

CLASS RINGS

all traditions aside

Call me old-fashioned. Tell me I'm too sentimental. Say I'm out of step with the times. I will take my lumps where they are due me.

The first event on the senior calendar is ordering the class ring, and if this is any indication of what I am going to face for the rest of the year, I can only say that it is going to be a very long and difficult year.

My daughter picked up her class ring while she was still in the early stages of her junior year. That's okay I guess, but it is my understanding that all her classmates picked up their rings periodically as they arrived at the school. There was no ceremony. There was no pomp and circumstances. There was no ritual. There was no tradition. You simply ordered them and picked them up on your way out the door when they arrived.

WHO CAME UP WITH THAT IDEA!?!?!

Sure, when I was a junior we too ordered our class ring in the fall. But hey we received our rings *together as a class* at the end of the year! Kind of a ceremonial beginning to our most anticipated senior year. But that's not the half of it.

At the beginning of the year, my daughter brought home a booklet with millions of emblems, designs and styles from which to choose from.

"You mean to tell me that you can decide *on your own* what you want on your ring?"

"Yup"

"And you are free to pick *any* color stone that you want to have on it?"

"Yup"

"And everybody's ring is going to be *different?*"

"Well, gee, dad, it'll have the school's name and the year on it."

"Oh, how *nice!?*"

Now I promised to myself when I set out to write this book that I would not fill the thing with the standard 'I walked three miles in the snow to school' commentaries. Actually, I grew up in San Diego, so that story has never worked well for me.

But come on! Isn't a *class* ring supposed to be just that!? Shouldn't it be a concerted effort

by the entire class to choose the emblems and designs that they want to be remembered by as a class!?!

We voted *as a class* for one of three designs that a committee had come up with. When we ordered our rings, all we needed to do was tell them what size and whether we wanted a red, white or black stone on it - red and white being our school colors, and black being for those who were a bit too fashion conscience and frankly, made their ring look like a mood ring, appropriately enough.

It was a very important first step for a senior class. We had to make sure that our class ring would out class all other class rings before it. I am still confident that the Hoover High class of '70 ring is still the classiest class ring in the history of that wonderful institution of lower learning.

But now you are telling me that this all important first step in a senior class has been reduced to a serve yourself pot luck!?!

My daughter's school colors are green and white. Do you know that I have yet to meet a student with a green ring on?!? Not one, I'm telling ya!?! Oh, I've seen some pretty blue, red, purple, silver, gray, black and white...but no green!

You know, I often hear people make comments about how our youth have no sense of tradition. They have lost their sentimental values. But I'm not all the certain that the kids are to blame.

When an obvious thing like a class ring has been reduced to yet another big business marketing scheme with it's booklets full of do your own things, we can't honestly expect the kids to learn anything about traditions or sentimental values, can we?

I'm beginning to get nervous. I'm not sure my sentimental, soft heart is going to hold up well during this, *HER SENIOR YEAR*.

Why, I'm so upset, I think I'm going to make her walk to school the first time that it snows!