

FILM & TV

The Spirit of '76

Do you know the inside story of *Dazed and Confused*, one of the greatest movies about high school ever made and the flick that made Matthew McConaughey famous? It'd be a lot cooler if you did!



The Post-Graduate: McConaughey as his *Dazed and Confused* character, David Wooderson, photographed at Top Notch in Austin on June 1, 2003.

Photograph by Dan Winters



By John Spong

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There was no good reason to expect *Dazed and Confused*, the second feature film from *Slacker* director Richard Linklater, to become a pop-culture phenomenon when filming began in Austin in June 1992. The only remotely recognizable faces in the ensemble cast were a bitchy teen villainess from a low-rated soap and a sixteen-year-old sorta-supermodel who had no lines. And the action, such as it was—small-town kids driving muscle cars in slow circles while smoking dope and listening to Edgar Winter eight-tracks—was set on the last day of school in . . . 1976. Could enough time ever pass to make a return trip to the days of pet rocks and Peter Frampton worth embarking on?

Well, a funny thing happened on the way to obscurity. Like *American Graffiti* and *Fast Times at Ridgemont High* before it, *Dazed* became the rookie card for a generation of new stars, both of the Hollywood and independent-film varieties. Matthew McConaughey, Ben Affleck, and Renée Zellweger (who had a small, nonspeaking role) are the names that now need no introduction. Almost as familiar, but in more of a where-have-I-seen-that-face-before way, are co-stars Milla Jovovich (a L'Oréal spokesmodel), Parker Posey (*Waiting for Guffman*), Joey Lauren Adams (*Chasing Amy*), Rory Cochrane (TV's *CSI: Miami*), Cole Hauser (*2 Fast 2 Furious*), Anthony Rapp (the original Broadway cast of *Rent*), Marissa Ribisi (*Pleasantville*), and Adam Goldberg (*Saving Private Ryan*).

The secret of *Dazed's* success isn't Linklater's paper-thin plot: Against a backdrop of the annual hazing of incoming ninth-graders at Lee High School, the star quarterback, Randall "Pink" Floyd, wrestles with signing a pledge to lead a drug-free summer, and a freshman-to-be, Mitch Kramer, gets a first taste of his new life. It's the characters, who, despite being played by unknowns, are immediately identifiable to anyone who can remember high school. McConaughey's Wooderson is the guy who has already graduated but continues coming around the school anyway. Affleck's O'Bannion is the sadistic bully suspected of intentionally failing his senior year so that he can terrorize yet another class of freshmen. Posey and Adams are Darla and Simone, the pretty, catty, popular girls. Cochrane is Slater, the stoner who gets to hang out with the cool kids because he always has pot. Goldberg, Ribisi, and Rapp are Mike, Cynthia, and Tony, the nerdy journalism-class kids who serve as the movie's geek chorus, struggling to make sense of a world that places no value on their greatest asset, intelligence. The travails of

Pink and Mitch, played by Jason London and Wiley Wiggins, respectively, don't so much provide narrative arc as pairs of eyes through which to view Linklater's dead-on re-creation of high school.





What He Really Wants To Do Is Direct: There was no good reason to expect Linklater's follow-up to *Slacker* to become a pop-culture phenomenon, but it has. Photograph by Dan Winters

Critical praise was nearly universal when *Dazed* opened ten years ago, in late September 1993—*Newsweek* called it a “crushingly funny and knowing ode to misspent youth”—but a small initial release, on only 183 screens, meant the film barely broke even at the box office, taking in just \$8 million.

Fortunately, many of those screens were in college towns, where the movie found a natural audience and built the word-of-mouth buzz by which cult favorites are made. Eventually it even outgrew cult status; home video and DVD sales and rentals total more than \$30 million, and the two volumes of the soundtrack have together sold more than two million copies. Fittingly enough for a coming-of-age movie in which no one actually comes of age, watching the film has become a rite of passage in and of itself.

But *Dazed* is about more than rolling papers and tall boys. Unlike *American Graffiti*, it does not pretend to depict the biggest night in a generation's life. Instead, it's one of the few teen movies honest enough to show just how much of high school was spent spinning our wheels, and how few of us were aware of it. And for *Dazed's* mostly untested cast and crew, it marked the last time they were able to make a movie that no one expected much from.

