



Gracies Dinnertime Theatre

Volume 26, Issue 1, Funding
www.hellskitchen.org/gdt



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The Sentinel welcomes RIT students.

Hear Ye, Hear Ye

By Peter C. Gravelle

As is our proud tradition here at *Gracies Dinnertime Theatre*, I would like to welcome Everyone(TM). Freshmen, returning upperclassmen, burnt-out co-oppers, administrators, professors, secretaries, I (and along with me, the staff of *GDT*) welcome you.

For those of you who are not new here (don't worry, I'll get to you freshmen in a second), there are a few new things regarding this publication. Firstly, the mast-head has myself and the ever-flexible Raymond Wallace as the new editors. This is indeed the case, and we hope to guide the publication through yet another successful year filled with satire, art and opinion. But there's something else new, and y'all will just have to wait until the next paragraph.

For the freshmen, I would like to offer an extra-special welcome to you guys and gals to the Institute. I will also take this opportunity to inform everyone of the current situation for dear *GDT*. Many people may have heard that this delightful magazine received money (for printing as well as payroll) from the RIT Creative Arts Commission. Shortly after my co-editor and I handed in our grant proposal for this upcoming academic year, we got an email from the Assistant Provost for the Creative Arts Commission stating that our Institute's President, Albert J. Simone forbade the entire Provost's

office from funding *Gracies Dinnertime Theatre* in any way, shape, or form (see this week's "Letters" section for more details).

There are those who believe "every little bit hurts." These are the people who spend their days fearing the coming night and their nights fearing the obligations of the soon-to-arrive morning. We all know that fear is no way to live a life. Fear of speech leads to silence. Silence is no way to solve the problems of this world. I prefer to think that "every little bit helps."

This is especially true of *GDT*. Every little bit of art, satire, and opinion that graces these pages helps to make RIT a more vibrant place. With this new life for the Institute, we -- its students, administrators, and faculty -- grow stronger ourselves.

So in the spirit of this mantra, and in reaction to our current plight, I kneel before you with hands outstretched saying, "every little bit helps."

Gracies Dinnertime Theatre meets Wednesday nights at 8pm in the Crossroads. All are welcome, regardless of purpose. Hells Kitchen, the publisher of GDT is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit corporation. Donations of time and/or money are always welcome.



Disclaimer: We print these letters as we get them, *most* of the time. In this case, we have removed the contact information to protect the (hopefully) innocent.

From *****@osfmail.rit.edu Sat Aug 9 10:44:25 2003
Date: Tue, 05 Aug 2003 14:19:16 -0400
From: Katherine Mayberry
To: xoder@mail.isc.rit.edu, rww4162@vmsmail.rit.edu
Subject: Creative Arts Funding
Dear Peter and Raymond:

