided that they ensure that only the baddies get butchered, such conduct is no bad thing.

Wolski feels that violence in itself is a neutral event that can be either positive or immoral. Or, to give his own more accessible explanation: "Darth Vader was evil and deserved to die. That's the essence of justice."

But for those of us who don't revel in the idea of training up toddlers who will use a stun gun on anyone who

jumps the queue at the ticket office, Michael Madsen, star of the *Kill Bill* films, has put forward a comforting thought. Watching the movie was like seeing a breath-takingly graphic domino effect of (largely dismembered) bodies hitting the floor; but, in response to the anticipated flurry of anti-violence rhetoric, Madsen said that Tarantino's films were merely a reflection of our society, making the startling comment that "Violence existed long before movies were made".

A far more pertinent point was made by Darryl Hannah, who plays hitwoman Elle Driver, and who is quoted as saying: "If you don't like it, don't go." And that's just the problem: we do like it. We like it even more than watching Stifler eating shit in *American Wedding*, Scarlett Johansson sobbing hysterically in *Lost in Translation* or Angelina Jolie taking her clothes off in absolutely anything. When it comes to selling movies, violence is king.

An absurd US\$14 billion are spent every year on going to the movies, half of which comes from foreign sales. This means that investors need to find scripts that are easily dubbed or translated, are not culture-specific and can be understood without difficulty. The upshot of all this is that they have to make movies with uncomplicated plots, little dialogue, undeveloped characters and simplified humour. It's not a criticism; it's a sales pitch. Which leads us, inevitably, to Mel Gibson's *The Passion of The Christ*. The film is just so unbelievably bru-

tal in its depiction of Christ's torture and death that in its first weekend alone it enjoyed mass church viewings, merited psychologists' warnings, sparked more public debate than Britney's wedding and earned over US\$214 million.

Which, of course, triggered another ethical dispute: is it morally acceptable to use violence, and especially the extreme suffering of Christ, to make a profit? No more so, it could be argued, than exploiting the tragic life of Aileen Wuornos in Patty Jenkins' *Monster*.

Obviously, the catch here is that both of these films have artistic and intellectual purposes, aimed at leaving the audience with additional insights and understandings. *Kill Bill*, on the other hand, makes no such pretence. The movie blatantly and unashamedly revels in the mutilated bodies littering the sets, and experiments with different methods of representing blood squirting out of brains. To which the world at large seems to be saying, bring it on. I want to kill Bill. It just looks like so much fun.



Kill Bill was one of the most violent movies ever.

Movie Review: Experiencing a *Troy* story



An epic tale of the love and courage of legendary Greek heroes based on Homer's *The Illiad*, an enormous budget and a star cast combine to supposedly create the perfect formula for an epic and memorable movie - and *Troy*, to a point, succeeds.

Though at first I found the acting slightly unconvincing and at times stilted, the second half of the movie swept me away. I was stunned by the breathtaking sets (the movie reportedly hit about \$200 million, making it one of the most expensive ever) and the casting is superb, with Brad Pitt as the rock-hard legendary warrior Achilles, Orlando Bloom as the Trojan prince Paris who causes all the trouble in the first place, Australian Eric

Bana as Paris' older brother Hector, and as the iconic "face that launched a thousand ships" German model Diane Kruger as Helen of Troy. Brian Cox as the greedy King Agamemnon also shines.

Opening worldwide last Friday, *Troy* left few disappointed moviegoers. Director Wolfgang Petersen (*The Perfect Storm* and, if you can believe it, *The Neverending Story*), captured my attention, and drew me completely into the ancient world of fantastic battles and fêted heroes, as all good epics should. The battle sequences, particularly the one-on-one clashes such as the titanic struggle between Achilles and Hector, are absorbing and incredibly well shot.

The various love affairs provide a break from the phenomenal battle

scenes, however it seems that the role of women in the movie, particularly that of Helen, appears to be restricted to being romantic attachments to the Heroes. Their task seems to be to look gorgeous and to kiss and cry on cue, although I suppose the movie is centred on the buff war-waging male soldiers for a reason. That said, sidelining Helen's pivotal role (she is, after all, the reason behind the whole fiasco) is a bad move.

I enjoyed this larger-than-life Hollywood recreation of the Trojan War immensely. Though not perfect, it seems that, judging from the pleased reactions of the Roxbury moviegoers last Friday night, I am not alone in my views.

■ Cindy Stocken
@@@@ out of 5



Mordor conquers all at the Founders Challenge

■ Pete Nielsen

It was Founder's Challenge time once again on the ninth of May, the time of the year when closet athletes creep out the woodwork, the Founder's gentlemen walk around with an air of confidence and the people who signed up for orienteering start wondering what it actually means.