* Here are their recollections, gathered this summer, of the making of *Dazed and Confused*.

BEFORE

Richard Linklater (writer, director, co-producer): I'd always had this idea for a strange high school film. I remember being a high school freshman in Huntsville and driving around all night with three or four guys in a Le Mans, listening to an eight-track tape of ZZ Top's *Fandango*. Eight-tracks never ended; a song would get quiet, you would hear a click, and then it would pick back up. So I wanted the film to start with a close-up shot of *Fandango* sliding into the eight-track player and then have a whole movie in this car, meeting people who drove up next to you, going through the drive-through, getting out and getting beer—basically always in and around the car.

But at that time, teen movies were John Hughes movies. There was so much

but at that time, teen movies were John Hughes movies. There was so much drama. Maybe I'm an undramatic guy, but I remember a complete lack of anything big going on in high school. The essence of being a teen to me was a whole lot of energy and music but nothing much technically happening. On any given night there wasn't a car wreck. There was no one impregnated, no huge love story from the wrong side of the tracks. So when I was doing press for *Slacker*, a Hollywood producer called up and asked what I was working on. I told him I had this teenage rock and roll film that I felt was my next movie.

The producer, Jim Jacks, and his partner, Sean Daniel, were Hollywood veterans who had set up a production company on the Universal Studios lot. They convinced Universal that Linklater could be the next George Lucas and his project an updated American Graffiti. The studio bit, to the relatively tame tune of \$6.9 million; to insure the investment, Daniel asked casting legend Don Phillips to come out of retirement and round up the talent. Phillips agreed on one condition: He wanted the freedom to use all unknown actors, as he had for the last film he'd cast, 1982's Fast Times at Ridgemont High.

Linklater: The studio would have liked Brendan Fraser, who had been in *Encino Man* and was sort of an up-and-comer. But he passed, which was fine. If he's in it, then it's a "Brendan Fraser movie."

Jason London ("Randall 'Pink' Floyd"): When I went to the first audition, I was waiting in the lobby, and Ashley Judd was there. She hadn't hit the big time or anything yet, but I thought, "Wow, this is a pretty girl." So she started flirting with me. Then she went in before me, and when she came out she said, "It was nice to meet you." When I walked in, Don Phillips said, "That girl did nothing but talk about you the whole time she was in here! You'd better go get her number!" I turned around, ran out, and was like, "Hey, hold up! What's your digits?" Don was impressed. I think that was one point for me in the stud department.

Don Phillips (casting director): After meeting a lot of kids at a couple rounds of calls, I convened what I call a "casting pizza party," something I'd instituted with *Fast Times*. We picked forty people to come in all day one day and read for eighteen parts, and we weren't specific about who was trying out for what. At noon the pizza delivery guy came, and all the kids got a little picnic while we mixed and matched people and parts.

London: So all the guys read for Pink, and all the girls read for Jodi [*Dazed's* female lead, eventually played by Michelle Burke], and to rehearse you basically went to a practice room with one of the girls and made out. We got

to make out with, like, three different girls each. It was the greatest audition of all time.



Gabor Szitanyi



Gabor Szitanyi

Joey Lauren Adams (“Simone”): I don’t know who came up with the idea for a pizza party, but it was just awful. A nightmare. You sat there with people you were competing against, which is bad enough when you’re just waiting to go read. But this was all day, with everyone. A couple of people, like Parker Posey, already had their parts and were just there to read with us. I remember asking her where she was from, and she said, “Mississippi.” I said, “Oh, I’m from Arkansas,” and she said, “Where’s that?” and went on smoking and chomping her gum. I fell in love with her later, but I hated her then.

Phillips: Vince Vaughn was there, but he was competing with Cole and Ben, and he didn’t get it. Neither did Claire Danes, whom Rick Linklater and I

loved but was more of an Eastern-school type. And poor Ashley Judd—she never even got to meet Rick. Then I get to Austin, and that’s when I met Renée Zellweger. I went, “Isn’t this girl interesting?” When Rick and I saw her together, we read her and thought, “Ahh, man! Too bad that everybody’s set, because she would have been perfect.” So we gave her that teeny part in the parking lot.