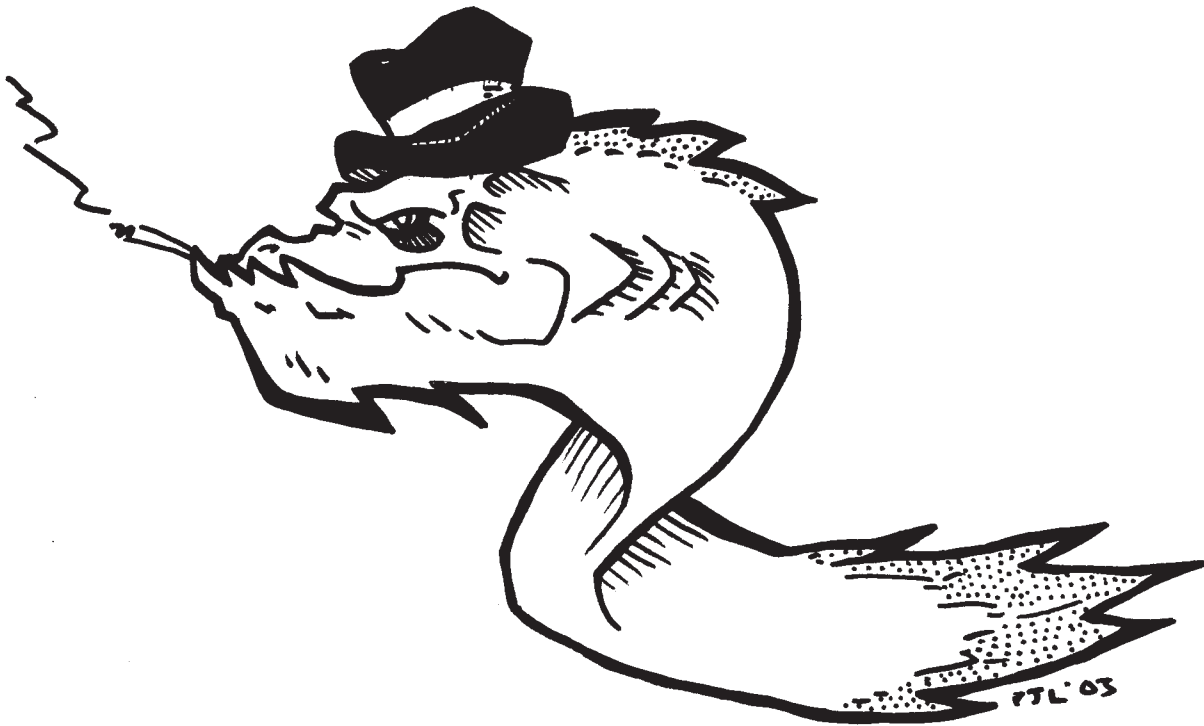
I regret to inform you that President Simone has directed that no Creative Arts funding or other funds from the Provost's Office should be allocated to *Gracies Dinnertime Theater*.

Should you have questions about this, I recommend you direct them to the Provost, Dr. Stan McKenzie.

Kit Mayberry
Associate Provost

--
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RIDE THE SNAKE.



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Submissions of all art forms are accepted.

Written pieces should be in Word, plain text or RTF format. Visual art should be submitted at the highest resolution and dpi possible.

Give your time!

GDT meets Wednesdays at 8pm at Crossroads. We are always looking for people to help us edit, write, fold, distribute, cheer, get off and other fun activities.

Interested in seeing the older volumes and issues?

Check out <http://www.hellskitchen.org/gdt>

The Story of Onan

At that time, Judah left his brothers and went down to stay with a man of Adullam named Hirah. There Judah met the daughter of a Canaanite man named Shua. He married her and lay with¹ her; she became pregnant and gave birth to a son, who was named Er. She conceived again and gave birth to a son and named him Onan. She gave birth to still another son and named him Shelah. It was at Kezib that she gave birth to him.

Judah got a wife for Er, his firstborn, and her name was Tamar.

But Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the LORD's² sight; so the LORD put him to death.

Then Judah said to Onan, "Lie with your brother's wife and fulfill your duty to her as a brother-in-law to produce offspring for your brother." But Onan knew that the offspring would not be his; so whenever he lay with his brother's wife, he spilled his semen on the ground to keep from producing offspring for his brother. What he did was wicked in the LORD's sight; so he put him to death also.

— Genesis 38: 1-10,
"New International Version"

Like many parts of the many biblical texts in existence, there is a very basic message to be found in this excerpt from the beginning of Genesis, chapter 38. It is, simply, "Don't be an asshole."

Er, son of Judah, is smitten by Yahweh, leaving behind a widow, Tamar. The widow Tamar is left childless, and so Judah commands his second son, Onan, to give Tamar a child in his brother's stead. Some versions indicate that Onan is compelled to do so by tribal law, however, this is probably added from historical context.

Onan, much to everyone's chagrin (surely), is less than forthcoming. In fact, Onan is somewhat perturbed at the concept of Tamar bearing his brother's child while Onan himself must put forth the all effort³. So, despite of

¹"lay with" is monk-speak for "fucked"

²I will use the more correct, if vastly more heretical, "Yahweh".

³Sex is a difficult thing, you know.

⁴Obviously much more successfully than most highschoolers.