As usual the event was characterised by the seamless organisation of Chairperson Rich Holland and his able crew, vast numbers of chocolate bars, and the hill up from Jameson dam claiming many a would-be runner. This year the Challenge was taken up by twenty-four teams, from mixed teams to the three all-ladies teams and seven people entering the new individual class.

The day itself was sunny, much to the despair of many an amateur first time challenger, who thought that a short run or swim would help their hangovers. The booming music from the announcement table was definitely not appreciated by all, but the Red Bulls and boerewors rolls were accepted with open arms.

The men's elite competition was won by the surprise-package of team Mordor, in a time of two hours and thirty-nine minutes. They made their move at the Jameson dam where their rowing machine Nick Burden

managed to overturn a lap and a half deficit to catch up to Chris Felgate, the individual competition winner. He tagged their veteran racehorse Efese Peter, a Settler's Marathon top ten finisher who managed to finish the last ten kilometres of the race in a staggering thirty-three minutes. The defending Kimberly Hall A team could only manage a second, over ten minutes behind the winners, while the much touted Smuts Oppies team failed to make their mark.

The orienteering was characterised by the nasty decisions of the organisers to include checkpoints at the Ichthyology Department and then another at Winchester House. The rocky road to the dam was too much for many of the bikes to handle, with punctures and broken chains all evident. The swimmers were pleasantly surprised by the warmth of the water, with many of them making significant gains for their teams before sending their runners up the heartbreaking hill back to the lawns.

Felgate impressed all by coming in just over four minutes after the winners, the All-African Champion triathlete easily defeating all his other individual competitors and justifying the tag of pre-race favourite. Felgate, who has just picked up a new sponsor admitted to training for between two and three hours a day, a feat that personifies what the Challenge is

really about, although the image of Dave Brereton, the Kimberly Hall A swimmer lurched over a bush typified the commitment of many of the teams.

The ladies' team event was won by St. Mary's Hall A in a time of three hours and twenty seven minutes, with The Sweatshop team coming in a respectable second. The Nelson Mandela B team won the mixed team title.

While the serious business was going on in the dam and roads above Grahamstown, a festive atmosphere was maintained at the Kaif Lawn. The Fun Run was a memorable event, with over 80 competitors turning out, especially Victoria Mxenge House who were represented by 30 all-black members and the few hill boys who braved fancy dress in the heat. The Fun Run gives another opportunity to the people who clearly have more sense but still want to participate and share in the passion of the Challenge and will surely remain a feature of the Challenge.

The Challenge was once again an unmitigated success, with participants and the crowd all joining in the spirit of the event, which has become a regular and popular feature of Rhodes' sporting calendar. A word of thanks from the organisers to all the local sponsors and everyone who helped make the Challenge a success.

■ courtesy of blueworld.co.za

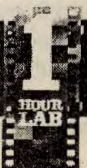


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Feeding the Inner Dragon

■ Clint Cockcroft

Over the weekend of the 1st and 2nd of May, the Rhodes Kung Fu Club welcomed Chief Instructor and Rhodes Alumni, Si-bok Marc Kahn, back to his once-familiar training ground.

An old friend of the Club, Kahn was the founding instructor in 1991 as a first year BA student. He then went on to complete his Masters in Clinical Psychology and is now a practicing psychologist in Cape Town.

With no airs or graces he began the weekend by saying that some people had mispronounced his name; it was not "Si-fu", meaning instructor, but "Marc". And so the weekend continued on a less-than-formal basis, with many questions and much laughter.

The morning started with the group, including members of both Rhodes Kung Fu and Karate clubs, being introduced to the Dragon. The exercise is called "Feeding the Dragon"; it is extremely strenuous and quickly

becomes torturous until you "look into the Dragon's eyes and take on its fiery attitude".

Feeling refreshed after a meal, we attempted the Monkey exercise. Essentially, this requires one person, the monkey, to do a full revolution around a partner's body without touching the ground. While many failed several attempts, everyone was enthralled as local instructor Bandile Dlabantu completed the task with great agility in seconds.

Dlabantu is a member of the Soul-fu team that is currently offering self-defence lessons and selling pepper spray on campus and to the local Grahamstown community.

With some basic monkey skills under our belts, the session moved on to the serious art of grappling. This was intense and exhausting but "inspiring" according to Ishtar Lakhani, a black belt in the karate club.

As a senior instructor with the South African Fanchento Kung Fu Federation, Kahn is a long standing

member of the national Technical Board.

He currently holds a second Dan in Jujitsu and second degree Black Sash in Kung Fu. He drew on these years of experience as an instructor and his skills with a baton, or short staff, to teach the group the subtleties of employing a weapon in a defensive scenario.

While Kahn has been invited back to the Rhodes Dojo several times since leaving in 1996, this was his wife Kelly's first visit to Grahamstown. She is a Therapeutic Reflexologist and offers nutritional counselling, a service she shared with the group on Sunday morning after leading a basic meditation exercise.

