

# The cheaper the beer, the better

By RANDY WALKER

A friend of mine swears by his favorite beer. He says other brands make him barf. Well, maybe he can tell the difference, but they all taste alike to me. To help other tasteless oafs out there, I have developed three rules for choosing beers.

**Rule No. 1:** Never pay more than \$2 for a six-pack. When you buy a national brand, you're paying for the name — the national advertising, the in-store promotion, the expensive packaging. Break out three bills only in extreme emergency.

**Rule No. 2:** Bottles are better. Canned beer has a nasty metallic taste even I can detect. Besides, I'd rather kiss a smooth round bottle mouth than a sharp metal slit. But if you have to buy cans, steel is more honorable than aluminum.

The third rule, and this should be laughably obvious: No real man drinks "light" beer.

With these points in mind, let's look at the cheap beer candidates on the Chapel Hill market:

**Red, White & Blue.** "The Beer With The Natural American Taste" is "brewed from premium American ingredients." RWB recently changed their honorable 1800's style label to a slick, computerized one that is out



of sync with their image. You gotta hate that.

**Black Label.** This "Canadian style" beer tastes about as Canadian as Red, White & Blue. Apty named, Black Label is brewed by the G. Heileman Co., up-and-coming cheapo beer kings.

**Iron City.** If I were a 250-pound machine parts welder in some grimly lost Pittsburgh

factory, I'd come home every night, shower, make love to my wife, plant myself in front of the TV and drink 24 steel cans of Iron City Beer.

Red, White & Blue, Black Label and Iron City are the Chapel Hill standbys. One of the three is always on sale at Fowler's or A&P, in bottles, for \$1.59 or \$1.65.

"Naturally Light" Goebel costs about \$1.85. They don't make it in bottles. Need I say more?

Beer. Harris-Teeter and A&P seel Beer,

which is really Falstaff, usually for \$1.69. You gotta respect the industrial black-on-white logo.

**Cost-cutter** is Kroger's contribution to the econo-beer world. Cost-cutter is really Beer, which is really Falstaff. Check out the cost-cutting scissors logo and the puke green can. Invariably \$1.69.

Many sub-\$2 beers not sold regularly in Chapel Hill deserve mention.

**National Bohemian Beer** is the national beer of bohemians. A favorite in the Chesapeake Bay area — the "Land of Pleasant Living" — National Bo is brewed by the same people who make Black Label, and is identical to BL except for the mystic Indian inscriptions on the Bo bottle.

**Piels Draft Style.** They used to call it Piels Real Draft but the government made them stop. I used to buy Real Draft for \$1.29 in Richmond, Va. I have heard that Piels sells for 99 cents in Massachusetts, but this must be regarded as no more than a rumor until somebody confirms it.

**Ortlieb's.** On the carton it says, Try Joe's Beer. Just who Joe is remains a mystery.

**Old Style.** Imported from Wisconsin.

**Widemann.** Pronounced WEED-a-mun.

**Blatz** is regular beer plus water. You gotta like their name, which sounds like somebody puking, and their bizarre triangular logo. They use cheap glue on the labels; you can peel 'em off and stick 'em on your car.

Randy Walker is a staff writer for The Daily Tar Heel.

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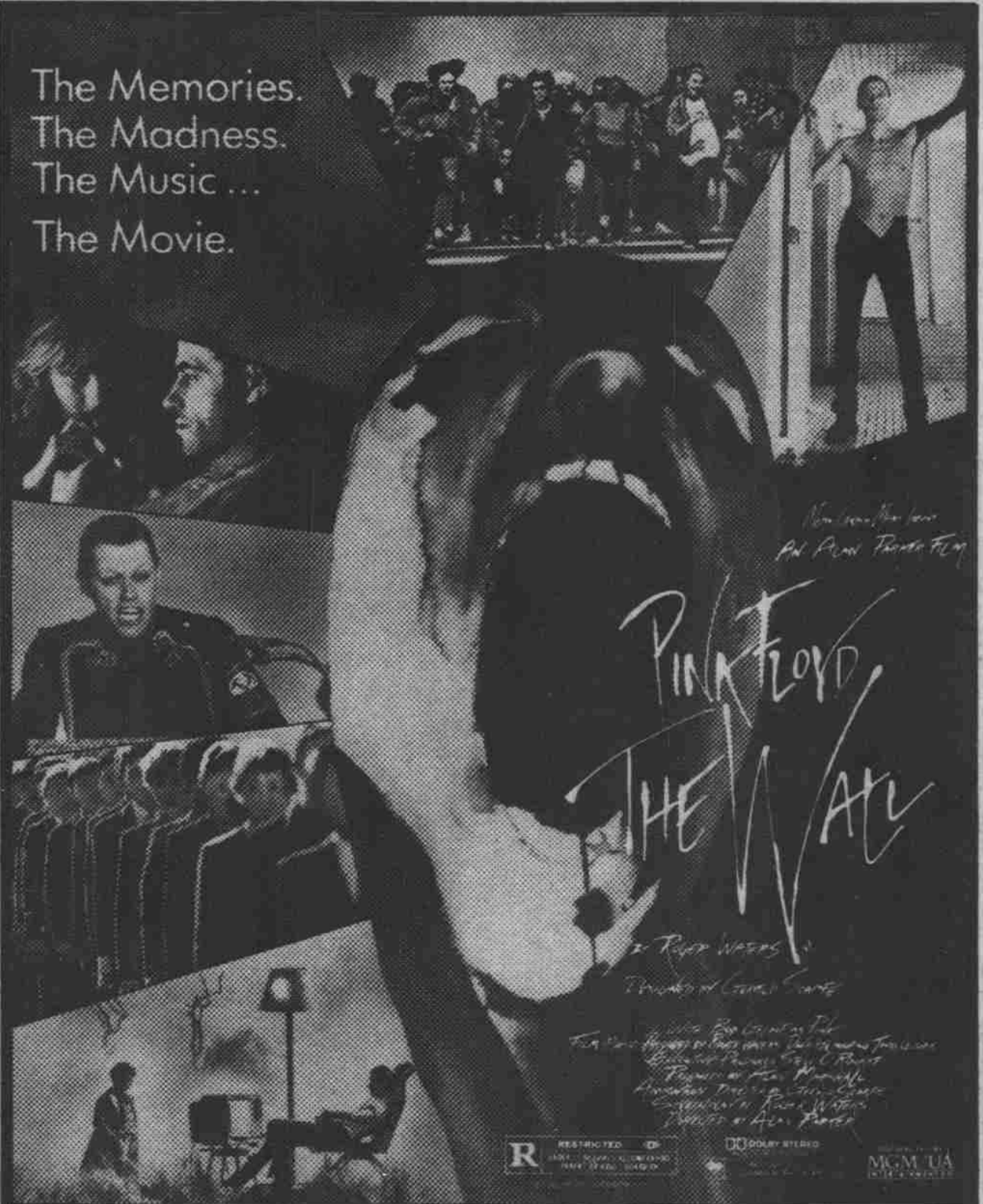
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