⁵Why this is a good solution, I am not sure. Perhaps, as this is somewhat early in the history of man, Yahweh is still attempting to cleanse the human race of its evil bits.

⁶He *is* a god, afterall

⁷Excepting, of course, the beliefs of certain Irish organizations

his father's wishes, Onan employs the pull-out method⁴ to ensure that his sister-in-law will not be impregnated.

Now, let's get a few things straight. As Onan's father said, giving Tamar a child is his duty as her brother-in-law. Moreover, this is *Judah* — *the* Judah — we're talking about. Judah is not just some overly protective and favoritistic father — he is the son of Jacob and the founder of the Judah tribe, one of the twelve tribes of Israel. Judah is the law. In light of that, Onan's actions are not just petty; they are a dereliction of duty, and against the law.

Needless to say, Yahweh is rather upset with Onan. Onan has abandoned his sister-in-law in her time of dire need and he has broken tribal law, and so Yahweh kills Onan for it⁵.

Yahweh could have any number of reasons for ending Onan⁶, but most likely are the following: disobeying his father, neglecting his brother's wife, and disobeying the head of the Judah tribe thereby breaking tribal law. Most probable (one can only hope) is the dereliction of the duty given to him by tribal law. Otherwise, failing to knock up your sister-in-law would probably still be a horrendous offense, as would disobeying your parents⁷.

Note where the passage can be confusing when taken out of context. "[...] so whenever he lay with his brother's wife, he spilled his semen on the ground to keep from producing offspring for his brother. What he did was wicked in the LORD's sight; so he put him to death also." From this quote alone, one might come to believe that Yahweh smote Onan because of his method of contraception, but remember, there were circumstances that demanded Onan give a child to Tamar as a duty to his brother. In an act of bad faith, Onan tricked Tamar into thinking that he would give her child, when in fact he hoped for nothing of the sort.

As stated above, the story of Onan reminds us of a key tenet of personal interaction, "Don't be an asshole — Yahweh don't like it." Listen to your parents, don't break the law, and do right by your siblings. Because the Bible fucking tells you so.

The Chosen People
By Tarik Najeddine

O Beautiful, for spacious skies,
 For sweaty brows so many,
 Of those who toil and slave,
 Here in the land of plenty.

They come from far away places,
 To make a little money.
 They all have far away faces,
 That want to be in the land of milk and honey.

They work long hours, day and night,
 At our docks, shipyards, and harbors.
 They work evening into the morning light,
 Still working with great ardor.

“A better life than I was given”,
 they wish the American Dream,
 “To give my children opportunity,
 and raise them on cookies and cream.

They built our roads, train tracks, and homes,
 Working in the Great Plains sun,
 They built our skyscrapers, bridges and tunnels,
 Working until the job is done.

They ask not much,
 They want to be something great.
 Just to be American,
 And not live surrounded by hate.

Night school, day jobs, minimum wage,
 The life of a “refugee”.
 Picking up trash, pumping gas,
 Things that seem foreign to you and me.

Three kids, two cars,
 What everyone wants,
 A dog, a cat,
 Nothing to flaunt.

But do they get credit for their part?
 I doubt it,
 they are heckled and cursed
 And forced to clean “American” spit.

Equality, Diversity, Liberty,
 No better than any,
 We, the chosen people,
 Are still the few oppressing the many

Submit
 Poetry
 To

gdt@hellskitchen.org

The great and noble victors, *GDT!*



Another astounding tug-of-war victory for *GDT!*

For another year the *GDT* team will carry the trophy and taste of victory, as the *Reporter* team, pictured below, was defeated for the third year running the annual inter-publication tug-of-war contest.



The cowardly *Reporter* team! Boo! Hiss!

Racial and Ethnic Diversity Enriches Campus Experience

By Dr. Albert J. Simone

As printed in the "Speaking Out" section of the Democrat and Chronicle on Thursday, June 26, 2003. Reprinted with permission.