She practiced Shaolin Kung Fu for five years and was teaching children's classes before moving from Johannesburg to Cape Town.

The weekend was a resounding success, with sparring and weapons training alongside attitudinal and lifestyle skills.



Guest instructor, Marc Kahn, sweeping local instructor Bandile Dlabantu off his feet. ■ Clint Cockcroft

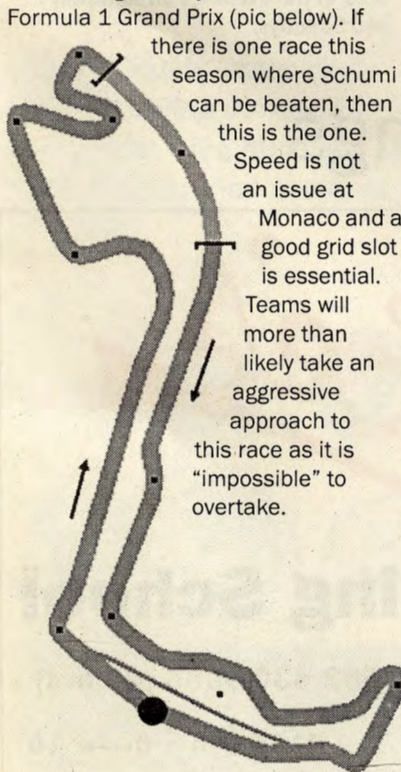
Is there a cure for Schumi fever?

■ Shane Torr

Michael Schumacher has not let his fans down and has won yet another race, taking his tally to five out of five. Schumi has piled on the records and the FIA could consider bringing out a Schumacher F1 Record Book. Schumacher has been named Sportsman of the Year and has received his Laureus Award for his hard work in the 2003 championship, battling with Kimi Raikkonen and JP Montoya to the very end.

Jacques Villeneuve seems to be top of the shopping list at Williams for the 2005 season. For more than a month now there has been talk of him driving for the Williams team and he has had numerous meetings with team manager, Frank Williams. He looks set to test for the team within the next month. Frank Williams has stated that he wants to finalise his driver line-up for 2005 before August. Other candidates include Jaguar's Mark Webber and BAR's Jenson Button. Villeneuve, who won the 1997 drivers' championship for Williams, could be the cure to the Schumi fever that has infected the Formula 1 boat.

The principality of Monaco is host to this coming Sunday's



there is one race this season where Schumi can be beaten, then this is the one. Speed is not an issue at Monaco and a good grid slot is essential. Teams will more than likely take an aggressive approach to this race as it is "impossible" to overtake.



She may look innocent and sweet, but watch out when you step onto the court. ■ Jenna Viljoen

Game, set and match for Rhodes' tennis ace

■ Jenna Viljoen

Joanna Carlson, the Rhodes Ladies' Tennis Captain, knows what it means to have a dream and achieve it with excellence.

She hails from Durban where she started playing tennis at the age of six and, with the support of her family (both her parents and her two sisters play tennis too), developed her talent into what it is today.

She is studying third year television journalism and psychology, and acknowledges that the journalism course is what she has always wanted to do academically and is happy with the way it is enabling her to do what she loves.

As the team captain, she says that the Rhodes Tennis Club's membership levels are not quite as high as in previous years and that there tend to be more social players than serious

competitors in the club, but that is not to say that the club is floundering. Joanna has represented Natal and Eastern Province and has gone on to excel at a national level.

She has played tennis for South Africa since U/12 and U/14, and is currently a national player. At the end of 2003 Joanna attended the world student games in Korea, a tournament that is seen as an excellent opportunity for local talent to experience international standards. Furthermore, she played for Eastern Province in the Triangular series held in Bloemfontein this year from the 5th to 7th of March, where her team attained a 2nd place ranking overall.

She's not sure what her definite plans are once she has finished at Rhodes, but an option may be to go onto the professional circuit if she feels the desire to pursue a professional career in tennis.

Pro20 cyclone ends

■ Dustin Emslie

The electrifying Standard Bank Pro20 Series came to an end on Saturday the 1st of May with the Free State Eagles walking away with the trophy after an exhilarating series of boundaries, wickets and most importantly, fun.

The shorter form of the game provided a day or night that the whole family could enjoy, without worrying about the so-called "boring stages" of the game. Free State deserved to be crowned champions after they came out on top against the team from the Eastern Cape.

The 40-over games seemed to suit the lesser-favoured sides as well. Batsmen were given licenses to swing away and pile up the runs, while it was a totally different story for the bowlers. They were forced to maintain an acceptable line and length and it was almost considered a crime to bowl a no-ball. The no-ball entitled the facing batsman to a free hit.

The umpires were also encouraged to lighten up and play their part in the festivities. Barry Lambson, in particular, got really involved by jumping up and down while signalling boundaries. The spectators were also kept on their toes and the term "crowd killer" was used frequently in reference to sixes being smashed into the stands and grass embankments. Yet another creative innovation from the sponsors of the series was the "hard hats". Limited numbers were handed out to spectators as "protection" against the fast flying ball.

