



Alumni Newsletter



THE VOICE OF THE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE

By RALPH KEYES

IS THERE LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?



for those still brooding over not being invited to the sock hop, some short hits on the most significant—and excruciating—four years of everybody's life

"HIGH SCHOOL," Frank Zappa once said, "isn't a time and a place. It's a state of mind."

Especially in recent years, as we've lined up for *American Graffiti*, watched *Happy Days* on television and made *Memoirs of an Ex-Prom Queen* into a best seller, America has become sort of an ongoing high school assembly.

As the most tribal experience many of us will ever undergo, high school must be memorable. Never again are we ranked so precisely by those around us and on so many scales. Through the popularity polls of our classmates, and their inexperience at tact, daily feedback was conveyed about how we were coming across. Such merciless judgment is not easily forgotten; it's the last time in life we know just where we stand in the scrutinizing eyes around us.

Consequently, insight into a person's high school behavior can usually give us an accurate picture of that person



POP HISTORY QUIZ

Above are high school yearbook photos of people you should recognize today. Name as many as you can, then turn the page for identification. Anyone caught looking at his neighbor's issue will be kept after school. As always, neatness counts.

today. Knowing what he was like in high school can make, or seem to make, everything fall into place. Because study after study has shown that there is seldom much difference in behavior between adolescence and adulthood. A look at one group of students 13 years after high school reports their "remarkable persistence of personality trends." What this means is that we're probably stuck for life with the behavior we displayed in high school. If noisy then, we'll most likely be talkative now. Self-assured as teens, we'll appear on top of things later. A study comparing one group of physically mature high school boys with another group that took longer to develop found that 15 years later, the first group still acted more sure of itself, even though its physical advantage had declined over the years.

For those who want life to be different after high school, this is discouraging news.

But here is the encouraging news: Although our behavior may not change after high school, the setting does. What succeeds in school won't work later on. Physical gifts, looks, a winning way and an easy smile—except for the occasional Paul Newman or Ann-Margret—are qualities that won't get you two seconds on the evening news. On the other hand, qualities that can lose you status in high school—aggressiveness, imagination and an independent turn of mind—may be just the qualities needed to make it in a larger setting where performance counts more than style. No

study has found any correlation between high status in high school and later achievement as an adult.

To the contrary: One report

on 351 graduates eight years later found no relationship whatever between social success in high school and later vocational success. "Some of the high school wallflowers are now leading very active social lives," the report stated, "and some of the sociometric queens of the prom now have little social interaction outside their immediate family.

"A study of the 20 socially most popular

and prominent members of the senior class showed that this group did not maintain a relative advantage or success in either social or other areas of young-adult performance when compared with a matched group of socially nonprominent peers."

In other words, things *do* change after high school and roles can reverse—radically.

Yet the memories, good and bad, persist. Questions such as "What were you like in high school?" "Were you popular?" "How did you feel about your body?" "What do you suppose your classmates were saying about you?" are not questions to which one gets a simple yes-or-no answer. Those struggling to respond are soon caught up in a flood of memories—dates, dances, fights, slights—long dammed by adult propriety. The memories are always personal and usually animated. Masks carefully constructed over the years crumble after a few moments of adolescent reverie. Bodies squirm, voices change.

Revenge

All the arrogance you read about stems from those days in high school. It all stems from a desire to be nobody's fool ever again.

—BOBBY DARIN

I am totally motivated by—I call it revenge.

—NORA EPHRON

I think for a long time there was an element in everything I did of "I'll-get-you-you-bastards."

—MIKE NICHOLS

Someday, so help me, I'll be so famous none of you will ever be able to touch me again!

—RONA BARRETT

If they don't like me, someday they'll learn to respect me.

