



# Gracie's Dinnertime Theatre

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## Urban Scholarships

**By Alex Moundalexis**

There's someone here at RIT that I think deserves a scholarship. Not just any scholarship, but a full ride—everything paid for in full with additional stipends. I'm not on any board of Trustees either—although I did meet a bunch of trustees once, but I digress. We could easily give this guy a scholarship, according to RIT's policies. Let me tell you why.

He has made himself plainly visible on campus, and is frequently seen on the academic side. Chances are you've seen him around and wanted to know more about him. He is a natural at promoting diversity: people are always asking about his history, culture, etc. And we all know how RIT loves to promote diversity. He doesn't make racial or sexist remarks, and he respects us all regardless of our sexual orientation. He is a stand-up kind of guy, and resists all attempts of those heart-set on removing him from existence.

The guy isn't all success; he needs to work on his social skills. He is usually seen on campus without companions of a friendly or romantic nature, and he rarely speaks to anyone. Despite the fact that he can be

a loner, I've got the feeling that he will be going places. If he had teamed up with the Inconspicuous Can of Beer last year, they could have won the Student Government elections.



There's only one problem: the public has yet to learn his name. So I consulted a friend of mine from Computer Science House, another Editor, and a few loving, affectionate staff members from *GDT*. Together we will bring memories from our childhood into the present and name him. We proudly introduce you to Mr. Poopie.

## Consensus Theory

### By Irving Washington

Morning comes all too swiftly. It always has, but somehow Saturdays always seem the worst—maybe because they usher in the harsh realities of life which I hope to escape, to expunge, with a night's peaceful slumber... and perhaps from the recreations of the previous night, undertaken to the same ends. As my eyes open the room slowly swirls into a clockwise drift, the backwater eddy of time and space which so neatly characterize my existence—and I realize that the latter of my postulates seems, at present, to be best supported by the blurring of my senses and my clock-radio's vindictive annunciation that this is, in fact, morning in only the most subjective of terms. I hate my addiction to clocks, a shameful habit born sometime in my years as a college student, forming life into some sort of stressful cage of lighted diodes and churning hands which never seem to accurately grasp, for me, the natural currents of life, but which I have nonetheless bound myself to like a severed mast in the bleak and ominous waters I struggle to tread on a daily basis. Morning has always felt as if it should be the time when I rise, the gentle transition from slumber to a gentle wakefulness, a languid anticipation of what, for good or ill, this day is to bring me. The most beautiful theories, it seems, are always the first to shatter in their actual confrontation with the artificial, life-mocking Tartarus of "real-world application." I lurch to my feet, cue my stereo, and sit back in full anticipation of my warm reveille, the fanfare welcoming me back into the land of the living and mortal... and am greeted by a rich and hearty silence. No volume. I press the switch and am immediately greeted with a harsh, indulgent roar of Slayer's *Disciple*, fading and resonating somewhere in the abyss between my ears, between a slow stereo chorus and half-cocked wah peddle... rumbling through my bones as it drifts, with an amorphous and macabre beauty, over and about the murky haze of my soul. I turn to my computer, ignoring the obnoxious teetering of the walls—and pause a second, enjoying the tranquil, distorted harmony of my reeling consciousness—Jesus, what all did I do to myself last night... or have the chemicals in the red affected more than my heart? Either way, this experiment seems worthy of a repeat, a little more unscientific documentation, research into the Dionysian high and ebb of a bacchanal excess... or perhaps it is something of the rare ecstasies enjoyed solely by those initiated into the rites of proper worship? Some things, perhaps, cannot be found online, despite the rhetoric to

the contrary.