On Monday [June 23], the US Supreme Court handed down its much-awaited decision on admission policies at the University of Michigan Law School and undergraduate College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

The Court, in reaffirming the 1978 Bakke decision, stated that:

- * Achieving racial and ethnic diversity is a compelling state interest.
- * The "narrowly tailored" use of race in admission decisions is permitted in order to achieve campus diversity.
- * Universities may have flexibility with regard to consideration of race in adopting admission policies consistent with their varying missions.
- * Quotas, including those "disguised" through utilization of a point system as in the undergraduate case, are illegal, and applicants should be considered as individuals and not as members of a group.

This decision, as in the Bakke case, is a split 5-to-4 ruling with regard to the use of race as one of the several factors in making admission decisions. The Sixth Circuit Court, in arriving at the law school decision leading up to the Supreme Court decision, was also split 5 to 4.

Some national polls narrowly favor affirmative action and some narrowly oppose it. A student referendum at the University of Michigan split 50-50 in support of its university's affirmative action policy. The issue remains sensitive and controversial, in the courts and across the population as a whole.

I do not expect the very active legal actions and referenda of the past decade opposing affirmative action, at both the state and federal levels, to subside over the next decade.

For today, however, we do have some direction. I strongly favor the decision of the Supreme Court, for five reasons.

Specifically, the decision:

- * Supports Rochester Institute of Technology's mission of preparing students for successful careers. Graduates

will be working and partnering with individuals and organizations from around the world that are of different cultures, races and ethnicities. Understanding and being comfortable with them will support our students' success. This understanding does not occur through on-the-job training or by reading a book or taking a course. It comes through living, learning and playing with individuals of different cultures over the four or five years of college life.

- * Enriches the college experience and increases the quality and relevance of education.
- * Improves the quality of life of our grandchildren. In the year 2050, the majority of Americans will be people of color. If people of color are not prepared to replace today's professional and skilled white workforce, America cannot be competitive in the global marketplace.
- * Supports our democratic system of government. If in subsequent decades the gap between rich and poor were divided among racial lines, serious civil strife could readily evolve.
- * Exemplifies the American values of opportunity and access for everyone who wants to work hard and has talent.

RIT has a race-blind admission policy. While we vigorously recruit nationally for talented minority students, all of our 14,000 applicants are screened on academic credentials independent of race.

Those students -- minority or majority -- who are deemed admissible are pursued. This past year, 10 percent of our freshman class comprised African-American, Latino American and Native American students. All of these students met our academic admission criteria (thousands of applicants did not).

These students moved from the freshman to the sophomore class at a rate of more than 90 percent, higher than that for the campus as a whole.

For our academically admissible students, race is one factor considered in admission decisions. Other factors, such as whether another candidate is a son or daughter of an RIT alumnus, an athlete, an artist, or a resident of an underrepresented state are also considered. The end result is a quality, diverse student body, race being one of the important considerations.

Why I'm Pro-Sentinel

By Gary Hoffmann

Lately I've been hearing some disparaging remarks directed at the new sculpture that was built on RIT over the summer, the Sentinel. Some creative nicknames have been invented for the monstrosity, including the Giant Non-Functional Robot, the RIT Erection, Simone's Compensation, the Really Expensive Lightning Rod, the Post-Industrial Fertility Symbol, and – my personal favorite – the Enormous Rusty Edifice Compensating for Technologically Incompetent, Ornery Nerds. I've heard people say it looks like Mecha-Godzilla took a huge shit next to the Eastman Building. And while I can't dispute these comments, it seems to me the vehement hostility stems largely from a lack of understanding regarding the sculpture's message and meaning.

According to the sculptor, Albert Paley (<http://www.rit.edu/~930www/NewsEvents/2003/May01/paleyart.html>), the Sentinel “speaks of technology, it speaks of organization.” It's a symbol for RIT and the diversity of programs at RIT (http://www.democratandchronicle.com/news/0804KD1DBMH_paley04_news.shtml), which range from Information Technology to Computer Engineering, with a few token art students thrown in for flavor so the engineers have some long-hairs to gawk at. This interpretation of the sculpture, however, is plainly wrong. Wrong, wrong, wrong. No self-respecting artist (and you're not going to suggest Paley just made the thing because he's a trustee, are you?) would invest that much time and effort into a symbol of RIT. Anyway, if it really was meant to symbolize RIT [insert obligatory brick joke on your own; I refuse to].

