

art@hendrix! 1970s

Hendrix entered the 1970s a year after the inauguration of President Roy B. Shilling, Jr. On Shilling's first birthday as President of the college, students threw him into the Butler Plaza fountain, upsetting a number of faculty members and administrators. Shilling climbed out soaking wet and endorsed the shenanigans, unknowingly creating a Hendrix College tradition.

For students, the early 1970s represented a period of social unrest as the campus flooded with anti-war protests, and the college's student media organizations became a center of reforming zeal. The *Profile* stopped reporting on campus events and instead reprinted national articles or lengthy opinion pieces. In 1973, the *Troubadour* printed pictures of elderly people and small children in pain and poverty against a stark black backdrop, rather than the campus gaiety which yearbooks typically commemorate.

In addition to Vietnam War protests, 14 Black students composed an open letter in April 1970, expressing frustration with racial inequality on campus. The letter cited a lack of Black faculty and Board of Trustees members, plus the failure of fellow students to stand up for their Black classmates. The college responded by adding a course on African American literature and designated a "Black Awareness Week," designed to celebrate Black culture through art exhibits, panel discussions, and a film series.

Later in the decade, student unrest began to subside. After a four-year debate with the Student Senate, the college allowed members of the opposite sex to enter each other's dorms and also turned Couch Hall into a co-ed living space. In 1973, students created KHDX, a radio station broadcasted from the second floor of Hulen Hall. The following year, Hendrix students held the first annual Goat Roast, which one faculty member called "a raunchy, hell-raising good time" that revolved around the roasting of goats and consumption of beer.

In 1977, Hendrix launched student-faculty pre-orientation trips. These four-day excursions occurred in natural parks across the state and helped students bond with their peers before the beginning of classes. In 1978, the college formally established the Bertie Wilson Murphy Symposium in Literature and Language. This program, which still exists today, brought artists and writers to campus who taught courses and delivered public lectures.