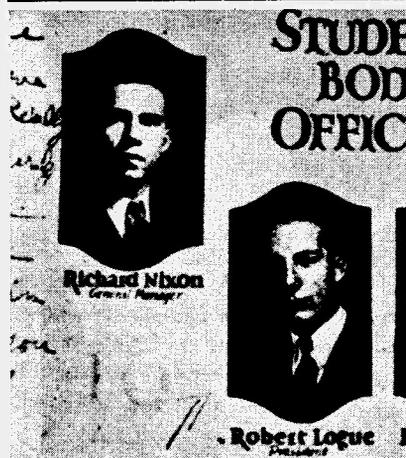
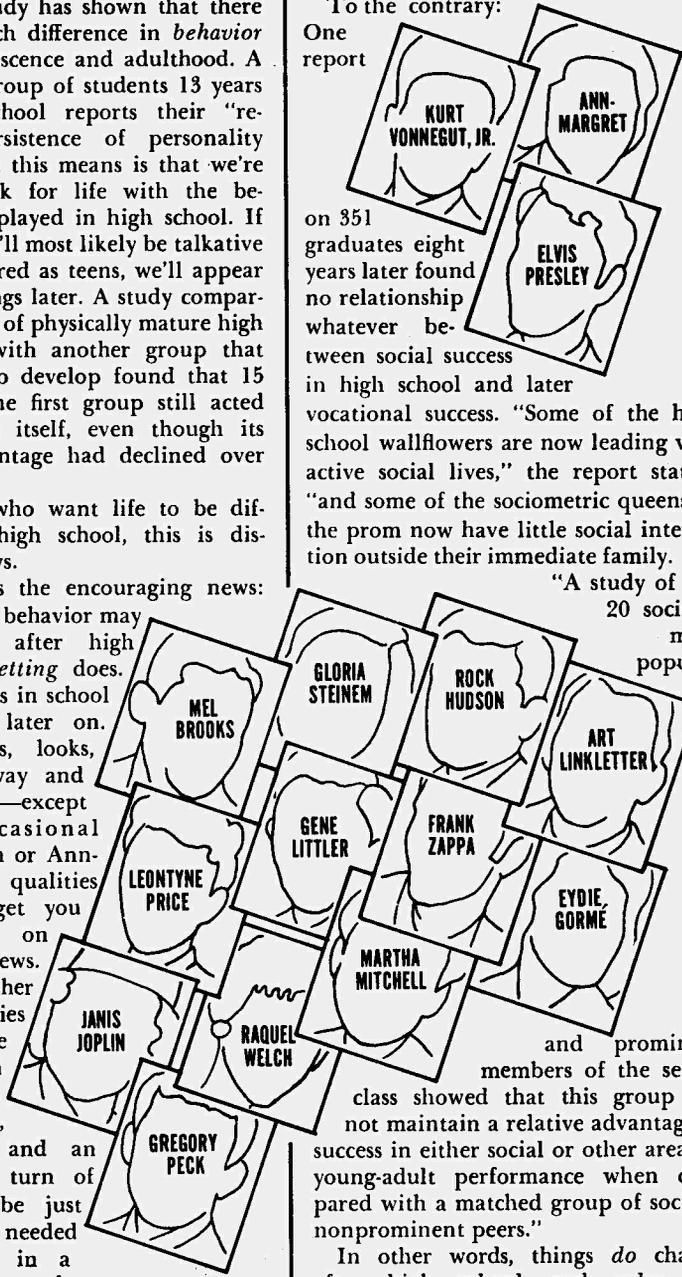
—BETTY FRIEDAN

'Cause I was a Jewish girl growing up in a Samoan neighborhood . . . I left . . . and, you know, the old story about "I'll show them" . . . I really felt that way and I had a lot of anger built up in me from those years.

—BETTE MIDLER

Man, those people hurt me. It makes me happy to know I'm making it and that they're still back there, plumbers and all, just like they were.

—JANIS JOPLIN



RICHARD NIXON

Richard Nixon's stern young face is pictured next to that of president Bob Logue's, in his consolation job of student-body general manager at Whittier Union High School. By the picture Nixon has written:

I have gone to 2 different schools and have had 4 different Student Body Presidents and, no kiddin' Bob, you are the best I have ever had. Really, Bob, you surely have made a big success this year, in everything you have done. You know I've always been crazy about

athletics, etc., but I have never been able to go out. You have certainly done your part in that line. Very few athletes have been able to combine good grades, high office and athletics—but you sure have. Thanks a lot for helping me this year at the gate and in everything you could. Boy, I've sure appreciated it. Remember me Bob, not as an orator, scholar or anything but just as old Dick Nixon, member of the Student Body. Thanx—lots of love an kisses.

Dick Nixon

P.S. Stay away from Blondes.

If I had been a really good-looking kid, I would have been popular with my classmates, I would have been smooth with the girls, I would have started scoring at about age 14, I would have been a big fraternity guy in college and I would have wound up selling Oldsmobiles. For sure, I wouldn't have had the bitterness and the fierce ambition I've needed in order to become a successful freelance writer. —DAN GREENBURG

I'd love to do something about all those football players I used to envy in high school. What's with them? They sell insurance and send their kids for karate lessons every Saturday. —ROBERT BLAKE

Thank God for the athletes and their rejection. Without them there would have been no emotional need and . . . I'd be a crackerjack salesman in the Garment District. —MEL BROOKS

I really knew despair.

—LAUREN HUTTON

Why couldn't this have happened to me when I was 16 and needed it?