No, let's examine the artwork on its own terms, as must always be done. Even what the artist himself says about it is irrelevant, and occasionally is even intended to fool the stupid. That's clearly the case here. First off, it's called “The Sentinel,” unless you read *Reporter* (<http://www.reportermag.com/vnews/display.v/ART/2003/05/09/3ebc1a7aa8823>), in which case it's called, “The Sentinal.” And what is a sentinel, you may ask? I have no idea, ask *Reporter*. But a sentinel is a soldier, specifically a guard at a military base, so right away we see the sculpture has militaristic connotations. Paley himself stated the Sentinel shall be a sort of guardian of RIT, implying RIT is a military

base. ROTC programs aside, I was under the impression this was an institute of higher learning. So what is Paley saying?

Well, let's look next at the sculpture itself. It's geometric, metallic, harsh, imposing. It's about six stories tall, a huge obstruction in any sense of the word. It brings to mind technology, sure, but the technology of steel mills, of industrialization. Combine this idea with the violent connotations of the title, and we see this is no gentle technology intended to improve our lives. This is a technology preparing for war. And that's what the sculpture represents, our nationalistic mobilization towards war. Not this diversity bullshit.

So it's a timely piece representing the growing nationalism in America. Look next at the several yonic and phallic symbols inherent in the sculpture. Sexual and fertility symbols such as these have long represented individual identity – sexual identity as personal identity. Yet these symbols are twisted, distorted into unnatural shapes. They are corrupted by the nationalism and mobilization towards war the sculpture has already been shown to embody. And this loss of individuality and identity is destructive.

This idea can be seen in the cage-like structure attached to the rest of the sculpture. It reminds one of the barrel of a gun – a gun carried by a military guard, remember. Yet this barrel is open at both ends, pointing simultaneously up towards the sky and down towards the earth. This gun is the modern analog of a double-edged sword. It points upward to threaten the heavens and the natural order of the universe, and it points back at the earth, at RIT, and at the viewer to threaten the mutual destruction we shall have wrought upon ourselves by our uninhibited, irrational use of technology, especially for violent ends. This is the true loss of identity this sculpture represents: self-destruction.

Ribbon-like strips of sheet metal also wrap themselves around the sculpture, looking like scraps from an explosion, again calling to mind this destruction. But these also suggest parchment or scrollwork, the media on which humans record their beliefs and knowledge. Our very spirituality is at stake, and Paley uses these strips of metal to show how malleable our beliefs have

become, and how dependent they've become on the machinery of war.

And yet what does a sentinel do, but issue a warning of impending danger? This sculpture does not just express the ideas I've spelled out above, but it warns us. The Sentinel warns us to be on guard against the very things it exemplifies, to be on guard against the use of technology unhindered by the application of reason, to be on guard against the rampant militarism of our present society, to be on guard against the loss of individuality in this wave of growing nationalism, to be on guard against the loss of our spirituality as we cry out again and again for blood and bombs and invasion.

And where better to issue this warning than at RIT? After all, "Sentinel" was also a nickname given

to Air Force programs typically associated with intelligence, hearkening back to the glory days of the RIT-CIA scandal. There's the Slaughterhouse, which receives DoD funding to further their research into killing human beings and blowing things up. And there's Al Simone, who cares nothing for freedom or for thought if it means RIT will lose a little government funding (<http://www.azstarnet.com/attack/indepth/id-CIAoncampus.html>). Nowhere in Rochester needs this warning more than RIT, which Paley clearly knows.

So why did he tell us it stands for RIT? Well, in a way, it does. But more so, he delivered that nonsense to convince the very people this sculpture warns us against to bring the Sentinel to RIT and pay to have it put together. Genius. Satire at its greatest.

That's why I'm pro-Sentinel.

Welcome, to the Land of Good and Stingy

By Ray Wallace

Once again, autumn, freshmen, and ass return to RIT.

