



Gracies Dinnertime Theatre

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Parting Reflections: Part I: Shed Your Skin, RIT

By David Fetzer

I have thoroughly enjoyed my five years here at RIT. If I had to make the decision again I would most definitely come back. I have been fortunate enough to study under some of RIT's brightest and most dedicated professors who have helped me through a great education—I found a program here that fits my academic and professional interests—I am involved in clubs and organizations that have allowed me to not only be a great contributor to the campus but to mature socially outside of the classroom...

And I have fought viciously for it every inch of the way.

My tenure here has given me ample time to observe, to listen, and to learn about this community, where it has been and where it is going. I give you some of my reflections during this, the eve of my graduation from RIT.

We all know that RIT, like any college, organization, or (and I cringe when I say this) business¹, is not perfect. However, the students should give the administration a hand as our university works hard to identify areas where improvements can be made and continues to take great steps to improve upon them. RIT is trying to take this campus "to the next level" and go "from good to great" by bringing its reputation up to that of other great universities. This is a noble goal and one we should be proud of. There is, however, a huge gap forming between how RIT is selling itself and what RIT says it wants to become. Adjusting the registration process, grading policies or course requirements are not where we should be focusing. You must completely shed your skin, RIT.

First let us draw a blatantly obvious line between schools that produce employees and universities that strengthen and nurture inquisitive minds. We'll start with some easy examples: MCC—typically (and yes, I am generalizing) students attend community colleges in order to obtain a degree in an area of study quickly and cheaply. Students do this because, as we all know, a college degree always leads to a fantastic job that will seat you in the lap of luxury and fame. Education at MCC is simply learning a set of skills in order to

have the ability to complete a set of tasks required by an employer. Okay, now Stanford—typically you have to be one smart cookie who shows great dedication in order to attend. What do you think the faculty says when you ask them about what education means to them at Stanford? I would bet, "expanding a student's mind," "helping them to grow and mature," "supporting someone who is interested and involved in their field" are all answers you would hear, while "to help our students get a job" would be near the bottom of the list. Finally, RIT... Hmmmm. Where does it fit? RIT says it wants to be like the big dogs where students go to learn and become immersed in their careers. But how does RIT market itself? What is RIT's angle? "Quality Programs for Successful Careers," the view books read. What I think RIT actually means here is JOB, not CAREER. There is a clear distinction. A job is a venue for income. A job is eight to ten hours a day during which every minute you're waiting until the end of your shift. A job is what you do to get by, to fill the time between weekends, a way to fill your house with stuff. Is this what we students really want?

Since we've divided the schools let's now place students in two separate groups. I see that there are students looking for a job (which is fine) and students who hunger to reach higher levels of understanding and fulfill themselves through a life-long career. These latter students attend school to learn from the most intelligent professors in the world. These students want a career where they will enjoy their work, will be knowledgeable and influential in their field, and be immersed in their area of interest. They want to get an education for the sake of an education itself. I am afraid that this way of thinking is lost on many Americans, but that is a topic for another time. For now, we have our two groups of students.

So what happens when our students from the first group are searching for a way to get a good job and see RIT? "Wonderful!" they think. An easy (not necessarily inexpensive) way to find a high paying job at IBM, NASA or Boeing (we've all heard it, don't deny it). What happens when they get here? BAM! The quarter system! Demanding professors! A semester's worth of

1. Dr. Simone, this is not a business. No business model can be placed over the value and importance of a complete education. In no way do I want my academics to be adjusted because "it would be good for the customer." You should be worried about my mind and my soul, not about my pocketbook.

material jammed into 10 weeks! 15,000 other students! Hundreds of programs! Academic requirements filled to the brim. Not easy. Extremely demanding, actually. It is very easy to see, then, that students become frustrated, they feel like they have been misled, and want to transfer out to a program that's cheaper and where they may be able to get a degree with much more ease.

