Nearly 1000 graduate under overcast skies
by Michele Wucker

Gray skies didn't stop nearly 1000 students from graduating at Rice's 74th commencement Saturday May 10, in the academic quadrangle. A gloomy weather forecast and soggy ground after several days of rain had threatened to force the ceremony indoors to Autry Court, but only a few drops of rain fell during commencement.

After an invocation by Father Brian Donovan, Provost Neal Lane conferred 96 doctoral degrees and 259 Master's degrees.

The brief shower began as students received their degrees. President George Rupp warned new graduates to put the diplomas under their gowns to protect the sheepskin from water.

Following the special award presentations, Rupp challenged the graduates "to counter the claims of exclusive concern for individual gratification in the present," advising them to maintain the same sense of community.

"Individual success may not be sustained only when they are rooted in..." see Rupp page 4

Rupp speaks to minority students at Rice
by Steve Phillips

President George Rupp told the Black Student Union April 20 that he supports working through existing channels to address minority concerns rather than establishing a central minority office.

In addition, he rejected student suggestions that an administrative committee for minorities be formed.

BSU President Steve McVea said that most of the people at the meeting left with feelings of resentment.

The BSU had asked Rupp to consider establishing an office for minority affairs to provide a visible support system for minorities at Rice and to coordinate minority activities.

The BSU would hope that Rice will increase the number of its black students and faculty, add new fields of academics like Afro-American Studies, establish a black speaker series, and promote greater recognition of February as Black History Month.

Oletheia Chisolm, who organized the meeting, described Rupp's reaction as "very reserved." She said he had hoped the meeting would be "one of many meetings to come, a way of getting our foot in the door."

"There's no reason for me to think things are going to change without more student influence," she said.

Mona Rayside, a student who attended the meeting, also said that most students had been disappointed. "He nodded his head and we came away with absolutely nothing. The few students who weren't disappointed said, 'We knew he wouldn't do anything anyway,'" she said.

Rupp did not allow the Thresher to attend the meeting, saying he didn't think it would serve any useful purpose.

According to the minutes of the meeting, when asked what the students could expect, Rupp said he would look into establishing minority merit scholarships and adding black speakers to the Presidential Lecture Series. He also said that recruitment of black faculty members is "in the works."

In addition, he told the students that he was working on a proposal for minority affairs. At the Richfield Company (ARCO) solicited a proposal from Rice for a grant for minority affairs on April 16, four days before the meeting, according to Rupp.

Student Affairs Ronald Stebbings was informed of the meeting with the BSU after it had taken place.

Rupp said that the meeting was "quite useful for clarifying concerns."

"I don't think you could find very many students at the meeting who didn't think they were being listened to," he said. Rupp later said he had reservations about a minority office because he didn't want the office to be separate from the rest of the university, and he didn't think it would serve minority affairs well.

"We risk minority students' not taking advantage of such an office," he said.

Rupp told the BSU that he would rather improve things within the existing structure at Rice.

He later pointed out that the Admissions Office has "worked very strongly and aggressively in recruiting more minority students." The Admissions Office has attempted to increase minority enrollment through letter-writing campaigns and an "ambassador" group of Rice students who visit high schools with high minority concentrations.

In addition, the engineering department has flown in minority students to show them the campus in hopes that they will choose to matriculate at Rice.

According to Associate Admissions Director Catherine Clack, the number of minority students in the nation planning to attend college has decreased recently, thus making it harder for Rice to attract a higher number of minorities.

Baker speaks about U.S. economy
by Lisa Gray

Secretary of the Treasury James A. Baker III offered his prescriptions for improving the American economy to an audience of 200 business leaders at the Rice Executive Luncheon held April 27 in the Rice Memorial Center.

Baker stressed the need for competitiveness in the American market. "Businesses have got to start asking themselves what they need to do to make themselves lean and mean," he said. Among those students to show them the campus in hopes that they will choose to matriculate at Rice.

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Minors need office

Constantly aiming at becoming a top-notch university, Rice prides itself on its reputation as “the Harvard of the South.” However, Rice lags far behind many schools in its minority relations. Many schools, including MIT, Yale, and University of Virginia, have centralized facilities for minority affairs. Rice needs to provide an Office for Minority Affairs if it is to remain in the forefront of higher education.

A minority office would help coordinate programs to help minority students cope with a primarily white university. It would solicit scholarship funds, aid contact between minority students and alumni, and, most importantly, provide a visible support group for minorities.

Many black students come to Rice from predominantly black high schools; a university where few of the students and less than 1 percent of the tenure-track professors are black is a real culture shock. Minority students must cope with extreme social adjustment as well as academics.

In fact, the academic shock that black students experience may be greater that that which white students experience because they often come from high schools that don’t provide as comprehensive an education as white schools.

Rice has undoubtedly made considerable progress in improving services for minorities; the Admissions Office is making steps toward attracting more minority students, and several faculty members are trying to increase awareness.