But take a look at the that above statement again; lack of the word "money". RIT's exalted, a l l has decreed that no RIT money shall *Dinnertime Theatre*.

Now, I know what's this mean for *GDT*? To whom and fish adventures? And for *GDT*. It means that we However, you might have *Dinnertime Theatre*. You from *GDT*. As for me, I'm for our beloved president³ : *GDT* will continue to excite, *continue* to sow his artist's

But let's get down to brass Pete, Peter, and I have pockets running more advertisements be sure to make 'em worth extra buck chilling out in *GDT*, it will find a loving

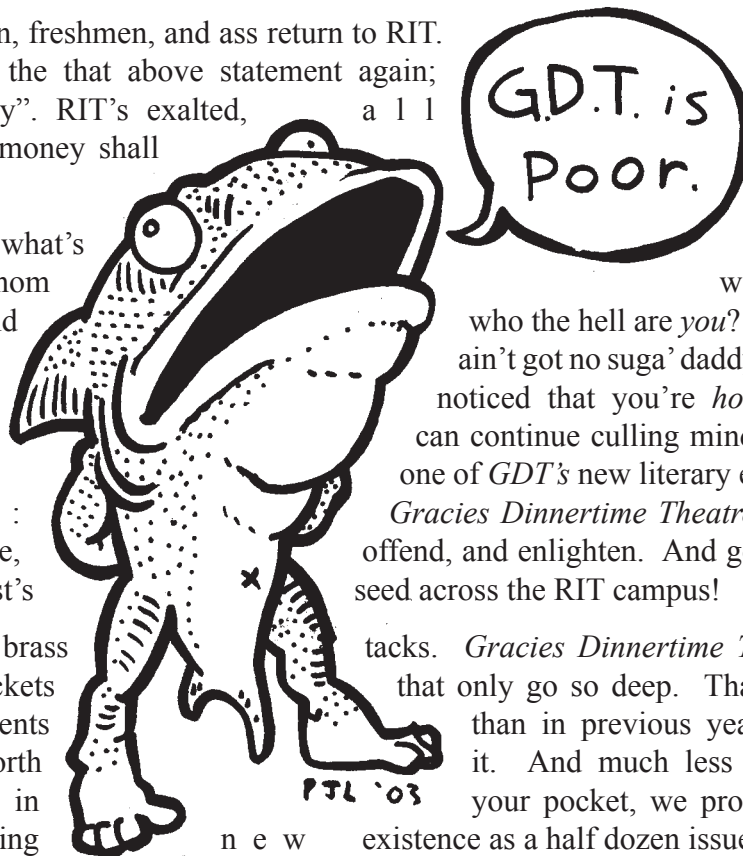
Of course, you can certainly go on enjoying *GDT* free and clear as always, and none of us will complain. However, if you love your *GDT*, here's your time to save it.

¹I'll give you two guesses. Freshmen, I'll give you four.

²The previous two having stepped down to take on vaguely more glorious ventures than terrorizing RIT's campus.

³Oh, so beloved

⁴what with the fraternities' constant pan-handling



notice the distinct knowing president¹ be allotted to *Gracies*

bugging you: "What does will I turn to for biting satire who the hell are *you*? " I'll tell you what it means ain't got no suga' daddy no mo'; we're on our own. noticed that you're *holding* an issue of *Gracies* can continue culling mind-shattering wit and insight one of *GDT*'s new literary editors², and I've got words *Gracies Dinnertime Theatre* is not about to disappear. offend, and enlighten. And godamnit, Pete Lazarski will seed across the RIT campus!

tacks. *Gracies Dinnertime Theatre* is here to stay, but that only go so deep. That means that *GDT* will be than in previous years, but don't worry, we'll it. And much less pleasantly⁴, if you've an your pocket, we promise that if you give it to existence as a half dozen issues of *GDT*.

What is this magazine?

This is Gracies Dinnertime Theatre, a magazine of satire, literature, poetry and art. We publish out of Rochester, NY but we have readers around the globe. We exist as a medium for your expression and invite you to contribute.



Anyone is welcome to submit.

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**Gracies
Dinnertime
Theatre™**

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