What about those students who come to RIT to extend their education (GASP! The horror!) and become members of their professional community? Those students quickly find themselves on a campus where quantity not quality is pushed, where co-op and connections to industry are mandatory yet proof of academic growth is not, the class can be cold and the administration is typically colder, and a field house is put before a library subscription to the Wall Street Journal and a budget increase for the Senior Seminar lectures. This is where students are placed on a track and go racing through their classes and speeding through their academic requirements while being told what to take, when to work, and what they don't need to know. This is where a mere job illuminates the light at the end of the dark tunnel.

And we wonder about retention? We question why students leave? We ask why application to our graduate programs is so low? RIT is trying too hard to satisfy everyone. I believe RIT cannot please both kinds of students. We cannot be a place for both students who want a fast and easy route to a job while also being a place for students who desire a true education, relationships with faculty and academic research. If you try to ride the fence, RIT, you make both sides unhappy. RIT can adjust the course requirements, adjust how transfer students' previous grades are calculated, and how SIS and the registration process function, but those will not change RIT's image and the expectations of the

two kinds of students that attend this university. I feel that RIT is doing great at helping those students who want a job. If this is your purpose, RIT, then you should continue to tinker with SIS and the grading policy to make these students happy and successful. However, to reach out and continue to find the best student, fabulous professors and researchers, and claim to be a place of higher education, then let go of those students that want the fast lane to a dead-end job. If you are trying to become a better university, to better your academic and professional reputation, then you need to shed your skin. Become a community of freethinkers and researchers: a true environment of academia. You need to move away from the stigma that you are creating great employees and move more towards becoming a place where you are helping each student personally with their personal goals and desires, regardless of whether that lands them at Microsoft. Keep those academic requirements high, stand tall with the tough (yet flexible) academic expectations, and point to the door when students complain that they cannot write, they don't like to read, or that they are just bad test-takers. Give up the mentality that this is a business and we, the students, are your customers. Offer choices, options and opportunities for professional and academic growth for students and your faculty and staff. That is the only way to take the next big step, RIT. This country does not need more drones, but needs intelligent, well-read and knowledgeable professionals who not only know how to work a computer or build a bridge but can communicate, can read and write, and can relate their professional field to the world around them. That's what you want to become, RIT. That will bring in the best students. That will attract the finest professors.

And that's where I will leave you until "Part II: Where the Buck Actually Stops"

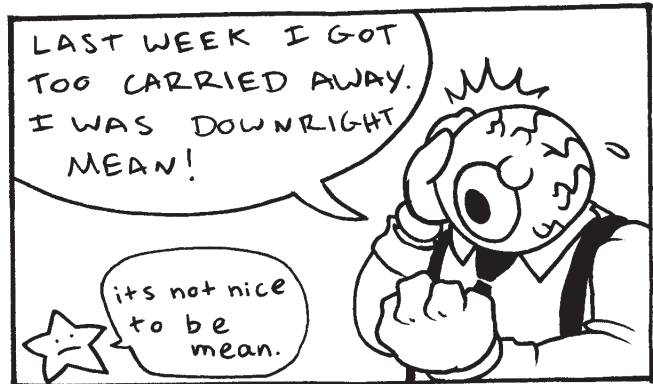
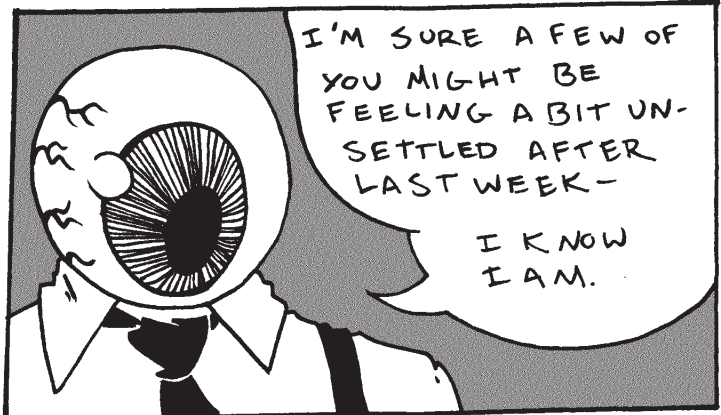
Choose your running-mate

SUBMIT

gdt@hellskitchen.org

JOE CORNEA!