But Rice simply cannot make the progress necessary if it does not create an office for minority affairs. There is a racial problem at Rice; the university must confront this problem directly. By declaring that the existing system can address the problem, President Rupp is ignoring the size of the problem.

Overt racism may no longer be a problem, but we need to avoid a subtler kind of racism: one that insists that a WASP-oriented culture is best for everyone. Minorities have been expected to assimilate themselves into a white university. It is time for Rice to recognize its minority groups and foster distinct cultural identities instead of cultural homogeneity.

—Michele Wucker

Editorial policy set

The Thresher serves a small but diverse audience. By trying to please everyone that reads it, we will end up pleasing very few of them. The editorial page of the Thresher will be your place to tell us what you’re not happy with. Here are some guidelines for submissions to the Thresher:

• Letters to the editor must be signed, and should include the writer’s college and expected year of graduation or departmental affiliation. Typed letters are encouraged but neatly written ones will be accepted. The Thresher will not edit content or ideas. However, we reserve the right to edit for clarity, grammar, and length, and we reserve the right not to print all the letters we receive.

• Misclassified submissions need not be signed. Unsigned editorials will be run as miscasts. Again, we encourage neatness, and we reserve the right to edit or not print all submissions. We will not print personal attacks. We will not keep misclass off the back page because it contains “off-color” language; however, we will not print submissions solely because they contain “off-color” language. The backpage editor and the editor-in-chief determine what will go on the backpage; their decisions are final.

• Letters to the editor and miscasts can be sent to the Thresher at P.O. Box 1892, Houston, Texas, 77251, or by campus mail to our office. Barring earthquake, catastrophe, fire, and flood, our next issue will be mailed to freshmen and returning students in July.

Gass rebuts Dahlberg editorial

To the editor:

In the last issue of the Thresher, Spencer Greene called the impeachment of Frisk Dahlberg a face. What becomes farcical, however, is he and his accusation, if one takes the time to look at them carefully. Go ahead, boys and girls, dig through your still-unpacked schoolbags, and pull out a copy of the April 24 issue and read along with me.

First he claims that the charges are “vague and meaningless,” that they would be laughed at in any court of law. Brilliant, Spencer. Of course they would. A court of law does not have the Rice University Code of Judicial Proceedings to rule by. They only have laws set by the United States government.

Just imagine the courtroom backdrop if courts were instructed to judge people on the basis of Rice values. Imagine all of America with an Honor Code.

—Linda Gass

UCLA suspends student editors

In February, the University of California at Los Angeles suspended two editors of the student newspaper Daily Bruin on the basis of publishing a harsh racial remark. A cartoon depicted a rooster claiming that his acceptance to U.C.L.A. was based on affirmative action.

Most of the accused editors insist on the distinction between a racial remark and a comment expressing the political times. In particular, a news editor at California State University at Northridge, insisted that “a university exists to promote the search for truth, and censorship is always detrimental to that search.”

A recent study by the Gannett Foundation found that censorship was indeed prevalent on the 18 universities studied. The study also suggested that one editor at the University of Delaware had committed suicide because he had been intimidated by a censorship scenario.

The Student Press Law Center in Washington claims that censorship has ensued from the conservative atmosphere that has recently pervaded campuses.

Threshing it out

letters to the editor

The impeachment is faulted for not having a supplemental qualification of the charges. It seems blatantly obvious that everyone on the University Court knew of exactly what the charges consisted.

Furthermore, one needs only to review the impeachment of Andrew Johnson to see a precedent for passing impeachment without passing any accompanying articles.

Next we proceed to Spencer’s unique perception of an impeachment. When impeachment was developed in England in the early 18th century, it was simply designed to charge a public official with a crime or serious misconduct. There is not a single mention of the words, “while in office,” nor is it implied.

—Samantha Gass

Beyond the Hedges

by Mary Ashkar

Yale research gets profs tenured

At Yale University, junior faculty members with excellent teaching skills rarely get tenure; it is a professor’s research and published works that carry the most weight.

Yale’s tenure system works on a limited slot system; only after a tenured senior professor retires can his position be filled. Since it is not often that such positions are open, Yale turns to the national and international pool of professors, knowing that its prestigious reputation can attract some of the most widely renowned scholars. Consequently, junior faculty members, upon joining the faculty at Yale, know that if denied tenure, they have Yale’s reputation to back them in their search for other teaching position.

—Andy Spencer

The next allegation is completely erroneous. Contrary to Spencer’s statement, the SA did not approve the election results. Had he bothered to check, he would have found that the SA transferred power to the University Court in 1966.

My last criticism of the editorial is the completely unfounded maligning of Andy Ranner. If Andy had spoken at the meeting, his remarks would have been construed as biased. The SA was well-informed on the issue, and Andy kept appropriately silent.

Spencer wonders how Andy could vote for impeachment when a month before Andy had submitted a motion to the court stating that it did not have jurisdiction over slander cases.

Spencer, get a grip on yourself. The University Court doesn’t have such authority.