Casting of the younger characters was done in Texas. The pivotal role of freshman Mitch Kramer went to an actual Austin high school freshman named Wiley Wiggins. And through a series of highly lucky coincidences, the small role of hanger-on David Wooderson wound up in the lap of UT frat boy Matthew McConaughey.

Anne Walker-McBay (co-producer): I found Wiley out on the Drag in Austin, coming out of Quackenbush’s. I’d been scouring the 7-Elevens and any other place where all the teenagers hung out, handing out business cards to anybody who looked interesting. He said his name was Wiley Wiggins, and I went back to the office thinking, “That’s the most incredible name.” All afternoon I kept asking, “Has Wiley Wiggins called?” Finally he came in for an interview, and we went through the entire thing without him saying anything about being in a PBS series [*The Perkins Family*] when he was ten years old. I gave him a ride home afterward, and he mentioned it offhandedly, and I said, “Wiley, don’t you think that would have been a good thing to have mentioned?” “Oh, yeah, I guess.”





Phillips: I went to Austin to cement the cast with Rick, who put me up for the weekend at the Hyatt. Usually I took all the perks I could, which meant staying at the Four Seasons, but it was graduation weekend at UT and I couldn't get in. So it's the end of the day, and I'm up in the bar having a couple drinks to unwind, and I see this really good-looking girl at the end of the bar with this pretty cool-looking guy.

Matthew McConaughey("Wooderson"): It was, like, a Thursday night that summer, man, and I wanted to stay in and watch some flick, but my girlfriend talked me into going out to have some drinks. There was this bartender I knew from film school who worked at the Hyatt and would give us a discount, so we went there. And when we walk in, he's there, and he goes, "Hey, man, the guy down at the end of the bar is in town producing a film." So I went down and introduced myself. That was Don.

Phillips: Next thing I know, I'm having a drink with this kid and talking about golf. I think I remember him saying briefly that he was studying to be a director.

McConaughey: Gets to be four hours later, and my girlfriend is gone, man, and Don and I are pretty lubricated. We're talking about life and women and some great golf hole he's played, and I guess we got a little rambunctious.

Phillips: And a little loud, because some big-muscled, red-shirted, UT-football-player bouncer guy escorts us out of the bar. So Matthew and I went to my room and he said, "How dare they throw us out of the bar, Don. Don't they know who you are?" And I said, "No, and they don't give a damn either." So he said, "You know what I'm doing? I'm calling a manager." And he does. And he demands an apology. Wow. So after all that, I ask him if he's ever acted before. "Naw," he says in that Texas drawl of his. "I've been in a beer commercial and a music video." And I said, "Look, I'm in town casting a movie with Rick Linklater. We have this character, Wooderson, who's a little bit older than the high school kids. He's only got a couple lines, so it's too expensive to bring anybody in from Los Angeles. Why don't you come to my office and pick up the script? Maybe we'll put you on tape to see what you look like."

Linklater: I thought he was too good-looking. Matthew looked like he'd do fine with college girls; but I needed Wooderson to be a little creepier. But

Matthew just sunk into character. His eyes shut to little quarter slots, and he said, “Hey, man, you got a joint?” He just became that guy. I thought, “Okay, don’t cut your hair. Can you grow a beard and a mustache?”

McConaughey: Man, they told me to dirty down. They said that once we got started, I’d get \$300 a day. That’s a lot more than I made waiting tables on Thursday nights at the Catfish Station.

With the cast in place, Linklater set out to instill the spirit of ’76 in a group of kids who, by and large, weren’t old enough to pronounce “bicentennial” the first time around.

Adams: Before we ever got to Austin, Rick sent us mix tapes of seventies music to get us in the mood.

Linklater: I wanted them to own their characters, so I gave them music to listen to. “Cynthia, you’re listening to Joni Mitchell and Carole King, but Simone, you’re listening to KC and the Sunshine Band.”

McConaughey: Nugent’s “Strangle Hold” was in my head the whole time I was Wooderson.