An interminable ride to the grill ensues... as heads rotate to oblique angles amidst the clutter of reflections in the rear windshield ahead, and faces cry out from memory... as I eat a breakfast/dinner of cheese steak the world slows its awkward revolutions and I find my consciousness focused on the glowing, blasphemous hell-mouth of a television screen spewing the commercial blather of an infomercial... a retired baseball coach and a wizened new age guru hunker in the shade of an opaque white hothouse, surrounded by immense fields of waist-deep aloe plants while cutaways of personal endorsements and perverse production line machineries tout the wonders of some sort of anesthetic blue ooze... I wait, anxiously, for the SNL credits to roll, knowing that they will never come, and question my grip on reality - does anyone else see that? No one seems to take interest - show signs of cognizance - any more than they might to a third person shot of a lost man staggering blindly through the moonlit streets of a grey-on-black Picasso rendering, calling the name of a woman he lost too long ago, for too little reason... *wallpaper*, taken for granted, the ramblings of defective minds in a world of sightless lepers. I wonder then, suddenly, if I am seeing the same world they are, *ever*, and especially today - an old lament of existential base, but all the more pertinent in this moment, lost between idle dreaming and harsh reality—at what the difference truly is.

And in this moment I feel the need for some consensus, some affirmation that my addled and introspective brain has not strayed too far upon its own tangents and imaginings, to perish or never to return - be the results good or ill, the flight back to pure creative fancy, the unleashed genius—or the depraved depths of the madman, forever castigated and exiled from the reality of others for his audacity to create one unique to his own needs and true self—again, a grey-scale of public and professional opinion. Too many events in recent days feel too outlandish to have occurred - this warped commercial, becoming a parody of its own intent, a president felled by the lethally precise acupuncture of a rebellious pretzel, the predictable misunderstanding and vicious antagonism of satiric commentary suddenly directed towards a *respectable* writer of the Institute-scion *Reporter*, no less... and to top it off, the imminent threat of *officially* government sponsored and thoroughly illicit interrogations of political prisoners thrown squarely into the face of over 200 years of Constitutional rhetoric... All of it, put together, seems good cause to question one's

own sanity, were it not for the common knowledge and unsung acceptance of these events by a greater plurality than any chaotic “Mob” delusions of a fractured and delusional psyche could ever strain to muster.

So is this, truly, the definition of reality, not some objective and explicit causal universe, nor any individual’s subjective interpretation thereof, but some ratification from the masses that certain things *are*, based upon

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### **Disconnecting. The Ending of the Agains and Still By R. Meinhart**

Hi, I’m back. I’ve returned to the kitchen table. In the kitchen with the flowered yellow wallpaper (that I helped you paper two summers ago) that goes so perfectly with the yellow linoleum tiles on the floor that is slightly scuffy near where the table legs were (before the kitchen was rearranged to make room for a cooking island- because your mom said that if she had an island like Emeril then she would be a better cook). Here in the house that I used to think felt like my house too. In the neighborhood where you “grewed me up.” Here in the city where you exist around every corner from the dress shop to the theater and down every alleyway and in every coffee shop in between. So I’m back and sitting here. Again. Only it doesn’t feel like an “again.” It feels like a “still,” and oddly enough, I’m still alone. Even though I shouldn’t feel that way, because you’re sitting there in “your chair,” the one with the dark blue seat cover that you put on there because the upholstery was a “putrid” chartreuse shade that didn’t agree with you. Maybe it agreed with me, and maybe that’s why this didn’t work the first time. We didn’t agree on colors. Which is important, you know, and I still like off shades and interesting hues and all that they mean, or that they don’t mean to you. What makes me think that I wont care that you like plain blue and all the baggage that comes with it this time around? Has a half-year plus made me less passionate? I shudder to think about such; as you quietly read “Christian Family.” Which is a topic that I know bringing up will only make one of us cry, if not both, before you go to your room to read on a bed that I used to feel comfortable in, by yourself, leaving me in the kitchen again and still. I think that I really liked the look of the ugly green chair in the amazingly yellow kitchen. Take the chair cover off. No? See? This isn’t working for me. I think that we need to see other peo-

acceptance of general belief? It was not the face of Helen that launched a thousand ships, back in that age of heroes, aeon of sanctified sinners and godless martyrs, but a universal acceptance of her beauty—and the fierce and nationalistic need to possess it, the almighty quest for the ultimate trophy wife...