—Spencer, page 3

Wendy’s burger man gets Duke degree

At this year’s Duke University graduation ceremonies, R. David Thomas, the initiator of Wendy’s Old Fashioned Hamburger, will receive an honorary degree. Mr. Thomas has also donated $4 million to Duke.

The awarding of an honorary degree to Mr. Thomas, who has not been educated past the eighth grade, has brought new meaning to the term “honorary degree.” According to the chair of Duke’s Sociology Department, the honorary degree is bestowed upon a non-university scholar or a philanthropist like Mr. Thomas. Awarding honorary degrees, thus, is comparable to naming buildings or scholarships after philanthropists.
Gass says U. Court Chair should show ethics in behavior

Threshing It Out

continued from page 2

To the editor:

I would like to clarify a couple of points about the University Court's actions in the April 24 edition of the Thresher on the selection of new masters for Hanszen and Will Rice Colleges.

The first point is that my remark to the effect that the Waldmans are different people than we are intended simply to underscore the fact that Hanszen College's Search Committee had no particular "model" in mind when it was seeking a new master, and that in any case a periodic change of style is good, perhaps even essential, for a college.

Second, although I did indeed comment on the "commitment to the college and interest in the activities of the college" on the part of the Waldmanc, my endorsement of their selection was far more positive. Among other things, the reporter failed to mention in his story my deliberate and heartfelt statement that "mastering is a team effort, and the Waldmans are a wonderful team."

The point deserving notice is that I have the highest regard for both Peter and Nancy Waldman, as anyone who has spoken with me about the recent master search at Hanszen can attest.

Richard J. Smith
Professor of History
Master of Hanszen College

Doonesbury

BY GARRY TRUDEAU

Smith says story unclear

To the editor:

I hardly think his fake masters for Hanszen and Will Rice Colleges are intended simply to underscore the fact that Hanszen College's Search Committee had no particular "model" in mind when it was seeking a new master, and that in any case a periodic change of style is good, perhaps even essential, for a college.

I asked him to show me the University Court Chairman's role in the selection of new masters. Consequently, the SA maintains that the University Court Chairman, certainly should exhibit exemplary ethics instead of a lack thereof.

Kevin Gass
1987-88 Student Association President

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The Rice Thresher, the official student newspaper at Rice University, is published each Friday during the school year, except during examination periods and holidays, by the students of Rice University. Editorial and business offices are located on the second floor of the Ley Building.

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Rupp praises family

continued from page 1

nourished by the relationships on which they depend," he said. "So
begin with family and friends."

He warned graduates of the dangers of insisting on immediate
gratification, encouraging them to place their actions in a
wider temporal context. He cited
several cases of the contemporary American preoccupation with
immediate gratification, including
"investment strategists for whom
enormous wealth accumulated through accepted manipulations
of the market is insufficient, and
who therefore indulge in illegal
insider trading" and "television
evangelists who glorify con-
spicuous consumption as the
expression of divine favor."

He also warned of the effects of self-involvement on the whole of
American society. "Think of our
balance of trade or the enormous
recent accumulation of federal
budget deficits. Or consider the
ever greater dependence on
student loans to finance
education."

"I am convinced that our
preoccupation with individual
satisfaction in the present
impoverishes us in comparison to
the sense of participation in
community and continuity over
time of our forbears," Rupp
added, "even as we pursue more
ardently a level of opulence
unknown to previous generations.
The challenge is to participate in a
higher story, a community of
memory and hope, that is larger
than our individual selves."

Rupp ended his speech by recognizing six retiring faculty
members: Walter Austin of civil
engineering, Morton Curtis of
mathematics, Wilfred Dowden of
English, Clyde Manschreck of
religious studies, James Sims of
civil engineering and Albert
Tipton of music.
End-of-year awards presented to student, faculty leaders

MENTOR Recognition Award

The Mentor Recognition Award, given annually by the retiring Student Association Senate, was presented during graduation ceremonies May 9 to History Professor Rich Smith, Tom Perrault, outgoing president of the Student Association, presented the award to Smith in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the student body "as an advisor, counselor, teacher, and friend."

Perrault cited Smith's successful five-year term as master of Hanszen College, but added that Smith's influence has spread beyond Hanszen, saying that Smith has served as an "adopted" master to many students from other colleges.

Smith has also been named a Piper Professor of 1987, the Minnie Stevens Piper Foundation announced May 1. The award, which carries a $2500 honorarium, is awarded annually to ten Texas professors chosen "primarily for teaching," according to Smith. "I am very pleased to have been nominated by Rice this year, and especially pleased to have been selected by the Piper Foundation, which has contributed so much to higher education in the state," Smith said.

PHI BETA KAPPA Society

Thirty-nine Rice students were initiated into the Rice chapter of Phi Beta Kappa May 8. To be considered for membership, a student must have demonstrated high academic achievement and completed a certain number of hours courses which "reflecting a breadth of intellectual interest rather than a focus on development of special vocational skills or techniques," according to the honor society.