There was no time for a quick nap or a glimpse through the newspaper in this form of the game. Fielders were also expected to be on guard for every ball and thus some great stops and catches were made.

The series was a great success among not only players but supporters as well. Hopefully we will witness some more breathtaking action in seasons to come. Congratulations to Free State but the real winner in this series was the game of cricket!

Rhodes sports people share their talents

■ Ron Humphries

The Rhodes University Canoe Club (RUCC) reached a hand out to the young boys of the Eluxolweni Shelter by running a canoeing clinic for them on Thursday, the 6th of May. Twenty-three boys between the ages of six and ten experienced the thrills and spills of canoeing. The RUCC transported the youngsters to the Settlers Dam in Thomas Baines Nature Reserve.

After a brief instruction from Pip Mortlock, the boys broke up into groups of four. Each group was assigned to a committee member who helped them to get going. After a few impromptu tumble turns, the boys began to grasp the subtle art of staying upright.

After two hours of canoeing, and swimming, everyone enjoyed boerewors rolls before driving back into Grahamstown. House Father, Luyanda Matiwane, said that the boys had enjoyed the afternoon and were already looking forward to the next chance to canoe. Based on this success, the club will now hold a similar development day once every term.



Boys from the Eluxolweni shelter enjoyed a day on the dam ■ Tom Mapham

RUCC Chairperson, Tom Mapham, said: "Training and Development is often seen as a chore, but what we have experienced today has been rewarding for everyone. We didn't appreciate how much we have to give, until today."

There is a problem with development programmes that are limited to single events.

While the events are appreciated

there is a demand for sustained programmes that actually enrich participants with new skills. The RUCC has become aware of this and is working on plans to implement 'real development'.

The club is working on plans to involve development paddlers in regular club activities in order to train development paddlers to a competition level.



Laduuma 2010!

Between the lines

■ Michael Salzwedel

If you haven't yet heard that South Africa has won the bid to host the 2010 Soccer World Cup, then you're either still in your mother's womb, or ten feet below the ground in your grave, or a David Blaine wannabe sadly stuck away in a box somewhere. The pulsations that permeated the air of Grahamstown on Saturday, when it was announced that South Africa is to host what is the biggest single sporting event in the world, were unlike anything I've ever experienced in this town before. People were so genuinely and collectively happy, with such a tangible realism that extended to hugs and high-fives being exchanged between many total strangers. I have no doubt that there were similar reactions in other cities around the country, and plenty of media reports have extensively confirmed this.

Many of us experienced a strong sense of déjà vu: who could forget the camaraderie after the 1995 Rugby World Cup final? Never since then, and until now, has the country been united to such an incredible extent by a sporting accomplishment. The psychological boost this country has just received is enormous and the foundation has now been firmly set for at least another decade of being "Proudly South African". Sure, 2010 is a long way off, but the ON switch has been firmly pressed and the countdown has begun: the World Cup is coming to South Africa.

Economist Mike Schussler has estimated that the tournament will inject an amount of between R13 and R24 billion into the country's economy over its 43 day duration, and a further R8 billion after the final whistle has been blown. He also predicts that over 120 000 new jobs will be created, of which HALF will be sustainable. Yet there are still some pessimists (who would perhaps prefer to call themselves realists), who have taken an apprehensive stance on the matter. They don't have confidence in the country's ability to successfully stage the event, and predict that we'll land ourselves in debt at the end of the day. Yes, on the surface it is valid to question why R10-million is spent on a stadium when it could be spent on food for the poor, but, in the long term, the positive spin-offs coming our way far outweigh the negative ones.