—DUSTIN HOFFMAN

Ten Ways to Get High School off Your Back

1. Go back to high school. Walk down the up staircase. If anyone asks for your hallway pass, tell him to get fucked.
2. Work in a high school cafeteria. Give smaller portions to students who resemble classmates you didn't like.
3. Become a state governor. Impound funds for secondary education.
4. Send a copy of your doctoral dissertation to the counselor who said you weren't college material.
5. Arrange to be given a nickname.
6. Have your portrait taken as it *should* have appeared in the yearbook.
7. Check the welfare rolls regularly for ex-cheerleaders and ex-football stars from your class.
8. Become a Marine sergeant. Be tough on guys who look like jocks.
9. Buy a team. Cut lots of players.
10. Make a disaster movie about crumbling high school buildings.

Who's Who of High School Status Groups

Jocks

Warren Beatty
Bill Blass
James Caan
Alice Cooper
James Dickey
Bill Graham
Dennis Hopper
Arthur Miller
Robert Redford
Jason Robards
John Wayne

Thespians

David Carradine
Johnny Carson
John Denver
Kirk Douglas
Charlton Heston
Cliff Robertson
Katharine Ross
Naomi Sims
Robert Young

Cheerleaders

Dyan Cannon
Eydie Gormé
Vicki Lawrence
Ann-Margret
Eleanor McGovern
Cybill Shepherd
Carly Simon
Lily Tomlin
Raquel Welch

Debate

Mia Farrow
Dennis Hopper
Art Linkletter
Eleanor McGovern
George McGovern
Richard Nixon
John Wayne
Wm. Westmoreland

Student Government

Warren Beatty
James Caan
Johnny Carson
Peter Falk
Hugh Hefner
Bowie Kuhn
Ali MacGraw
Bette Midler
Ed Muskie
Pat Paulsen
Philip Roth
John Updike
John Wayne

Newspaper

Steve Allen
Alice Cooper
Howard Cosell
Hugh Hefner
Ann Landers
Philip Roth
Jerry Rubin

John Updike
Abigail Van Buren
Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.

Yearbook

Steve Allen
Hugh Hefner

Honor Roll

William O. Douglas
Betty Friedan
Henry Kissinger
Ann Landers
Art Linkletter
Shirley MacLaine
Eleanor McGovern
George McGovern
William Proxmire
Rex Reed
Barbra Streisand
Abigail Van Buren

Hoody

Merle Haggard
George Lucas
Michael Parks
Elvis Presley
Robert Redford
O. J. Simpson
Rod Taylor
Hunter Thompson

Band

Jean Seberg
Frank Zappa

Dis-Honor Roll

Woody Allen
Bob Haldeman
Michael Landon
Arthur Miller
Gregory Peck
Charles Schulz
O. J. Simpson
Gay Talese
Joseph Wambaugh

Wallflowers (self-described)

Joan Baez
Erma Bombeck
Mia Farrow
Betty Friedan
Lauren Hutton
Ali MacGraw
Joan Rivers
Buffy Sainte-Marie
Barbra Streisand

Pep Club

Johnny Carson

Class Clown

Steve Allen
Johnny Carson
Dustin Hoffman
Bette Midler
Carrie Snodgrass
Jonathan Winters

George McGovern

Just as Nixon may have spent the better part of his life after high school campaigning for student-body president, his 1972 opponent George McGovern could also have been struggling against the caption under his yearbook picture, which reads: "For a debater, he's a nice kid." A shy introvert in high school, the future Senator went on to be elected president of his class three years out of four in college. McGovern also admits that enrolling in civilian pilot training in college, then becoming a bomber pilot during World War Two was in no small part to refute the taunt of a high school gym teacher who'd called him a coward. "That cut me more than anything anybody has ever said to me," the South Dakota Senator recalls.

Franklin Roosevelt

In his biography of Franklin Roosevelt, who did not do well at Groton ("I always felt hopelessly out of things," the President recalled), John Gunther hypothesized that those who did do well were rote steppers who marched off into obscurity after graduation. "As a matter of fact," writes Gunther, "the boys who were the best 'Grotties' usually turned out to be nonentities later; boys who hated Groton did much better. The explanation of this lies in the fact that the boys who became successes were not conformists; hence, they were apt to be excluded from the compact group that made the core of each class. . . . A great many people, even including Presidents, have overcompensated in later life for slights and slurs undergone in school days."

Jerry Ford

In his inaugural speech before Congress, President Gerald Ford made a confession.

"I am here to confess," said Ford, "that in my first campaign for president—of my senior class at South High School in Grand Rapids, Michigan—I headed the Progressive Party ticket and lost.