Gabor Sztanyi

Anthony Rapp (“Tony”): There were all these old *People* magazines lying around for us to flip through.

Marissa Ribisi (“Cynthia”): I went through all these yearbooks from the seventies looking at the different looks, and I saw all these white girls with curly hair who had let it grow into an Afro. It was sort of cute but sort of awkward, and I thought that was apropos for my character. I was willing to be ugly because I remember all the other girls looking really cute, and I thought, “I’ll be that awkward girl who gets to feel really confident because she’s got something up here.”

Rory Cochrane (“Slater”): I got a wig, which was kind of freaky to have on when you’ve never had long hair. I’d put it on and walk around. Austin is a cosmopolitan city and everything, but it’s still Texas. Guys would drive by and shout out, “Hey, hippie” or say something about rock and roll.

Linklater: The stylistic thing was not to go overboard but to act like we dropped the camera down on this date in history. You had to nail it, with the clothes, the design, and the music too. If a song came out in June 1976, it was a no-go. For a second I had Thin Lizzy’s “Cowboy Song” coming over the closing credits, but that song didn’t come out until July. So I didn’t use it.

DURING

After opening with Aerosmith’s “Sweet Emotion”—the rights to which cost Linklater more than the entire \$23,000 budget of Slacker—Dazed essentially unfolds in three acts: The Hazing, The Cruising (back and forth between the Top Notch burger joint and the Emporium pool hall), and The Beer Bust. The first act opens with scenes in the school, where, among other things, the senior boys are in shop class working on paddles to “bust” the incoming freshmen guys and on other unauthorized projects. The action moves quickly to a parking lot where the freshmen girls get theirs.

Lee Daniel (cinematographer): I worked out that shop-class scene with Rick. In junior high and high school I spent almost all of my time in wood shop, and one of our teachers was a stoner. He taught us how to make bonges that

didn't look like bongs, so if the principal came in, we could say, "Oh, it's a bedpost. We're making bedposts."

Adams: Those girls' hazing scenes were all-day shoots on a hot, black-asphalt parking lot. The freshmen had tan lines from the mustard we were squirting on them.

Parker Posey ("Darla"): I decided the older girls had been terrible to Darla when she was a freshman, so this was her day to act out. I'd talked to an aunt who'd been hazed by girls who made her swallow oysters tied to dental floss and then pulled them back up. That's what's in Darla's mind when she's putting pacifiers in the girls' mouths, screaming, "Wake up! Wake up! Wake up!" She is going to transfer everything that happened to her onto these girls.

Walker-McBay: The freshman girls spent the whole day with the mustard, ketchup, and oatmeal baked on them. I ran into some of them eight years later, and they said they still can't eat mustard or ketchup.

Linklater believed the movie wouldn't really come together until the second act, when the cruise through the night began. That just happened to coincide with Wooderson's entrance.

Posey: At the time, I was on *As the World Turns*, and the producers had put my character into a coma, which freed me up to do the movie that summer. But I had to fly home after the hazing scene to do something on the soap. When I came back to *Dazed*, everyone in the makeup trailer said, "Wait till you meet Matthew McConaughey. You're gonna die."

McConaughey: I do remember the first night on the set. I was just supposed to drive through the Top Notch and that was it. But when I came out of the trailer, with the hair and the peach pants and the Nugent T-shirt and the necklace with the pipe on it, Rick said, "Hey, there's a beer bust going on later in the movie, and we need a character to get that information to some of the other characters. Maybe Wooderson is the guy to do it."