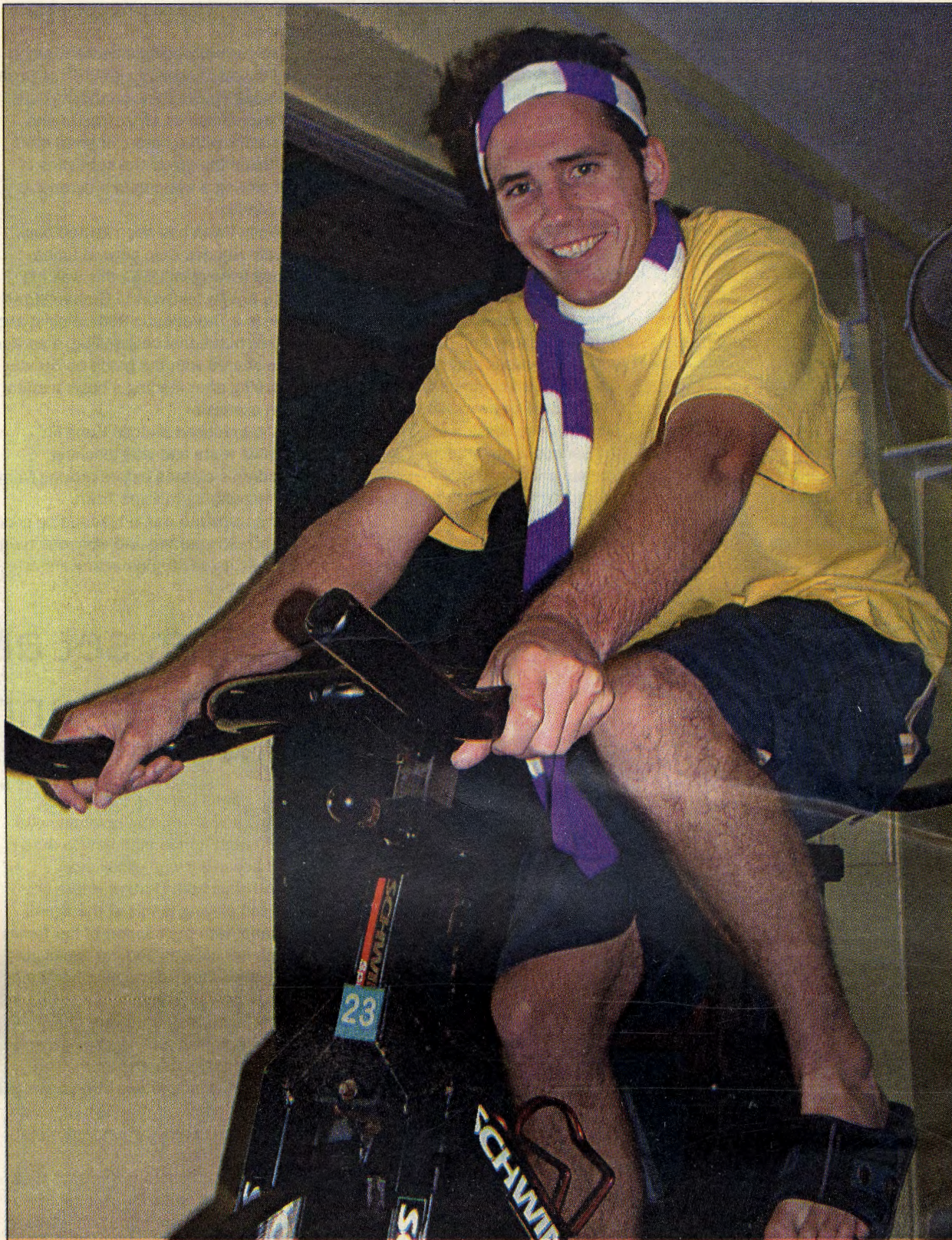
When someone of the calibre of SA Chamber of Business chief executive, James Lennox, states that the World Cup "will no doubt help establish a common South African identity" and that "the economy will gain massively from this," one can't help but take the optimistic approach and be thankful that the country has been afforded this monumental privilege and gigantic opportunity. We successfully hosted the Cricket World Cup and the Rugby World Cup, so who is to say that we will not succeed in hosting the 2010 Soccer World Cup!? In the words of Thabo Mbeki: "Lets all go out and celebrate... forward to 2010!"

The real Sweat Shop

■ Carly Ritz

If you have been to the Health Suite lately, you will have noticed the Sweat Shop stand perched just outside the entrance to the gym, displaying a variety of refreshments, Appabands, beanies and scarves available in any colour combo you want! Look out for cosy lumo orange scarves this winter, a must-have for the vibey individual. But venture further into the gym for a sweaty experience of a different kind... I dare you.

Spinning is a popular activity and there is no exception here at Rhodes University. You must know that when you have to arrive at least 20 minutes before a class to secure a bike, that something addictive and spunky is going on. This craze is not just about sexy instructors yelling at you to turn up your resistance and assume hand position three – although the whole image is quite kinky. Spinning comprises of the same principles as outdoor cycling but in an indoor environment. You can climb hills, jump and sprint without even leaving the premises. Chris Felgate, a 3rd year HKE student and spinning instructor, says that as a tri-athlete, he spends much of his time training on his own and spinning is one way that he is able to help others and exercise in a social environment. Besides the social advantages, spinners can enjoy upbeat music as well as many physical benefits including improvement in cardio-vascular fitness, weight loss, toning and general feelings of health and well-being. Each instructor has to have a qualification before he/she can give classes, which maintains a mode of professionalism about the activity. Kerry Wallace, who has a BA honours and is currently doing her PDEM, has been a spinning instructor for the last four years. She has recently run a spinning course with 12 participants Roald Wallis, a 3rd year HKE student being one of these brave few. This course has both practical and theoretical requirements and according to Wallis, was "very professionally run". Wallis would like to create an "upbeat" feel to a class and hopes to inspire people to work to their full potential. The course participants will be writing their theory exam today (20th of May), so good luck to all of them. Another course will be run next term as well. Both Kerry and Chris feel that support for spinning at Rhodes will continue and that they may need a bigger studio soon. Kerry suggests that spinning may be "in fashion at the moment", but insists that spinning will maintain



James Ball, manager of the Sweat Shop – never afraid of a challenge.