New meal plan causes ID change

by Michele Wucker

Beginning next August, Rice students will pay for their meals through a new "reduced balance" food plan designed to let them pay only for what they eat.

The Reduced Balance Residential College Food Plan Committee sent a recommendation April 28 to Vice President for Administration William Aker, suggesting that the university adopt the plan.

Under the plan, students will be able to buy as many or as few meals as they like after they purchase a minimum number of meals. In addition, off-campus students can pay the base fee and buy individual meals at reduced cost. Any meals that have been paid for but not eaten by the end of the semester will be credited to the student's meal plan for the next semester. Central Kitchens will use a computer system to keep track of the student meals. Magnetic card-reading machines manufactured by the CBORD company will read 11-digit codes in the magnetic strips on the back of student I.D. cards.

In the past, bar-code stickers for cards.

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1. The coherent minor
The "two worlds" of academia — the sciences and the liberal arts — were supposed to meet under the coherent minor plan, a curriculum plan which aimed to make Rice students better educated about the "world" outside their majors. Under the plan, liberal-arts majors would complete a three-course minor in a science, and science majors would do the same in a liberal art. And everyone would take "foundation courses" in his or her non-major field.
That was the plan, at least.
But the coherent minor committee's first proposal, released in November, drew unexpected controversy. More than a hundred students and faculty attended a December forum at the Chemistry Lecture Hall to question the committee and criticize the proposal. They complained that the proposal was too restrictive, difficult to implement, and contained poorly constructed minors.
"Many of you were at the forum," Provost Neal Lane later told the faculty. "Others were more fortunate."
Citing arguments voiced by students and faculty, the committee changed its position for the final proposal in April. The new version recommended that the coherent minor begin a five-year "trial period" in the fall of 1988, during which the minor would be optional. The foundation courses, however, would remain required.
After further but less passionate argument, the faculty approved the new proposal.

2. Teaching, research, and Dr. Joseph Martin
The color pamphlet Rice sends to prospective students promises, if they come to Rice, they will have professors "who combine enthusiasm for teaching with abilities for research," and the university has long boasted that outstanding teaching is preferred here.
That's what made it so surprising that Assistant Biology Professor Joseph Martin was denied tenure.
Martin has received about as much teaching recognition as Rice has to offer: he's won the Nicholas Salgo Award for Excellence in Teaching and the Phi Beta Kappa award for Outstanding Teaching by an assistant professor, and he has just received a 1987 George R. Brown teaching award. Martin's student evaluations rank him higher than any other professor in his department and among the top teachers in the university.
After the Biology Department refused to recommend him for tenure, 420 students signed a petition on Martin's behalf. The petitions were sent to the Committee on Promotions and Tenure.
Then 175 students peacefully marched from the Anderson Biological Laboratories to President Rupp's office, to deliver letters urging the university to recognize good teaching in the tenure process.
But when the Board of Governors announced tenure decisions on March 27, Martin's name was not included, presumably because he had not completed sufficient research.
In response to the controversy, the Promotions and Tenure Committee declared in an April 3 letter to the Thresher editor that teaching is "very important" in the tenure process.
Meanwhile, Martin has announced that he will leave Rice next year, taking his award-winning teaching to another university.

3. The drinking age and Proctor Holt
Administrators who deal with discipline are never popular with students, but Proctor Edward Holt had an especially rough time this year as the Texas drinking age changed from 19 to 21 in September.
Holt, using a clause of the judicial code called "independent action," punished the students himself without allowing the case to go through the University Court. Holt's use of the clause caused the Student Association to censure him.
The Proctor didn't improve his popularity with students when, at a fall faculty discussion of the academic calendar, he suggested that Rice eliminate spring break, since he saw "no need for everyone to goof off for a week."

4. Rice football
New football coach Jeff Burdett had just finished winning four Ivy League championships for the University of Pennsylvania and everyone wanted what he'd do with a Rice team that hasn't had a winning season since 1963.
Burdett led the Owls to a 4-7 record — nothing to brag about, but as many wins as Berdett's predecessor Watson Brown gathered in two seasons. The year included an upset of Air Force and narrow losses to Baylor and Texas.
Though it's too early to tell whether Berdett is engineering a turn-around, his recruits for this year look promising; the 30-member freshman class includes the Los Angeles player of the year.
The National Collegiate Athletic Association's ban on Southern Methodist University for paying its players certainly didn't hurt Rice's recruiting. Rice, the only Southwest Conference team in Texas not under investigation for athletic violations, may have struck the recruits as the only school in the state sure to be safe from suspensions.
Ticket sales, though, don't seem to be going very well. The Athletic Department has announced that it will give coupons for a free hot dog and soft drink at every game to anyone who buys a 1987 season ticket by August 31.