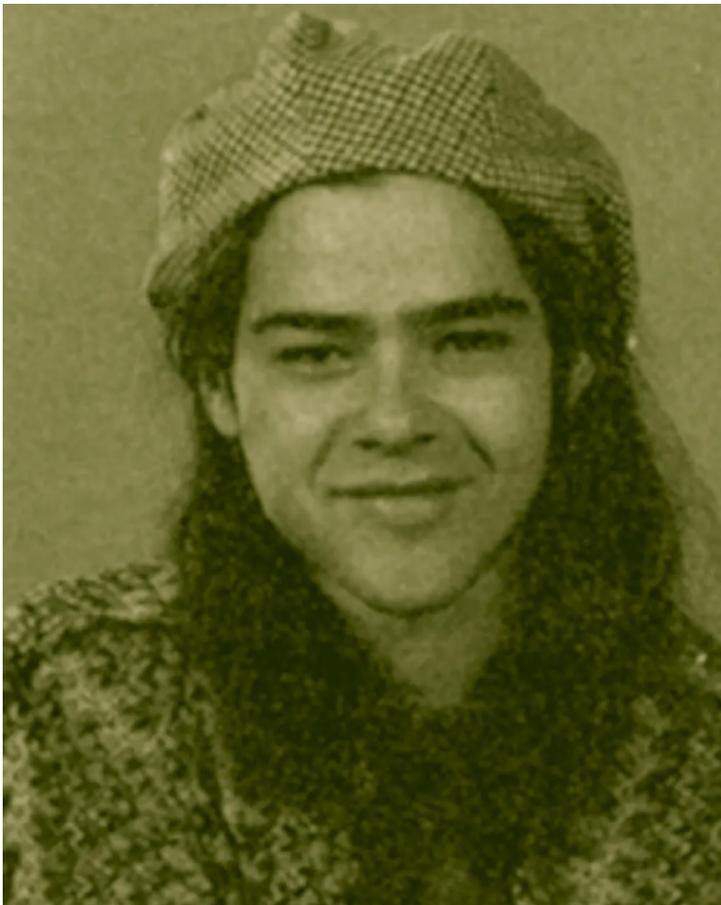
Ribisi: Cynthia was supposed to have a huge crush on Tony, but in real life, I just didn't. When it came down to shooting, Rick was like, "I need to find another guy for Cynthia. Maybe Wooderson?" I thought, "Oh, this is genius." He's everything she's against. She's this girl with a future, kind of preachy, and suddenly she's into this guy who only likes high school chicks. She's so smitten she can't speak.

McConaughey: Rick and I worked that out in maybe thirty minutes. He said, "You know Wooderson's been around. He's been with good looking

you know, Wooderson's been around. He's been with good-looking brunettes, blondes, everything, for ages. Now I think he's into the redheaded intellectual, something a little different." So Wooderson pulls up, throws her a little Spanish about the fiesta later, and then—and I don't know where this came from—asks if she needs a ride. And she's driving her own car, man! It all just flowed real easy. That's the scene when I tuned into who Wooderson was. He's about women, pot, his car, and rock and roll. And at that moment he's high, he's in his Chevelle, and he's listening to rock and roll. The one thing he doesn't have is the chick for the night, right? As soon as Rick went, "Action!" I remember thinking, "There's my fourth thing. Completion. This is as good as it gets for Wooderson."

Ribisi: Then there's that great scene when Wooderson, Pink, and Mitch walk into the Emporium in slow motion with Bob Dylan's "Hurricane" playing. The first time I saw it I cried.

Sasha Jenson ("Donnie"): There was a lot of improv stuff in there that was worked out in rehearsal. Rick didn't always have the time to set up everything he wanted to shoot, so we'd be in the Emporium, and he'd say, "Okay, everybody, go to where you think you should be." So Ben [Affleck] goes to the pool table, and we got that great bit of him kicking that guy's ass at pool right before he gets the paint dumped on him.



If the kids seem to spend the second act waiting for something big to happen, the true extent of their aimlessness isn't clear until that big something happens in the third: a keg party in the woods.

Linklater: I wanted a montage sequence at the beer bust to give the essence of the party. But it's hard to script the essence of a party, and if you don't have it in the script, you don't have it on the shooting schedule. So we had about thirty minutes and a couple of cameras to get it. We cranked up the music, asked people to move, and followed them around. I'd run up to Rory Cochrane and whisper, "Okay, you're trying to score some weed off somebody," and he'd go with it and we'd film.

Daniel: My older brother, Bill, graduated from Richardson High in 1977, so he was right there with these guys, and he said we had to have a beer-bong scene. So we did. But, like, I don't know where Rory's Martha Washington bit came from [Slater riffs that the mother of our country was a "hip, hip lady" who had a "big, fat bowl" of pot waiting for her husband at the end of each workday]. He didn't do it in rehearsal, and I wasn't prepared when we were filming. It was hard to keep the camera still, I was laughing so hard.