■ Gaynor Barnard

a strong following because unlike aerobics it appeals to both males and females.

Georgie Michelmores, a 3rd year BJourn student and also a spinning instructor, says that people should come and spin to take their minds off other stresses and be rejuvenated, especially with exams around the corner.

Kirby Gordon, a 2nd year BEcon student feels that "any guy who runs for 20 minutes and thinks that he has had a good work-out hasn't had a 45 minute spinning session followed by the sexy Georgie's famous power sprint just to top it off. Spinning takes balls."

So come along, armed with towel, Appaband and water bottle and give it

a whirl, and see why everyone wants to TRY SPINNING!

■ Spinning classes are held every day of the week and on weekends. There is a 6:15 class in the mornings as well as classes at 4:15, 5:15 and 6:15 in the afternoons from Mondays to Fridays. Weekend classes are at 5:15 in the evenings on Saturdays and Sundays.

Redbull gives Rhodes students wings

■ Keighley-Ann Bell

Red bull, the energy drink that "gives you wings", will be sponsoring an exciting day of inventive and speedy box carting, which is set to take Rhodes students by storm this Saturday, the 22nd of May. The competition, which has been organised by Paula Chowles (the Rhodes Redbull Student Brand Manager), involves two Redbull-sponsored box carts and eight teams of four "go carters" who must race one another to the finish line with the sole intention of winning. This and a great creative outfit will be the criteria for first prize, which is "any adventure day of your choice", ranging from white-

water rafting to bungee jumping and 4-by-4'ing in the dunes on a beach, for the entire winning group that takes part. The event is a stimulator that acts as a prequel for the national box carting event set to take place in Durban in October, where the contestants must build their own box cart and race it out to the finish amongst other top go carters in the country. Luckily for Rhodes students, box carts will be sponsored and the only thing expected is to show up in a killer outfit. The teams taking part have already been finalised. Red Bull has organised an official after party to be held at The Suite. For more information about the national event, contact Paula Chowles at 072 385 7581 or take a look at www.redbullboxcartrace.co.za

-SPECIAL-

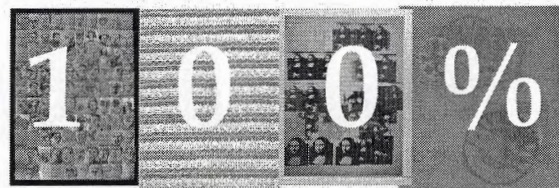
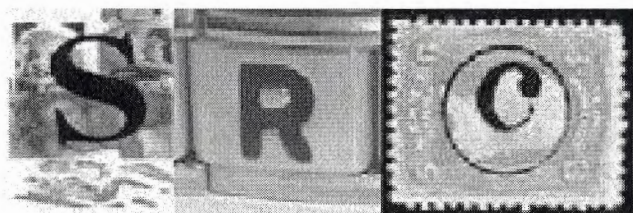
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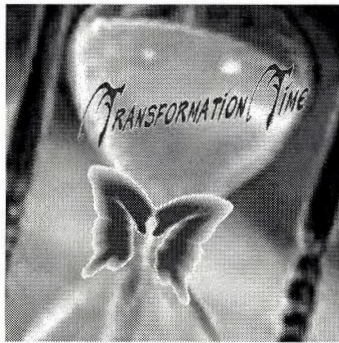
Independent Official Newsletter of the SRC

All the leaves are brown

There is an old Grahamstown saying that goes something like if the leaves are beginning to fall and you haven't started learning for the exams, then start praying. But as usual at this time of the year you will find that you begin to work very hard and seriously at avoiding work. You will suddenly find your most mundane task taking upon the unusual form of being very exciting. For example your washing, tumble-drying and folding of your clothes will be vital for your well-being. Your room will be dusted three or four times a day and vacuumed far more frequently, which will also have something to do with the sudden increase of daily visitors. The gym will be packed, even at 6am on very cold mornings. The stress will cause you some discomfort and the sudden panic attacks will become rapidly nastier as the times for those exams creep closer. Non-smokers will suddenly pick up an unexpected and very enticing pack of cigarettes and smoke the pack in a matter of seconds. The munchies will hit you harder than heavy-weight boxing champion and you will have uncontrollable urges to go to BP and eat those sweet-and-sour pork pies or koek-sisters. But remember that good things come to those who are diligent and even to those who are not. I am talking about the 4 week holiday afterwards and trust me you will appreciate them so much. So just remember to balance your life, for example try cutting down on excessive amounts of TV watching, don't exercise obsessively and the most important thing is to learn. You'll find that you can't go wrong with learning. This is the last SRC supplement for the term, so from the entire SRC have a good exam period, learn hard and enjoy your vac. Please also remember that the Oppie bus will still be running and that we are still want people to come to the SRC offices with any complaints of any form of harassment, on or off campus. – Charmaine Jelbert