5. Marketing Rice
"I could tell you that it was a good place, but I couldn't tell you why," said Kent Dove about his impression of Rice before he came here in September to become Vice President of External Affairs.
"I want to make Rice a household word," announced William F. Noblitt after he was hired in March to head Rice's public and media affairs as Director of University Relations.
The new positions are meant to spearhead what Dove calls "a new phase in Rice's public-relations programs."
Dove, whose staff may soon include professional marketing strategists, says an improved university image will help to recruit students and faculty as well as aid in fundraising.

6. Student volunteers
On Valentine's Day, 500 Rice students, faculty and staff travelled around Houston to volunteer at organizations around the city. The Rice Student Volunteer Program (RSVP) coordinated "Outreach Day," matching students to volunteer programs.
Volunteers helped or were given orientation classes at the Red Cross, the Houston Area Urban League, the Crisis Intervention Center, and Citizens for Animal Protection.
RSVP's work earned Rice a favorable mention in Time magazine and a feature in the Houston Chronicle.

7. Tuition increase
In January, President Rupp announced Rice's largest tuition increase since the university began charging tuition in 1965. Tuition will go up $500 for the 1987-88 school year, bringing the total to $4900 — nearly twice the 1978 tuition. The increase is the ninth in as many years.
Rupp announced the increase briefly at the end of a faculty meeting, and some student senators were infuriated that Rupp didn't first explain to students the reasons for the increase.
Of course, Rice isn't raising its tuition just for grins: the university's liability insurance will cost about $500,000 more next year, and the ailing Texas economy "has had its contribution," Rupp said.

8. Election Scandal
A February campaign for University Court Chairman became more ridiculous and harder to understand than the new federal financial aid laws.
Four students ran for the position: Greg Heath, Frank Dahlberg, Andy Karner, and Todd Torrence. The last three are the characters of our story.
Karsner put up posters which attacked the current University Court's record. Torczon responded with his own posters, which read "Andy Karsner doesn't know what he's talking about," rebutted Karsner point by point, and ended with a plug for Torczon. Dahlberg, wearing dark glasses and a trench coat, placed posters over and beside Karsner's, making Karsner's posters seem to say things like, "If elected I will suck your dick" and "If elected I will turn Rice into a police state."

Karsner, believing Torczon had put up both sets of posters, made dinner announcements at seven colleges implying that Torczon had put up the offensive posters. Dahlberg won the election. No protests were filed against him, and the Student Association Senate approved his election. But Torczon, upset about the dinner announcements, filed slander charges against Karsner in University Court. Karsner submitted lengthy pretrial motions claiming that the court had no jurisdiction over the case, that he wasn't notified of Torczon's complaint in time, and that he could prove Court members were biased against him. Torczon then decided to drop the charge, saying all he wanted was an apology from Karsner, and it didn't look like he would get it.

But that's not all. One and a half months after the election, when Dahlberg had already settled into the office, the SA Senate passed a resolution to impeach him for violating university rules that require such things as "considerate and ethical behavior" and "good taste and good manners." Dahlberg resigned before his trial. A new election for court chairman will be held in the fall.

9. Safe Rides
You're off campus and you've been drinking, but you have to drive home. What do you do?
The Rice Program Council began its Safe Rides program, the first of its kind at a major university, to give drunk students a safe way home. Student volunteers worked from 10:30 p.m. to 2:30 a.m. on Friday and Saturday nights during the academic year, driving to pick up students who called the RPC office for a ride.
Alley’s ‘Lie of the Mind’ satisfactory

A Lie of the Mind
Alley Theatre

If you’re like this Goldbluck, you found that Blood Simple burned your mouth and Paris, Texas was barely tepid. The Alley’s production of A Lie of the Mind might, then, be just right for you.

Not, of course, that A Lie of the Mind is the sort of play you could expect baby bear to enjoy. It is of the same genre as Blood Simple and Paris, Texas: dark, powerful drama about rural working-class Americans. People with long extended families. People who drink a lot of beer and have marital problems. People who would never use the phrase “marital problems.” People who like to drive across this great nation of ours in beat-up pickup trucks or old Chevys with fins or, best of all, old, beat-up Chevys pickups with fins.

Like the two movies, Lie uses disturbing, insistent country-style music to punctuate scenes and keep you on the edge of your seat. The if-they’re-not-famous-then-they-should-be Red Ryder Rambler’s provide this music in the Houston production. The Ramblers wrote and performed the music for the New York premiere of the play, and their efforts alone are worth the $5 or $6 for a student rush ticket.

Lie is not as gruesome or shocking as Blood Simple — that is, in this play no one’s hand gets crushed by a window and then attached to the sill with a dagger. The play doesn’t have the happy ending (admittedly a loose definition of the term) of Paris, Texas. It also differs from those in that the Alley couldn’t find a way to get old American cars or pickups on the stage; you just have to imagine the drive from Billings, Montana out to the ranch, since it happens during a between-scenes blackout. Quel dommage.