*And so worship this in your sloth and arrogant foolishness, all—your new god, Spork, The Almighty..*

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ple. Again? Or Still? Only, I won’t say the second part, because your attention is already returned to the garbage you’re reading, and besides, dear, to be totally honest I’m not sure how I feel about my return, or shall I say your return? I’m not sure who returned to who, but I do know that you definitely said that you “just called to say that you loved me,” and I laughed because I had never liked that song so much, and because you know that. And because I said okay. I’m not so sure why. Maybe because I like that you know that I have weak ankles and knees from seasons upon seasons of soccer, and what I’m like when I’m really really sick, and because I like that you make me breakfast without me asking sometimes and know that I like mushrooms in my salads and because you would never in a million years address me as “woman.” Maybe because I missed you, only I’m starting to think that I missed this kitchen, not so much the person in it. Or maybe I even missed the person that I was when I was with you still and that I want to be that person again, only I don’t think this is why though, because I think that I am too original for you, still. And because I’m wondering why I said okay. I’m not so sure I should have let you in the door; or really, let myself into the house; into this yellow kitchen again. Because this time has the promise of being another last time and I don’t want that, and knowing this is what makes this time different and I don’t like that either. And maybe because I’m not looking for a real relationship, (and you can go ahead and pull out your psychology terms on me and whatnot, but what’s so much wrong with just having fun?); or maybe because I want any kind of relationship that I do have to come sans-“baggage.” And maybe because I’ve met someone else and because he isn’t navy blue. Not that I’ve asked him this of course, but I just know. You were never an unusual shade of chartreuse. But I am. And maybe I need that. Still. Again. Both. And all that is found in between.

## What Debt?

### By Alex Moundalexis

The Debt is the amount of money owed by the government to other government offices, foreign countries, and private investors. Currently, the Debt outstanding is hovering just below the six trillion dollar mark—or approximately \$21,000 per citizen<sup>1</sup>. Analysts have also noted that since September 28<sup>th</sup> this year, the Debt has increased an average of \$1,026 million per day. What the analysts haven't said publicly – but should have – was that this is a shitload of money.

To date, the United States hasn't made a significant effort to reduce the Debt, yet we still borrow billions from others each year. Of note, we have been paying off the interest on the Debt each year—nearly \$200 million—a modest fee for leaving bills unpaid. But wait! There's legislation in development to reduce the Debt, right? Wrong. President Bush's "fiscally responsible" budget helps the Deficit—which is the annual amount that spending exceeds revenue. So we're adding less to the Debt than last year – hooray! The budget does nothing for the Debt.

Think of your credit card statement. You can pay the balance, the minimum, or the interest. If you only pay the interest each month, eventually the credit card issuer will send out the collection agency to hunt your ass down. Evade them long enough and they might get violent. The same thing applies to the United States. While most of the Debt is owed from one U.S. government account to another, roughly 40 percent of it is owed to foreign countries. So far, no country has attempted to collect the balance from the United States. Should we be concerned that some governments may attempt to use violence as a method of collecting their fair share?

President Bush isn't worried. President Clinton wasn't worried. It's an odd world where you can say

that we owe the European nations \$3T without flinching or getting a knock to the jaw. The United States is the most powerful bully (I mean organization) in the world—perhaps the universe. Hell, the United States has gone pretty far and done some pretty horrible things to provoke a response by the gods—the lack of response might indicate that ... oh no, I couldn't even suggest that the United States is more powerful than the gods ... oops.

If anything, this revelation should mean one thing—we stop asking for money. That's right, there's no point in asking for loans anymore. From now on, the United States will demand money and resources from other countries. Who the hell is going to make us

pay it back? There is not a country in this world that is capable of collecting on the Debt, so long as we've got the bombs. We're going to town with our military, over in Afghanistan—imagine our response if a few countries attempted to take 4 or 5 trillion dollars from us? Why should we as Americans pay off a debt that no one could possibly collect on? This is free

*pink*  
money – the American dream even!

<sup>1</sup> As of Friday, January 25, 2002—the debt was \$5,929,882,520,741.37. If you divide by the estimated population of the United States (286,109,734) the result is \$20,725.90—approximately \$21,000.