ATTENTION ALL LEADERS





Transformation Councillor

I, Tafadzwa Madondo, am the current Hobson Hall Representative and my portfolio is Transformation. The way I define transformation is that, students should understand how things have changed over the past years at Rhodes. This year being the centenary year one can recognise that things have changed over the past 100 years, which includes the lecturing system, residence system and how the days of racism have gone by. The only way transformation can be promoted is through the reconciliation of students of different cultures and making students aware of issues such as rape and the effects of such to the community of Rhodes as a whole.

As an SRC member I have helped organise the First year Luncheon, helped on the rape awareness week and partly on the Give-Five campaign. One of the things that the SRC has transformed so far is that each week the SRC gets to visit different halls on campus, this makes the students aware that the SRC is there to represent and listen to the concerns of the students.

Basically my duty as the Transformation Councillor is to work with all the other councillors especially Community interaction and Gender.

This being so, it has been proposed by the SRC that the Transformation portfolio be combined with the Gender portfolio as from next year, to add more meaning to the portfolio and recognition by the students.

Student forum

Warning, this article involves some of what actually happens with student politics, you might want to ignore it and claim that the SRC hasn't thrown a party in ages and so must not be doing anything.

On Tuesday the 4th of May the first Student Forum of the year was held at the GLT. A pitiful number of people showed up, but it wasn't a party and people only seem to get involved when there is a problem.

The usual apathy rant aside, a big thanks to all the people who attended. The Student Forum is an official committee of enshrined in the constitution of the students. It is made up of a selection of student

leaders from around campus including society heads, residence and hall head students. This is usually too formal an arrangement and so the meeting is opened up to the whole campus, with the minutes distributed to actual members afterwards, giving them seven days to comment. It was a very informative meeting with the highlights being:

- * The launch of the shiny new SRC website (It will soon be upon us)
- * Details of plans for alternative entertainment such as putt-putt and bowling alleys
- * Changes to the Constitution of the Students (I'd find out about these if I were you)
- * The new class-rep policy
- * The details of an extensive society review to get rid of defunct Societies

After the formal agenda the gathering is opened as a general meeting. This is where the scandal happens. Unfortunately it seems the SRC has been well behaved apart from a naughty swearing incident. It must also be mentioned that oppie biscuits were discussed at the several urgings of one of the attendees. Oh, we will be having another party at the beginning of next term, so you can see us in action again. YeeeHaaa!

Dom White



Hopefully, we aren't competing

Class reps workshop

The last week of the first term saw the realisation of plenty of planning. The SRC hosted a Class Representatives training workshop on the 20th of March. The first of its kind, the workshop was a big step for the SRC Academic Portfolio towards fulfilling the obligation outlined in the student's Constitution: to oversee all class reps at the University. While no easy feat, there definitely exists a need for such an undertaking. Class reps are generally elected and then pretty much left to figure out for themselves how to go about doing things. At present, the process of electing reps seems more like an arduous task more than anything else. The attitude is "we have to get this done, so let's just do it."

The system as it currently stands is a shadow of what it could be. There is quite a big vision behind this, that has been passed down from previous Academic Councillor (2002) and SRC Vice President (2003) Earl Hodges. Passing on the torch so to speak, I have tried to do my bit and hopefully it will keep on developing as it passes from one Academic Councillor to the next.

Provided at the workshop was a handbook addressing the basic roles and responsibilities of a class rep. One of the main speakers was former SRC President Matthew Charlesworth, who delivered an excellent address on the challenges facing a class rep and ways to really make the most of it. He was followed

by Prof. Chrissie Boughy from the Academic Development Center, who workshopped the teaching and learning policies of the University. This was an essential step, as it is important for class reps in particular to be aware of the role and obligations of departments and the University towards students.

I will be in touch with all reps via email, and hope to start something of a regular newsletter. Meanwhile, I have been developing a policy that will be addressed at Student Forum, outlining in further detail the role of Class Reps. Eventually, class reps should be empowered to the extent where they are an extension of student government on a local level, while the SRC represents the corporate level. The point is to create a forum for students to be heard, and for concerns and problems to be effectively and efficiently dealt with. This is the goal towards which the SRC strives as a whole, and one which I am trying to bring about in my own portfolio.

If there are any questions from class reps or concerning class reps, feel free to email me at academic@src.ru.ac.za. Otherwise: remember guys – it's halfway through term already. With less than a month to go till exams, it's never too early to start studying.