PUBLIC EYE!
by PETER J. LAZARSKI '04



Stop Encouraging Him!

By Tim Hettler

This evening at dinner, I ordered my usual: Pasta Alfredo with Chicken (we at *Petals* just call it a "PAC") and a Diet Pepsi. "Pepsi?" You may ask. "But Tim, you used to run track, you're programmed to believe the soda is Satan in a can!" That's true, but right now Pepsi is running a promotion in which one out of every three bottles contains a code for a free song on iTunes. Anyone that knows me understands that my zealot-like fanaticism towards Apple and all Apple-related products trumps about every other principle and ideal I hold. Besides, statistically every 3 drinks I buy I'll win something. It feels good to win; I smile every time I see that 'one free song' message. It's pretty much all I have going for me right now, so just grant me this pleasure without arguing how arbitrary it is.

Anyway, where was I? Ah, yes... So I had almost finished building my death robo- I, uh, never mind that (they know too much! use the delete key! But I don't want to! Use it! No! Fine, but don't come crying to me when they foil your... plans.). Let's just start this paragraph over.

Anyway, where was I? Ah, yes.... So I had almost finished building my death robo- FUCK!

I ordered my food and beverage. Turns out it was my lucky day, I won a free song (I had bought 2 non-winning Pepsis earlier. I just throw those at people who don't love America). After finishing my meal - which was delicious, by the way -- I hurried back to my room to get on iTunes and seriously over-deliberate which 99¢ song I should purchase. I clicked the "Music Store" tab and was greeted by the sleek homepage. Oh, Eric Clapton has a new album out! Maybe I'll buy his single - nah, I'd rather just buy the whole album. Let's see what else we have here: NERD, Maroon 5, Britney, William Hung, OutKa- wait, WTF? *William Hung??* Three distinct thoughts immediately arose:

1. Why is William Hung on iTunes?
2. Why is William Hung on the *front-page* of iTunes?
3. I must've had poppy-seed chicken with my meal 'cause I am trippin' out!

After surmising that my last thought was wicked lame, I looked into this William Hung thing a bit more.

For those of you who don't watch *American Idol* - first of all, what planet are you living on? Hopefully some planet that doesn't get Fox, because the rest of the universe has *AI* fever! Speaking of fevers, Ryan Seacrest should be arrested for arson - because he sets my pants on fire!

William Hung AKA "The Hong Kong Ricky Martin" is a by-product of *American Idol's* harsh audition process. His rendition of Ricky Martin's "She Bangs" was so dreadfully poor that you couldn't help but like the poor guy. He innocently claimed to "have no professional" experience when he mistakenly took the public's laughs of pity for cheers of approval. The media has only made things worse by giving him spots on such credible shows as *Entertainment Weekly* and zinging him on non-funny shows like *SNL*. Fox even cashed in on his apparent non-talent by creating an entire show devoted to people who had terrible *AI* auditions, with William Hung as the centerpiece.

Just when I thought William Hung had faded to obscurity, I find his EP *Inspiration* not only prominently displayed on the homepage of iTunes (as an exclusive - I can only imagine the 11th hour negotiations Steve Jobs went through to get that deal), but also the top-selling album of the day!