This space must be filled

An edit; a layout; worth?

Whitespace is a weed.

**Submit better poetry.**

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# Poetry

All submissions, including gothic poetry and bad editor haikus, accepted.

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## **girl at a diner**

**By gary hoffmann**

your eyes stare down at the cup of coffee  
clutched tightly between cold hands  
staring ponderously, mournful of its absence  
of the answers you hoped to see within it  
so you take a deep breath and sigh  
breath shoving sharply away the faint wisp  
of steam that climbs slowly up  
to caress your face  
and disturbing the liquid within with rippling  
harmonies and dissonances  
your eyes reflect the coffee they stare at—  
no milk, no sugar—  
stained deep brown by decaffeinated tears  
you lift up the cup slowly to your lips  
so small, pale, and wonderfully flavored  
and blow softly—a silent whistle—  
before sipping from its warmth  
and setting it back down slightly off-center  
from the ring it had just left behind  
your shirt slips just a little  
to reveal the tiniest bit more of your bare shoulder  
only to be swiftly readjusted  
you smile dimly at some private thought  
briefly seeing beyond the cup of coffee  
to someplace beyond the world of dreams  
and breathe another sigh

## Maroon Translucence: My Take On Red Wine

By R. Meinhart

It never fails that  
At the end of every month  
(Save for December, of course)  
I wish that I was one of those women  
In Humphrey Boghart flicks that  
Lounges gracefully on a daybed in a sun room  
Overlooking some beautiful ocean or cityscape  
Playing with an elegant looking wine glass  
In oh- so delicate fingers  
Twirling the rich red elixir around  
In circular patterns watching  
It reflect in half burnt down candles and in  
Humphrey Boghart's  
Dark and dramatic eyes.

And on slightly brisk days  
Particularly on unusually warm winter days  
And pleasant nights in late summer  
Hyphen early autumn  
I want to be a gypsy in a midnight  
blue broomstick shirt and emerald bandanna  
Covering wild red hair  
Who gets drunk off of cheap wine in the  
Company of good friends,  
Singing in a loud, rich tone,  
While dancing an unrestricted camp fire;  
Falling asleep on a softened riverbank  
Under a Bohemian's starry blanket.

In the waning months of late winter  
Particularly as February rolls into Marchness  
And whenever its snowing  
I want to share a bottle of middle class  
Red wine with my  
Lover or companion as we curl up on the  
Tightly woven blue rug in the den, ears tuned  
Into NPR NewsRadio.  
Slowly sneaking small sips  
From a crystal rocks glass between the  
Stitches of my knitting, as  
He reads the New Yorker,  
of course.

And on select and wonderful days  
During all times and seasons  
I enjoy being myself  
Conversing with a friend over a bottle of  
Lovely, carefully selected red wine  
About Alice in Wonderland and the  
Way that windy days should  
Almost always been spent  
Flying kites. Or with my parents  
Who share a glass with me  
To show that they now equate me  
With adulthood. Or even with my dog  
As we settle in with jazz music  
And The Fountainhead for a  
Wonderful evening. And it  
Is on these days that I am  
Most content.

## THE INCONSPICUOUS CAN OF BEER

### STRIKES BACK!

By Rocko Bonaparte

The Inconspicuous Can of Beer™ was infuriated that it was not featured in the recent events of the explosive Rochester party scene. Instead, it was substituted with Miller Lite.

"It pisses me off," the Inconspicuous Can of Beer commented, "but I'm not going to cry."

Rather, it has decided it needs to re-assert itself as the liquid sunshine of choice for pale, depressed RIT students. It also plans to expand to the University of Rochester, and somehow make its way over to the West Coast. ICOB surmises that people will be more hospitable to it elsewhere.

"People out in California don't shit bricks and undersea mines when they find out the party isn't serving Canadian beer," it commented. Leaders of the campaign to elect the Inconspicuous Can of Beer for Student Government president blame this on the lack of votes for ICOB's candidacy. They also blame the fact that ICOB is not a marketing major.