The play does have an alcoholic wife abuser (Jake, played aptly by Brandon Smith), his sister who shares a terrible secret with him (remind you of Shepard’s Buried Child?), his helpful brother (Jeff Bennett does a good job here) and their widowed mother.

It also has a wife, whom Jake has abused; her brother, who is bent on revenge; and their slightly disinterested parents: Baylor, who’d rather hunt and gather like a prehistoric than support a modern family, and Meg, who answers, “I’ll go check the oven” when you ask her who won the Rockets-Sonics series. They’re an interesting bunch, at least.

Add a blizzard, a house fire, a hunting accident, a weekend in Mexico, brain damage, and an American flag. Simmer on medium heat for three hours or so and you have A Lie of the Mind. Not too much message, not too little. Not too much drama, not too little. And topped off with good performances.

Just right for me, at least. —Spencer Greene

The Secret of My Success — or Alex Keaton Does Manhattan?

Once upon a time, a producer needed a young Republican-type to play the role of an aspiring politician that can’t tell the truth. They chose an over-eager midget for the part. The show was a hit among high school girls and Michael J. Fox will never be able to play a role that isn’t some variation of Alex P. Keaton. His latest movie, The Secret of My Success, could just as well be called Alex P. Keaton Does Manhattan.

Fox plays Brently Foster, a Kansas farm boy who goes off to wreak New York City to make a name for himself. When I saw that in the preview, I thought wow. I can relate to this; I’m from Kansas and I’m going to New York. He gets there and meets lots of beautiful women. I can relate to that, too.

As a result of an unfriendly corporate takeover, Foster finds that his guaranteed job no longer exists. He hits the streets armed only with his resume, only to find that New York is not friendly to the jobless. We are treated to an interview that is hilarious. It is reminiscent of a commercial that the armed forces ran a few years ago (probably during Family Ties). The personnel director won’t hire him because he doesn’t have any experience and he can’t get experience until someone hires him. Sound familiar? Sounds plagiarized.

Our plucky hero finally throws out his last ace and asks his distant uncle to give him a job. The next day Alex, I mean Brently, shows up at the mail room wearing a suit and tie. All of the blue collar workers laugh at him. He shows them. He starts reading the executives’ letters and memos and within two weeks knows the entire corporate structure. He then takes over an empty office, passing himself off as a new executive to infiltrate the corporate upper echelons.

Along the way, he manages to have an affair with the boss’s wife and to pick up a gorgeous girlfriend, a vice president who’s having a secret affair with the boss. Meanwhile, Primrose is the target of a takeover by a T. Boone Pickens-like character. The upper brass is terrified and tries to slash expenditures to make the company less attractive. Brently, who has lived fewer years than some of the other executives who have worked, suggests the radical plan of expanding operations. They reject his proposal and submit to the takeover once they realize their jobs are secure. Brently, of course, gets angrier. It’s not wise to get a Kansas boy angry.

If you like Family Ties, you’ll like The Secret of My Success. It’s funny. It’s clever. And it’s witty. But it shows absolutely no creativity. The producers knew that Michael J. Fox playing Alex P. Keaton would draw a large audience of high schoolers — and it does. (Remind me never to go to one of his movies while HSD is on spring break.)

And there’s one last problem with this movie, at least for those of us from Kansas. If Brently worked for Jayhawk Communications, part of the University of Kansas, why does he wear a Kansas State shirt? —Paul Angles

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Mayonnaise and the Origin of Life
Harold J. Morowitz

It is a curious fact that eminent professors of biology and related fields often feel compelled to take pen in hand and write profound essays on "life, the universe, and everything." But they do this without sounding like a pompous twit, it is a rare treat. Harold J. Morowitz, professor of molecular biophysics and biochemistry at Yale, has succeeded in doing just that.

Mayonnaise and the Meaning of Life (New York: Berkeley; $3.95) is a collection of essays dealing with a myriad of subjects. Some are technical, some whimsical, and others humorous. The majority are entertaining and only a few become bogged down in technical verbiage.

A good example of the whimsical is "The Peculiar Life" which comments on an article in a ten-year-old issue of Nature. Psychologists M.H. and H.G. Bornstein, in 15 towns throughout the world, "sampled and measured the tempo at which local inhabitants walked the main streets of their cities and towns...alone and unencumbered." The data revealed that the "pace of life" (the average speed of the walkers in feet per second) is equal to a constant (0.05) plus 0.86 times the logarithm of the population of the town. Hence, the inhabitants of Crete (pop. 365, Salonut) stroll at a leisurely 2.8 feet per second while those in New Haven cruise at 4.3 feet per second.

In presenting the data, Morowitz pauses to consider what happens in Psychro if an old man dies: does everyone automatically walk more slowly? And what if triplets are born?

Another essay, "Do Bacteria Think?" probes the field of thinking and mental activities. Depending upon one's approach to the question, one can conclude that either "the Supreme Court Justices... do not think but simply respond to stimuli in a manner that has passed the evolutionary filter of survival" or that bacteria think.