STOP ENCOURAGING THIS POOR YOUNG BOY! I really hope William is sitting back with his buds at Berkley, having a huge laugh and reveling in the most amazing, elaborate gag ever contrived. However, I don't think this is the case. He's hired security to escort him to class, he got an agent. He's probably trying to plan his big leap into the movie industry. I actually wouldn't be surprised if he had a cameo in *Scary Movie 4: Who Keeps Funding Us?* I feel like the world has this huge inside joke and William is the only one out of the loop. Even the name of his EP, *Inspiration*, is slightly mocking. He's like the nerdy kid the captain of the cheerleading team told everyone she liked just to be cruel. He's strutting down the hall as the cock of the walk thinking everyone is pointing at him because he's suddenly become the coolest guy in school, when in fact everyone is just pointing out how stupid he is for thinking she was serious. William's the nerdy kid, society is the cheerleader. The ruse will go on until he thinks he's going to the prom with her and spends all

his money on a tux and limo, only to find out she left with the quarterback an hour ago.

Someone just needs to sit down with William and calmly, lovingly explain to him that we've all just been taking advantage of him. We all thought it was funny at first, but we let it go to far and now we feel bad. Some people may argue, "He's a goofy-looking foreign-exchange student. This is probably the best he'll ever do. Why shouldn't he ride it out as long as possible?" To which I reply: He's a computer science student at Berkley. If worse comes to worse he can go back to his native country where IBM is outsourcing all of their work and make it big writing a security patch for a virus he wrote. If William continues along the path he's

on, at best he'll get an *E! True Hollywood Story* about his inevitable spiral from pop-star to coked-up New York State Fair Cole Muffler Court opening act (that's the stage you don't have to pay to see). At worst he'll be a side note on some Vh1 special called something like "Hey, Wasn't 2004 Ca-razy??? Strikes Back!" where D-list actors and musicians make lame remarks about events in pop-culture that are probably best forgotten. And, honestly, do we want Vh1 to define 2004 with William Hung's rendition of "Rocket Man"?

*Tim Hettler is the Editor-In-Chief for the online editorial/entertainment magazine, the basement:
<http://thebasement.bighet.com>*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Servant of Two Masters

GDTWIRE—The College of Liberal Arts and RIT Players at RIT will present Carlo Goldoni's play *The Servant of Two Masters* on April 22 - 24 at 8:00 pm and April 25 at 2:00 pm in Ingle Auditorium in the Student Alumni Union on the RIT campus. Student tickets are \$2 and general public tickets are \$4 at the door.

Clarice and Silvio and their friends and family are reveling in the announcement of their wedding. Their joy is undone when Federigo, the man to whom Clarice had been betrothed before his untimely death, appears at the door. He is alive and well and demanding Clarice's hand. Federigo, though, is not exactly what he seems and is in fact determined to marry someone other than Clarice. Meantime, Federigo's servant, Truffaldino, is constantly scheming for food and money and getting himself into one sticky situation after another. Everything becomes discombobulated as messages are misdelivered, identities are confused, and Truffaldino takes the meatballs to the wrong table.

Goldoni's 18th century farce was inspired by the *commedia dell 'arte*, a type of improvisational theatre popular in renaissance Europe. Like the *commedia* scenarios that preceded it, the play features a variety of stock characters—young lovers, miserly fathers, servants both clever and bumbling—slapstick humor, and visual gags.

All of It
By Mike Craig

I swallow your poetry whole
Fractal hips curving in and out
My eyes just waving along the lines
Sinking below all reason
There's every reason for it, I know:

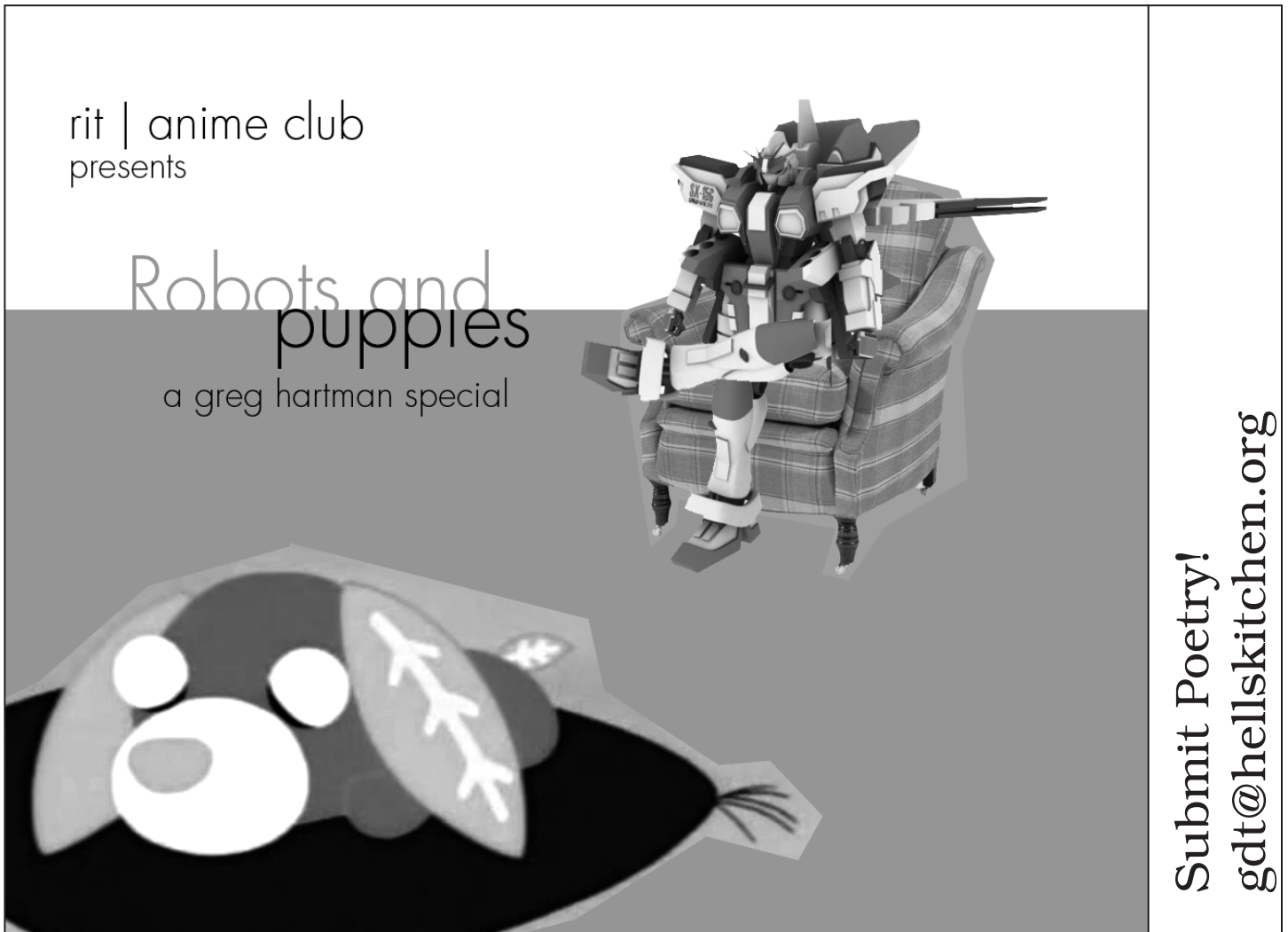
A perfectly good reason exists
That I can't find the strength to deny
The anxiety to have everything
And you, a reality defined until
You breeze on by, as you should:
We both knew you would.
But the corner's turning
I've found myself a new dream:

By a summer river
In your lap the sunlight
Would just shatter through your hair
Into a million rainbow globes.
There'd be no way out
As much, at least, as there's no way in:

We'd let the murmurs of some old anthem
Drizzle down through the air
Like it was all those gray days
We'll spend in bed, sobering up
After a month, a night, countless years
Afraid of lamenting what's already been written
And never to be said.

rit | anime club
presents

Robots and
puppies
a greg hartman special



Submit Poetry!
gdt@hellskitchen.org

By Nicole Robinson

With Spring Quarter here already, it is assumed that most RIT students have survived Rochester's horrible winter. Now that those days are behind us, we have all gotten out our spring clothes along with our fake, plastered smiles. Everyone says hi now, everyone holds the door open for each other, and laughter is definitely in the air. How can this be when just weeks ago, these same people were too busy looking at the ground to say hi, slammed the damn door in my face, and were too depressed to know what laughter was.