"There's a COB in ICOB, but it sure don't mean 'College of Business,'" Anita Beer commented. She is ICOB's beautiful daughter, and managed the campaign for ICOB during last year's elections. Anita says that they will not take a defensive to this slap in the face. Rather, they will take the offensive, and finish what they began.

"Good, affordable happiness. A pat on a shoulder from your best friend, the Inconspicuous Can of Beer™." She said.

However, ICOB continues to mull over his "fall from grace" as he calls it.

"Why Miller Lite? Are they afraid of calories?"

In fact, some of the party attendants were RIT athletes, and had to stay in shape. Hence, when they get hammered on beer, they make sure it doesn't contain that many calories. ICOB retorts, "That's nonsense. I know those bastards were downing Nick Tahou's later in the evening." Anita added that this

remark was not made to demean Nick Tahou's in any way. Rather, it was an "insult to the men afraid to sling their bellies around during a race."

"Come on, this is Division III we're talking about. Have fun with the sport and then get drunk. These folks are ruining their fun with the sport and their fun with the party."

After some more of this banter, ICOB returned to the Miller Lite issue. "I would have proudly sat in that guy's hand in the flyer. What is his name again? All Simons? Whoever he is, I still wouldn't care. Better than getting warm in the gutter! Those bastards!"

ICOB began to cry.

"I told you . . . I wasn't going to cry." It whined. Anita interrupted to tell us ICOB would run again for class president this year. It will also run for homecoming king, queen, prince, princess, or even little prat if that becomes available. Anita reminded us that ICOB would always win a real popularity contest. "Yeah, one voted on by real people, real men, not those little pussies!" ICOB responded.

It came to our attention that now was a good time to consider leaving, but ICOB began to slurp on itself and started to feel better.

"You see. That's how it is! One sip of this stuff and I'm ready for anything."

"Anything except driving a vehicle." Anita interrupted for the sake of legality.

When asked about reports of beer being forced to be emptied from cups before leaving a party, ICOB responded, "What a waste a beer! Then again, it wasn't my beer, so I don't care!" ICOB didn't care much about people who were even forced to empty water from a cup before leaving parties, but commented that it "seems stupid." He suggested that those individuals poor ICOB into their cups instead.

ICOB closed the interview by reasserting his new runs for king of RIT and the rest of the world. They are ambitious claims, but few can dispute the power of the Inconspicuous Can Of Beer. Stay tuned for ongoing articles about *GDT*'s favorite presidential candidate.

## **At A Coffee Shop In Chili**

**By Gary Hoffmann**

at a coffee shop in Chili I wrote a poem about a girl I've never met, a girl I've seen only in my mind a thousand times in bluest dreams of lost imagining a girl I've never spoken to but will some day a girl I thought about sitting there as I drank my decaffeinated earl grey tea sitting at a circular table with a checker board printed on it and trying to flirt with the brown eyed girl behind the counter who doesn't go to college here or anywhere close to here and when she goes back in two weeks I won't see her again until the long, hot, humid days of mid-June but I was thinking about someone else, someone with eyes just as brown but tired with sadness, a girl drinking coffee at a diner I've never been to, a diner with off white tables and those metal napkin holders you always find in diners she was

drinking coffee and not speaking to me simply breathing, sighing, thinking about the time we didn't meet at the Brockport diner, perhaps, or thinking about a lost love, someone she'll never again hold close to her, their breath intermingling as they embrace and kiss, as they feel each other's warmth and lose themselves in thoughtless ecstasy, their minds irrelevant as their bodies join, dancing, grinding like two giant millstones or churning like a gigantic printing press a printing press I saw when I was six years old and made all the more huge and loud and horrible because of it, that is how they once met and how they'll never meet again this is what she thinks so sighingly about, her breath blowing away the thin wisps of steam rising from the white porcelain mug that doesn't quite match the table on which it's leaving tan ring shaped stains, the steam softly caressing her cheek lovingly and so I wrote about her

# **We Want You!**

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# 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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