The subject of evolution appears in several essays and is a welcome sight for any rational inquirer. In "Tell It to the Judge," Morowitz serves as an "expert witness" in an Arkansas trial debating whether or not creation science is a science. The main argument of the creation scientists is that evolution contradicts the second law of thermodynamics which states that "isolated systems move toward the maximum degree of molecular disorder." Morowitz does not criticize the religious for their strong beliefs. Rather he criticizes them for their self-professed knowledge that is inaccurate.

Scientists, too, come under fire for using terminology and concepts inaccurately. In fact, Jeremy Rifkin is accused of writing "patent intellectual nonsense" in his book, Entropy: A New World View. Morowitz traces the history of the concept, its mathematical definition, and the absurdity of applying that concept to fields and situations where the laws of physics are irrelevant. Other essays deal with little known biological facts, such as the fact that 90% of the cells that people carry around with them are not theirs, neither genetically nor developmentally. They belong to billions of bacteria, yeast, fungi, viruses, protozoa, and other "wee beastsies." A joke that the author could use as a stock joke when telling his audiences about the makeup of the human body is, "You are 99% water, but the hospitals are 100% water - do you get the joke?"

The main problem with "A Falwell to Arms or Jerry Rigging Your Salvation," is that the actors constrained themselves by basing all of the humor on local or current events. It was clever, but not particularly new, innovative humor. There were too many kids making fun of Jim and Tammy Bakker and Oral Roberts and Jerry Falwell and the faith-healers.

Falwell to Arms or Jerry Rigging Your Salvation
The Comedy Workshop

Are you a fan of "Tonight Show" humor, but wish that Johnny would be a little more creative in his delivery? Do you wish that Ed McMahon would have more of a voice? If so, The Comedy Workshop has the solution for you.

Their new comedy revue, "A Falwell to Arms or Jerry Rigging Your Salvation," is a steady stream of skits and songs poking fun at current media events such as the downfall of the Texas economy, drugs, collegiate sports, politicians, singles night at the grocery store, and especially the television evangelist sex scandals that fill today's media.

The comedians - Bill Fagan, Jennifer Noble, Fritz Dickmann, Sharon Menzel, and Paul Menzel put on a polished, well-rehearsed show. Each expertly manages to present himself or herself at least one completely different character in each skit. They also use a bare minimum of props, relying instead on their acting skill to convey their messages.

Live humor is like live theater. There is a personal interaction between the comedians and the audience that does not exist with television. The performers create a feeling of intimacy with the audience by going out amongst the crowd to perform their roles. Overall, the show was funny and the skits were evenly humorous. Most of the jokes went over well and there were no duds.

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The anonymous cast of Comedy Workshop's satiric A Falwell to Arms
And they just would not let the Texas economy rest in peace. Most of us are quite aware that both the state and the city are broke, thank you.

As a Rice student, I'm jaded by Live humor. There is a personal interaction between the comedians and the audience that does not exist with television. The performers create a feeling of intimacy with the audience by going out amongst the crowd to perform their roles. Overall, the show was funny and the skits were evenly humorous. Most of the jokes went over well and there were no duds.

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Owls end season on losing note but winning record

by Steve Nations

Although you wouldn’t believe it possible had you watched just their last ten games, the Rice Owls’ baseball team finished up the year with a winning record, compiling an overall mark of 24-23. During the last three weeks of the season, though, the Owls dropped ten straight games, including nine conference contests, to wind up eighth in the Southwest Conference. Rice edged out Texas Christian by one game with a 5-16 conference mark.

In the final series of the season, Arkansas took three games from Rice. The Hogs took the Friday night game 4-3, then swept the Saturday doubleheader with scores of 5-1 and 3-0. In the first game Rice stranded a whopping 15 runners on base, letting a multitude of scoring chances slip away. The Owls managed only three hits in the game, including a homer by Mike Grace. Saturday’s games, both Arkansas pitchers went the distance as Rice managed only two hits and an unearned run in the opener, and five hits in the second game.

The Razorbacks led only 2-1 going into the seventh (and last) inning of the opener, but Andy Skelis gave the Hogs some breathing room by launching a three-run round-tripper. Skelis is second in the conference in home runs with 13. In the second game the Owls again had trouble driving in baserunners, as twice there were men on second and third with only one out, but neither situation produced any runs.

The Owls were batters all year by their SWC foes. The team ERA in conference games was a disappointing 8.23, while conference opponents’ ERA was a mere 4.45. It’s hard to win ball games like that. Part of the problem may have been the presence of only one left-handed pitcher, that being freshman John Polasek.

Of course the SWC is well represented this year among nationally ranked baseball teams. Texas has held the top spot in the national polls for most of the year, and Arkansas is currently ranked fourth. A&M also has a spot in the national rankings at number 17, but Rice and Houston will be competing in the SWC tournament this weekend, May 15-17.

The non-conference portion of the schedule was good to the Owls. Their record in non-SWC matches this year was 19-7, including a team ERA of 5.40 and a team batting average of .334.