Why do RIT students blame the weather when they know what they are getting into? People travel from warm, sunny places such as Florida, California, and Maryland. Then they settle at RIT only to be "surprised" by the snow. I don't know what they were thinking when they decided to apply to a college located in Upstate New York. Did they think that the snow would cease upon their arrival?

It amazes me how people can suffer from Seasonal Affective Disorder, when they came to RIT knowing that the weather patterns would be everything but pretty. They know that it will snow about 90% of the school year, yet they are stunned when it does. To me, that's like hating heat, and applying to Arizona State. What amazes me even more is that the people who are depressed don't do anything about it. They sit in their dark, gloomy rooms and do nothing! Wait—I'll give them the benefit of the doubt: they sit in their rooms, and play video games. Don't they know that the best cure to Seasonal Affective Disorder is to take in more light. Contrary to popular belief, the light from your computer screen does not count. Get out and do something! Go to the gym, get involved in campus

activities or plan an outing with friends. This is better than sitting, and complaining.

Even worse than those people are the locals who complain. These are the students who have lived in Rochester or the surrounding areas for all or much of their lives and still act as if the weather patterns will change. You would think that if someone has been through 20 winters, they would figure out that the 21st winter would be no different. I understand that this fact doesn't disqualify them from not liking the snow. However, they should have adapted by now.

Consequently, I wish that all the local complainers would stop sharing their past blizzard stories. No one wants to know what you were doing when the blizzard struck, how long you were stuck in your apartment, how long you had to live without electricity and heat, or why RIT chose not to close school that day. If you are from this area, like me, then these stories are not that exciting. Every local citizen has a similar story, and you don't see us going around telling random people. The one thing that bothers me is going up to someone, only to hear them talking about the blizzard of '77. They talk about it as if they were there, even though they were clearly born in the '80s.

Of course, all of us wish that RIT would have chosen a better spot for their campus. The truth is The Powers that Be did not. Why waste most of the school year being sad and complaining over weather conditions that you can't change? I think that RIT students need to just accept the fact that it snows here. It snowed before we arrived, and it will continue to snow after we leave.

The Traveling Platypus

Bob Rutan



The Ebb and Flow of Satire

By **Matthew Denker**

Satire, as defined by Webster's Dictionary, is a literary work in which human vice or folly is attacked through irony, derision, or wit. A lofty goal, if ever there were one. This sets the stage for pointing out the lack of Weapons of Mass Destruction in Iraq, the over charging of the US government by Halliburton, and even the lawsuits against children downloading nursery rhymes by the RIAA. Unfortunately, GDT does very little of this these days. I don't wish to speak to what we actually print these days. There is really no use. Even with contributions by our alumni, we are lacking a steady stream of new and intriguing content. I've been away from RIT for almost a year now, and in that year, I've watched GDT go from printing 1000 issues a week that disappeared from the campus in an evening, to printing 700 that I could probably collect on any given visit to the school.

I had initially thought to discuss GDT privately with the editors and other students involved. After considering that plan for a while, I thought that an open and inviting campaign would be a better way to execute the process. That said, I propose publicly that we do the following things to make us a viable outlet for students on campus:

1. Lay down the law

We need to first get a set of guidelines from President Simone and commit to following them across any staff changes. This means developing a real mission statement and publishing a repeatable set of guidelines to publishing our magazine. Nothing less than creating a valid and viable infrastructure to GDT will suffice. We then need to make a commitment to the students of RIT that we will publish articles of quality and worth. We will solicit articles in advance, so we never run out at the wrong time.