Adam Goldberg ("Mike"): The main reason I'd wanted to play Mike was because of the fight scene at the beer bust, where he could work out all his unrealized revenge fantasies. He had all this desire for visceral experience, all these Beat aspirations, but ultimately he got carsick very easily. Throughout the film he sees everybody else have all this experience; the freshmen get their asses kicked, everybody else goes out and gets messed up, and all he does is comment. So then he tries to participate, and he gets his ass kicked too.

McConaughey: Yeah, Wooderson breaks up that fight, not because he's some kind of an authority figure, but because he's thinking, "No, don't be getting in a fight that goes on too long and breaks up the party and messes up my groove." Call him an egotistical utilitarian.

As one would expect, the party extended beyond the set.

McConaughey: It's a bunch of New York and California actors, right? One Saturday I say, "Okay, tomorrow morning we're going to float the Guadalupe River. I know it sounds early, but trust me, you do not want to just hang out in the hotel. New York has the Hamptons, Los Angeles has the beach, and Central Texas has the Guadalupe."

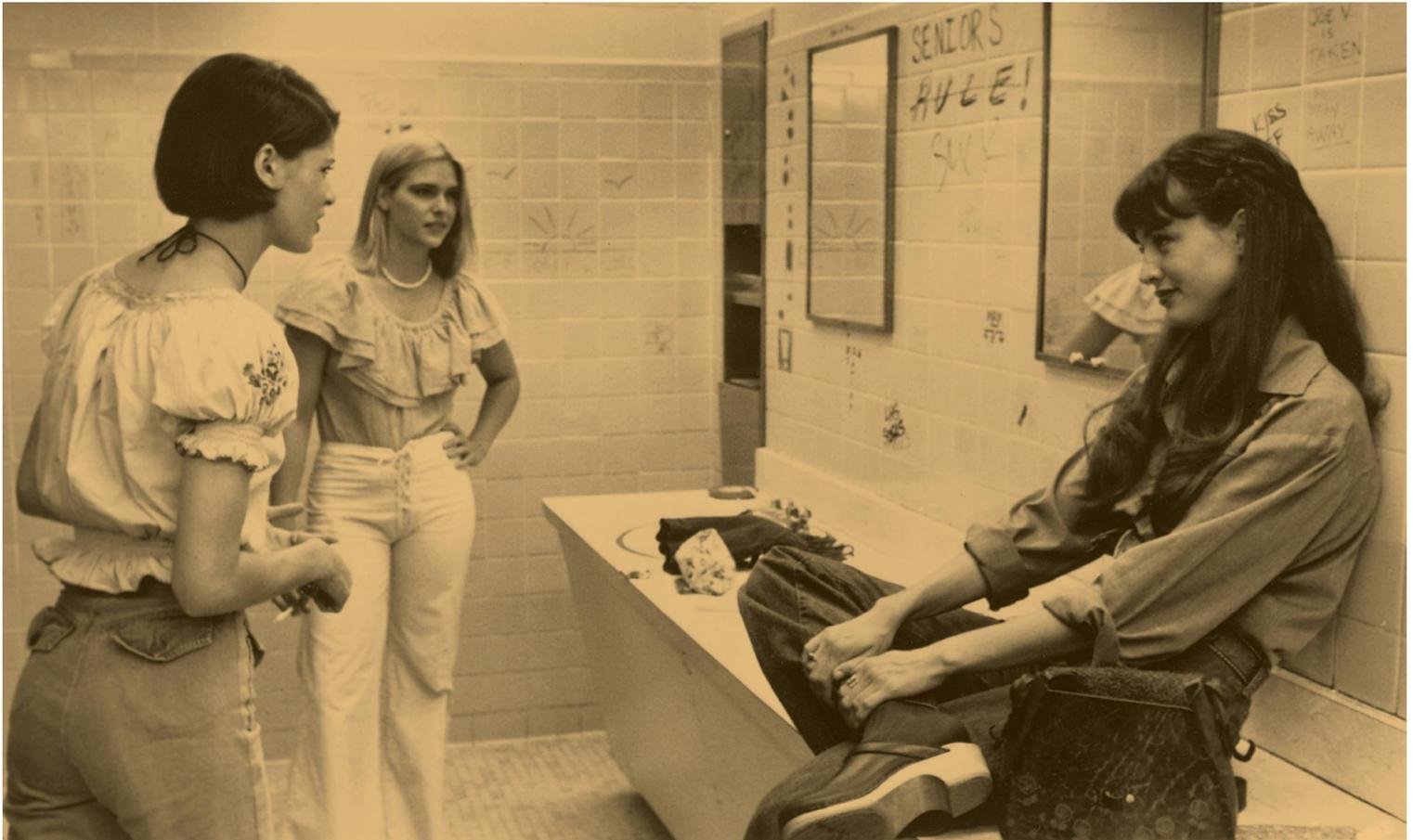
Jenson: We'd do an inner-tubing thing, and it was the greatest. We'd work all night and then go watch the sun come up, floating on the river. Sometimes we wouldn't even sleep—but, hey, we're supposed to look like we're so damned tired and stoned and drunk anyway.