Jay Knoblauh ended the season with 13 home runs, 55 RBI, and a .372 batting average, all team highs for the year. He also led the Owls in several other offensive categories, including at-bats, runs scored, hits, doubles, triples, total bases, slugging percentage, and game-winning RBI.

Not a bad year for the slugging, who may very well be playing professional baseball next year.

This year was really three separate seasons for the Owls. In February, while playing strictly non-conference opponents, Rice ran up an excellent record of 13-1, the lone loss coming against Lamar when the Owls were unable to take batting practice because they arrived late. March saw the start of the conference contest, and Rice was cooled off considerably, finishing with a 9-9 record during the month. April was a disaster, as the mounders managed only two wins against 13 defeats during the month. Those two wins came in a Saturday doubleheader against Texas Southern University.

Rice will need to concentrate on improved pitching next year, and find a replacement for the offensive firepower that will be lost if Knoblauh does indeed leave next year.

Rice’s team ERA of 8.23 in conference games ranks it dead last, and the team batting average of .259 ranks eighth. Though the SWC is a tough baseball conference, the Owls are hoping to solidify their strong points and develop their weak points as they look to next year.

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KAPLAN EDUCATIONAL CENTER (TX) DONT COMPETE WITH A KAPLAN STUDENT—BE ONE
Sports briefs for the Sports fan

The Rice golf team placed sixth at the Southwest Conference championships this year, their highest rank in four years. John Christian led the field with a round of 67, as well as the finish, as well as the Texas A&M, Texas, Arkansas, and Tom Billeter were named to the all-conference team by Coach Castaneda.

Coach Jim Castaneda was pleased with the finish, as well as the Owls’ performance all year long. "Our team’s stroke average is down five chalks from last year, and we’re slowly making progress. And we’re doing it with real students," he said.

John Christian led the Rice squad with a superlative third place in the field, including a four-under-par 67 on the last round. Christian was reticent when asked about his progress. "I got off to a good start, and made a few puts I wasn’t hit at before." Christian was a unanimous all-conference selection this year, the second year he has been selected. Both Christian and Houston Martin, who shot a three-day score of 224 for the Owls to place third on the team in the Southwest Conference, have been nominated for the Academic All-America team by Coach Castaneda.

New men’s head basketball coach Scott Thompson has announced the men who will help him guide the Owls next year. hollow may even play another position while he waits his turn to lead the Owls offensively. "Donald is just a heck of an athlete and we want him on the field somewhere," said head coach Jerry Berndt. "If we move him, though, it will just be for the season. Donald Hollas will play quarterback for Rice University.”

In the offensive backfield John Davis has been switched from fullback to tailback. Davis is the Owls’ leading returning rusher with 297 yards on 67 carries last year, and Berndt describes him as a big-play ball carrier.

Defensively, junior Jeff Hood has been switched from center to linebacker to try to fill the gap left by the graduation. Only time will tell how the linebackers can respond to the challenge.

In the defensive backfield Berndt is already touting William McClay as a contender for all-Southwest Conference honors.

The junior had an excellent spring, and according to Berndt, he just keeps getting better. The Owls open up their schedule with the Lamar Cardinals, a team Rice has never lost to in three contests.

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French girl (19) from Paris would like to spend a year with an American family as an au pair in order to improve her English. For information call Mrs. Sapp, 688-5318.


Lost: a pair of gold glasses with black earpieces and a gray tip in academic quad first week of March. Turn into Campos or SA office.

Help Wanted. Child care beginning September. Young woman wanted to care for seven-year-old girl, 3-6 p.m., 3-5 days/week. Must have car, good references, and be absolutely dependable. Near campus. 527-9737 (home), 520-4450 (work).

Needed: Upper-level electrical engineering student with both design and practical skills to work as partner. Programming skills preferred. Call 285-1902.

Wanted: Mature, male non-smoking graduate student to share 6-room home including washer, dryer, kitchen privileges. Seven minutes to campus. $245 plus 1/3 utilities. Kevin, 721-5125, or collect to Sheila, (512) 472-1400 or (512) 328-4060.

Roommate wanted to share two-bedroom house off Stella Link (15 minute drive). Furnished minus one bedroom. Available June 1st for indefinite future. Prefer non-smoker. $225 plus 1/2 utilities. Call x.3207 or 666-1727.


Tutor needed for 6-year-old first-grader during the summer, mainly for the basics. Salary negotiable. Call Vandy at 933-5141.

To the little cabbage: I miss you. -Blanket

Why is quantum physics better than a man? 1) It's more fun. 2) It makes more sense. 3) It's easier to deal with. 4) It doesn't send in chauvinistic misclass. 5) It would never serve being told to go fuck a beer can.

Don't marry for money, hang around rich guys and marry for love. (An oldie but a goodie.)

The missionary position: it's not just a good idea, it's the law. (Ditto.)

You can lead a horticulture, but you can't make her think.

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