

by Jason

# What the Hell Are

I have been happy to see a new, or shall we say, revamped, publication floating around the Clark Campus. I have eagerly read every issue of *WheatBread* that has come out thus far, and have taken great interest in hearing fellow Clarkies write, and sometimes ramble, about what goes on here at this place we call home.

It is good to see that there are people who go to Clark who are aware of what is happening around them, are interested in it, and are motivated enough to sit their butts down at the computer and hack out some of their thoughts so that they can be shared by others. This promotes others to think, pose questions, and become more aware of how they feel about issues, people, places and things in general.

I cannot stress enough how important it is to have lines of communication remain open, and how crucial it is to maintain forums for people to ruminate about their lives and the many facets that shape them. There are many trends that have been developing around us in this postmodern age. People watch Tv—and a lot of it. Every night three fourths of the American public is sitting at home watching Tv.

They are not doing anything, and this frightens me. People do not read nearly as much as they used to. People do not have intelligent conversations nearly as much as they used to. The amount of newspapers in this country have been diminishing rapidly over the past twenty years. This is

not a good thing, because the fewer publications there are out there, the less the truth about what is really happening in this country can come out. USA Today is not a newspaper: it is a watered-down, biased, color-coated corporate magazine that does not contain an ounce of the hard hitting expose journalism that this country needs.

Every thing is being bought out and controlled by major corporate octopus tendrils and there are increasingly fewer and fewer avenues for truth and fewer and fewer people who even know to question what they see on the nightly news and read in magazines.

The fact is, as a culture and a society, we are less opinionated, focused and more complacent with what our lives offer us. I think that young people need to realize that MTV is such garbage that it is beyond ridiculous. Entities such as Music Television exist for profit, and they achieve this by exploiting our generation. This form of media creates opinions for us, and dictates what is hip, what is cool and what is important, instead of leaving these decisions up to the individual.

I have seen the effects of the television age and I believe that we need to realize that ideas must come from ourselves, that they must be discussed and argued over. Reading and writing and discussion are so important to the health of a society, and without them a shallowness and ignorance will persist.

I have been at Clark for

four years, and I will be here for a fifth year as a graduate student. I believe that this school is unique in that it gives it's students the space and freedom to function at the level they are capable of, at whatever stage they are in their development as a young adult. Is that a good thing? Perhaps it is, or perhaps it is not.

There are people here who do not sit on their asses. They may participate in theater, in athletics, clubs, organizations, volunteer work, etc. There are also people here at Clark who don't do a damn thing. You may be one of them, but if you are reading this paper, chances are that you have some interests beyond staring at the walls, but surely you know someone who is a Clarkie, and does not actually do much of anything.

I think that this is an interesting subject, because it has so many implications about where we are at as a society. Did this issue even exist fifty years ago? I don't think I am wrong in saying that times have changed, and that the ways of reaching what one would call success in this country have changed. It is a very recent development in the history of this country that one must graduate from college in order to get a decent job. Today this is a fact, but for our grandparents, only a select few, mostly men, even went to college.

Somewhere between then and now, the experience of the middle to upper class income 18 to 24 year old changed. Now it is expected that you will

go to college. In 1950, you went to college a) if your family was rich and b) if you were really smart and got a scholarship. Either way, I will assume that most people did not fart around nearly as much as they do today in our fine colleges and universities.

Today, going to college has an image of a care-free, party-hardy existence. It has become a four year summer camp hiatus before going off into the complexities and horrors of self-reliant adulthood. We all know this, because we are here, and we don't even go to one of the "real party schools."

I wasn't around back then, but from what I know, the educational system of this country has been in decline for some time now. Is it the fault of the institutions themselves? Is it because of the breakdown in community? Does our government spend too little on the well being of our public schools? I think that it is a combination of these issues among others. Is it acceptable for people to go to college and not do anything productive while they are there?

Clark is a good school as far as academic standing is concerned, but let us be honest with each other. We all know that it is quite possible for someone with slightly above average intelligence to cruise through their studies here without too much strain. One can get away with doing relatively small amounts of work and still get decent grades, and then there are those who perform at much higher levels and genu-