London: The journalism kids never did the "go on the river and get on the boat" stuff. They were very much their characters, going back to the hotel and playing chess in the lobby.

Goldberg: We would hang out in the lobby, drinking beer and playing cards. I was with Jason Lee [*Almost Famous*] a lot. He wasn't acting yet; he was skateboarding. But he was dating Marissa, and since she was seventeen, he came as her guardian. We would sort of run wild in the hotel.

Ribisi: We hung out with Renée a lot because she was from Texas. I remember her saying, "God, I want to be out there doing what you guys are doing."

Deena Martin ("Shavonne"): I remember seeing Renée with the extras and telling her, "Get over here. You don't belong there." And I hung out with Ben a lot. My boyfriend and I went with Ben to get a husky puppy, which he kept in the hotel.



Martin (center) in character.

Movie Still Archives

Adams: At the time, I couldn't keep straight who was playing O'Bannion, because O'Bannion was such an ass and Ben was a really sweet guy.

Daniel: The only problem with Ben Affleck was that he didn't know how to use a clutch. He knew how to use the brakes, but he burned up the clutch on that gray Duster.

Adams: I only went tubing once. It was a blast. But mostly I was in the lobby with Parker, Adam, and Rory, whom I'd started seeing, drinking beer. I'm sure the hotel hated us, because when the regular clientele came down for their continental breakfast, we'd still be there in our pajamas, smoking, drinking beer. I think the manager actually sent Adam to his room once.

Linklater: Yeah, tubing, dating, whatever they were doing, I tried to stay out of it. I was just a girl that was hanging around. I always wanted to be a...

of it. I was just glad they were having fun. I always expected to show up for work and find somebody had been in a car wreck or broken an ankle.

The party concluded at the only logical place, the football field, where Pink had called a “joint subcommittee meeting at the fifty-yard line.” Among the kids with him was Wooderson, in place of the Pickford character Linklater had originally written as Pink’s running buddy. When Shawn Andrews, the actor playing Pickford, had a hard time fitting in with the cast, McConaughey’s Wooderson picked up his slack. And so, in the scene where Pink mutters the line Linklater wrote to sum up his film—“If I ever start referring to these as the best years of my life, remind me to kill myself”—Wooderson announces a corollary moral.

McConaughey: My father had passed away in, like, the first seven days of shooting. So when we were finishing up the film out there on the football field, I was with Rick, just talking about the scene, what was happening, what was being said, what needed to be said. And he reminded me that one time I had gone to him and said, “Well, basically, man, it’s just about livin’, isn’t it? Just keep livin’.” So we went out there and we shot it, and it became the thing that Wooderson told Randall “Pink” Floyd. It was kind of like, “You can sign the drug pledge or not, whatever you got to do, man, because in the end, of course, it ain’t that big a deal. Life’s gonna go on. You got to just keep livin’.”





