

# REVIEW *and* OUTLOOK

## Editorial Opinion of The Ring-tum Phi

Thursday, February 10, 1977

# Answers

This may go down in Ring-tum Phi history as the "all-letters" issue, even though there are only two of them. Both are long, and both represent extended and thoughtful consideration of the issues dealt with in this column. This is the kind of response I've been looking for all year. I'm sorry that it took an ugly and unfortunate incident to get this sort of reaction. Read the letters before this column.

In reply to Mr. Cantler: Honor is not the only issue. It never is. Of tantamount importance are the principles of liberty. It is entirely possible that a student be both guilty of an honor violation and, at the same time, the victim of improper or unfair treatment. Neither guilt nor innocence has any effect on his right to a fair trial. The cries of "Procedure!" and "Discrimination!" came from individuals who care about preserving the rights of a free man, rights which are at least as deserving of our "jealous protection" as your precious honor.

To Mr. Rose (with apologies for not being able to print your entire letter): While the quality of the television production of **Roots** is questionable, the importance of the book at least is probably great, and it indeed could have been used as a springboard for a discussion of racial issues.

Washington and Lee has always seemed exceptional to me in the **extremism** of its attitudes and characteristics. In terms of race relations, the University appears as extremely white, extremely traditional, extremely conservative, and extremely Southern (in terms of shared beliefs, not geography). Integration came to W&L extremely late. Blacks form an extreme minority. The barriers which separate blacks and whites seem somehow more formidable here than elsewhere, at least among students.

If these barriers are indeed more formidable, then they require greater effort to be overcome. Dialogues between black and white students, whether formal or informal, must be the result of mutual effort. The need for interaction and intercommunication between white and black students is desperate; the will to achieve these goals must be strong.

And speaking of extremes...