Till next time,

Verashni Pillay
Academic Councillor 2004

OPPI.NYON

ALL ABOUT OPPIDANS

What – no hot dogs?

by Aretha Phiri

Friday the 23rd of April saw many an Oppi swarm into the Oppidan secretary's office in anticipation of a special occasion. The office, normally "unexplored" territory by Oppidans, except for when originally registering with the Union, suddenly became a hub of activity, and Mrs Joy Allcock, the most sought-after woman on Rhodes University campus. What was all the noise about? – A long awaited, and long overdue, Cheese and Wine! Anyone who lives in digs will appreciate the value and importance of such occasions in which good, and hopefully nutritious food can be consumed. Denied the regularity of "proper" meals, so common to life in residence, any food, no matter how "crap" that food may turn out to be, is undoubtedly a welcomed and esteemed highlight in the life of the Oppi.

The Cheese and Wine was scheduled to begin at 6.30 pm and for the first time ever, Oppis rallied together (way before it was scheduled to start) in support of a truly worthwhile cause – refuelling their stomachs that seem to always function on 'low'. By 6.00 pm however there was no sign of the event – disillusioning, considering people had attempted to sabotage the event by claiming it had been cancelled. Amid much grumbling and threats to claim 'compensation', the life-saving caterer arrived, in a car filled to the brim with what appeared to be food. The committee members arrived on the scene just in the nick of time, to transport the food, and to prevent what could have culminated in the "Oppi Food Riots" of 2004.

With the Oppi committee's decision to be lenient (just this once) on those without the necessary identification, the vast number of Oppis was able to enter the venue, which was big enough to hold (if we consider health and safety) about forty people. Expecting the usual "hotdogs", they were confronted instead by a well laid out table of savoury treats, ranging from stuffed eggs, pastries and sandwiches to carrot sticks and dip, provided for by the enthusiastic catering team at the Blockhouse. The obvious surprise and excitement could not be contained and comments on how good the food was, not to mention how much of it was available, permeated the room. There was so much food that some Oppis were inclined to bring with them personal cutlery for the benefit of either feeding the masses that were not able to attend or, more to my suspicion, to stock up on food supply for the next week, whilst at the same time effectively utilising their 18.5 cents a day-worth

of contributions in membership fees. Despite the lack of obvious entertainment, the good vibe and flowing conversation enabled all to eat to their heart's content, to the point that some complained of stomach-aches and

yet seemingly undeterred, only left the venue well after the cut off time.

Eventually, with all the Oppis having left, the committee was able to 'organise' the room into a somewhat agreeable state for the person with the unfortunate task of cleaning it the following Monday. With the satisfaction of having pulled off such a successful event, they were able head home or wherever the night took them, for some well-earned rest or celebration.

So, is this a sign of things to come or is this just a once-off attempt to make up for an allegedly 'faceless' and inactive union? Let's face it, being an Oppi was about as exciting as being an honorary member of the Mickey Mouse Club, a tedious necessity. Well hopefully not any more. This year, and hopefully for years to come, the Oppi committee and its warden, is dedicated to providing for and bringing the Oppis together. With the success of the Cheese and Wine in mind, the committee has planned events for the next term, the most prominent being another Cheese and Wine and an Oppi Ball, to be announced nearer the time. The committee will endeavour to utilize money received, for the full benefit of each and every Oppi. It will also try to provide effective support structures for its members in the attempt to be more accessible. This will be a proactive mission and as such all members are encouraged to make meaningful contributions by way of opinions, ideas, feedback and news on any events occurring that may affect Oppi's. Comments, queries and suggestions can be emailed to the following email addresses: g04p3993@campus.ru.ac.za and j.v.allcock.ru.ac.za

With that said, here's wishing each and every one of you success in your upcoming exams and some well deserved fun during your vacations.



Quick 'n easy recipes

Vegetable Frittata

Good for vegetarians and anyone seeking a delicious "on – the – go" meal

Ingredients

2 cups fresh or frozen mixed vegetables

3 eggs

¼ tsp salt

¼ tsp basil

1 tsb vegetable oil

1 onion sliced

Method

Bring 2 cups (500ml) of water to the boil in a saucepan. Add vegetables and cover. When water returns to a boil, drain vegetables. Beat eggs with salt and basil. Heat oil in a non-stick pan over medium heat. Add onion and sauté for 3 minutes. Add vegetables and sauté until hot. Pour eggs over. Reduce heat to med/low. Cover and cook until set.

Serve with cheddar cheese on or with a toasted bagel or bread.

Oppidan Committee

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The SRC oppi bus

The bus leaves the main library weekdays at 8:30pm and again at 10:30pm. An SRC initiative, the bus takes you right to your doorstep, should you need it.

It is estimated that as many as

1 in 10

South Africans are HIV positive.

How many are reading this page?

HIV and AIDS affects all of us, even if we are not infected.

**Treat everyone as if they are HIV positive,
treat everyone with respect.**