Ben Affleck
Gabor Szitanyi

AFTER

*To this day, Linklater characterizes filming *Dazed* as a constant fight with Universal—over the language, the lack of nudity, his choices for his creative team, and everything having to do with money. Those were minor skirmishes compared with the war that raged in post-production.*

Linklater: The real battle was over music. I'd picked all those songs—they were all in the movie—but we didn't have enough money to use them because the studio kept cutting the music budget. So we needed to make a soundtrack and get a \$300,000 advance for it so that I could pay to clear the songs.

Universal was going to use their own music division and label to do that, and the money was all set. But the head of music was convinced that to get on MTV we needed new bands to cover seventies songs. And I'm like, "No. Absolutely not. The whole authenticity will be out the window. This is all about this moment in history. There will be no re-recordings."

Wiley Wiggins ("Mitch"): I think they wanted somebody like Jackal to play seventies guitar licks throughout the film. I remember Rick talking about showing up at Universal with an Uzi.

Linklater: When I refused to re-record, Universal pulled the plug on the album deal. At that moment we didn't have any money, and I still needed it to finish the film. There was a threat that I'd have to start cutting songs. Dylan's "Hurricane" alone cost \$80,000. Finally the studio said, "Okay, we'll come up with the money, but only if you give up all your royalties from the soundtrack." I said, "Fine. Just don't screw with my movie. You can rob me, take everything I have. Just don't kill my family."

Daniel: That was pure heroism on Rick's part, to give up all of his points, everything he was going to make from the soundtrack, to keep all the songs on there.

More disappointment awaited. The studio restricted the film to its initial, small release and downplayed any substance in the film with an advertising

release and downplayed any substance in the film with an advertising campaign that focused solely on its party-hearty aspects. But Linklater told cast members at the time, “We made a really good, authentic teen movie that people will find eventually.” He was right.

Ribisi: I was sitting in a theater in Los Angeles waiting for *Kalifornia* to start, and the trailers came on. The screen is black, and suddenly I hear my voice, really loud, saying, “The fifties were boring, the sixties rocked, and oh, my God, the seventies obviously suck. Maybe the eighties will be radical.” And I was like, “What? That’s me.” And then there’s my face. It was amazing; people started cheering in the audience. I tried to see it six times when it opened, and each time it was sold out. I remember trying to go even three months later, and it was sold out. I thought, “Yeah, this is definitely a phenomenon.”

Goldberg: Phenomenon? The day the movie opened, I remember going to a bar, and somebody started talking to me about that film, and that has been happening for ten years.



Cochrane, London, and Jenson in character.

London: I've never seen anything like it. This movie came out and then seventies fashion came back and all this great retro stuff. And *That '70s Show*? Don't tell me that's not a *Dazed and Confused* sitcom. I mean, Ashton Kutcher in the first season with the long hair and the puka shell necklace? I was like, "That's me!"

Adams: I first realized what the movie meant about four years after its release, when someone came up to me and said, "You got me through college."

Cochrane: There aren't many college students who haven't seen it.

Rapp: I went to see it at a place in Chicago called the Brew and View, where they had been showing it for I don't know how long. And there were all these *Rocky Horror*-type games—like every time Mitch nervously grabbed his nose, the audience would count, "One! Two! Three!"

Wiggins: Whenever people recognize me, people I don't even know, they always say, "Grab your nose, man."

McConaughey: For me personally, *Dazed* fans are my favorite fans. They never want anything. They like to come by, say the first half of a line, and wait for me to finish it: ". . . It'd be a lot cooler if you did." Then they walk off giggling. Just giggling.

Phillips: To this day you can't go to a video store on a Friday night and get *Dazed and Confused*, because the kids still have *Dazed* parties, and everybody knows every line in the movie.

Linklater: There'll always be a new generation of kids who want to discover their pop-culture history. When I was in high school, it was *American Graffiti*, *Happy Days*, and Sha Na Na. We were finding the fluffy, fun stuff in the fifties, an era we had missed out on. I wanted to rub everybody's noses in the seventies a little bit. I tried to be anti-nostalgic, but the power of movies

is that when you depict something, you create instant nostalgia. My point was that some things never change in teenagerland. I wanted to tell a story about what I remembered of being a teen, which was driving around and looking for something to do. I'm kind of amazed I got to make it.