2. Make a commitment to ourselves

GDT is little more than a bunch of practically pre-pubescent losers who rub a couple synapses together between looking at pornography to generate a weekly publication. It may, in fact, always have been this way, but for us to advance beyond the primordial goo from which we currently publish GDT, we need to stand up straight, pull our thumbs out of our collective behinds and evolve. Plenty in life is funny that is also not the

Swedish Rocket Corporation. With this in mind, we need to actively commit to working ourselves. I know we are not at this moment getting paid, but if we commit to RIT then they will commit to us. We need to hold actual office hours, and actually accomplish work. Set goals, and then achieve them. Some members of the staff have been proposing this, and you know who you are. That is a step in the right direction. I say we must make the leap in that direction.

3. Make a commitment to GDT

Currently, we are unpaid. GDT is also unpaid for. Many of us pay for the issue out of our own pockets. That's fine, but not the commitment we need. Make a commitment to fundraising. Make a commitment to hand kissing and baby shaking. The fraternities and sororities, for however easy it is to make fun of them, are far more charitable than we could ever hope to be. Nevertheless, we should strive to collect money in such an efficient and pleasant manner. Maybe one week a quarter we could hand issues out and shake hands. In time, we would be as legitimate, if not more so, as any other group on campus.

4. Grow up

Shaq. I could leave this section with that one word, that one name. Sadly, there are so many more issues than that. On a whole, we need better poetry and a more adult view on satire. As college students, we are fast approaching real problems that demand real humor. The fact that RIT claims their 5% raise in tuition is a godsend and well below the 40% that NYS raised tuition last year could be funny if it was pointed out that we paid out bigger increase than they did anyway. Go figure. Unfortunately, we're pointing out that we're not like the old GDT anymore. I think that's the least of our problems.

5. Say it like you mean it

We are funny people. That's the best that I can say. Unfortunately, most people do not realize exactly how funny we are. If we published half of the conversations we had, people would be dying with laughter. There's nothing stopping us, except maybe our own lack of foresight. That leads us to the final bullet.

6. Mother always said think before moving your lips

If we at GDT can be accused of one overshadowing and ultimately life threatening pattern, it is a complete lack of foresight. We are told to do one thing or else, and we do the other. We pass around something that might be offensive, there's some disagreement, we print it, and we get in trouble. This should not be as surprising to us as we find it to be. About the only thing we've had the good grace not to print was a comic that didn't hold back on homosexuality. Oh, and a naked picture of Al Simone, but that might have been because if we blinded all of our readers, we couldn't sell advertising anymore. The worst part is not that we don't see this stuff in advance, but that afterwards we feel like we've crossed no boundaries, that the things we print are awesome, and that we are actively working to better the magazine.

We're not, sadly, and that needs to change. We need to cut out the pathetic 15-year-old humor and print a magazine that we are actually proud of. That means a magazine that is funny, but that you wouldn't

be ashamed to show your mother. I have spent the last year thinking about GDT, and how I wish I were at RIT to fix it. The last month has left me thinking about how I don't think there's anything left to fix. I can't give up my commitment to this magazine, though, because I know how good it can be. I know we can print an issue with a picture of Iraqis playing with beach balls. That is hilarious. This article is decidedly not funny. That's because lately the joke has been on us. We need to laugh at ourselves a little and then resume making everyone else laugh. Besides, a college with a stair and gateway opposite an anatomically correct tiger must leave at least some room for humor. Let us take that room and nurture it into an entire college of humor. It could be the College of Laughing and Instigation Technology, where we could finally find what every student at RIT is actually looking for: a genuinely good time.



**Gracies
Dinnertime
Theatre™**
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