"Maybe that is why I became a Republican."

In Washington, William J. Schuiling watched the President's televised confession with consternation. "I was amazed," Schuiling recalls, "absolutely amazed that this little incident would be any part of his mind."

Schuiling is the man who beat Ford in high school. Schuiling today is an investment banker. His office is within view of the White House. On one wall, Ford's

picture is inscribed, "With appreciation for our long and close friendship." Beneath this picture, not long after Ford's speech, Schuiling gave his version of their contest in Grand Rapids 46 years earlier.

"You see," he said, "Jerry had a few close friends, while I had many, many friendly acquaintances." The banker leaned back, hands clasped behind his head. "So I thought my root system was stronger than his."

Unlike his opponent, Schuiling was not an athlete. His constituency came from places like the Y Club and Zoological Society—some of whose members got together with him for a strategy-planning picnic in the fall of 1930.

"Let's see, there was Thad Williams," Schuiling ticked off on his fingers. "And a girl; I think her name was Carol Tully. And Burt Salisbury."

"That evening, while roasting our wienies, and so forth"—Schuiling raised his palm in the air—"No beer! That was *unthinkable!* We thought we would gain an advantage by immediately assuming the name of the Republican Party—the reason being that we were from a Republican community."

"This left Jerry at a disadvantage and he picked the name of the Progressive Party. Now, the Republican Party platform seems rather trite today, but it was very important then." Schuiling paused, with a sheepish grin.

What was it?

"Rings and pins before Christmas."

"You see, we were seniors and we thought this would be a way of encouraging our parents to buy our rings and pins for us for Christmas. Very few of us had rings, so we were *very* anxious to get them."

On that platform, and with the added promise of two dances and a spring picnic, Schuiling's Republicans beat Ford's Progressives.

"But I don't think the best man won," Schuiling was quick to add. "I just outplayed him. I got to more of the, the, uh"—the banker pondered his words. "The student who was not *involved* in many things, who liked some *attention*—and I think they realized that the *Varsity Club* would not be appointed committee chairman and that they would all have an opportunity to participate."

Did that happen?

"Yessir! Yessir!"

How did Ford take the defeat?

"Well, he was the first one over to congratulate me. But apparently it made a lasting impression on him, because he mentions it from time to time. And I don't believe ever in the history of an inaugural was such an insignificant personal situation brought out."

Do you remember by how much you won?

"Yes, I do." Schuiling leaned over his

desk. "But I'm not gonna tell you. Because it was a very, very comfortable margin."

Do you remember the actual count?

"Yeah." His voice rose. "It was a *very* comfortable margin. You'll just have to go ask the President and get the figure, but I know what it is."

Is it something you've remembered over the years or did you look it up?

"Oh, I didn't have to look it up. It's a figure that just stuck with me for some reason."

Kissinger

The young Henry Kissinger is recalled by one classmate as "a little fatso." "What you have to remember about Henry," a colleague once said of our Secretary of State, "is that he's the creep nobody would ever eat lunch with."

MATCH THE DESCRIPTIONS

Directions: Below are descriptions of prominent people who have appeared in the press. Following each is a list of possibilities for the person so described. Select the person actually described.

1. "She was pretty and blonde and energetic and, as we used to say in high school, popular."

- A. Jacqueline Onassis
- B. Phyllis Diller
- C. Alice Cooper
- D. Barbara Howar

2. "She was not beautiful in either the hip-swinging or prom-queen sense."

- A. Marilyn Monroe
- B. Barbra Streisand
- C. Valerie Perrine
- D. Mean Mary Jean

3. "Onstage she sometimes projects the air of a spoiled, slightly heartless prom queen."

- A. Lily Tomlin
- B. Karen Carpenter
- C. Moms Mabley
- D. Gloria Steinem

4. "In many ways, she reminds you of the girl you necked with in the back seat after Friday-night high school football games."

- A. Ingrid Superstar (Andy Warhol's stable)
- B. Dale Evans
- C. Julie Eisenhower
- D. Indira Gandhi

5. "She has the waggish air of a Norman Rockwell cheerleader."

- A. Bella Abzug
- B. Chris Evert
- C. Cybill Shepherd
- D. Bette Midler

6. "Her style is pretty much what you might expect from the giddiest girl in the 11th grade."

- A. Erica Jong
- B. Tatum O'Neal
- C. Joni Mitchell
- D. Agatha Christie

7. "He was the class Fat Boy, some-

how, without being fat."

- A. Orson Welles
- B. Gerald Ford
- C. Richard Nixon
- D. Robert Redford

8. "He looks like the well-bred right guard on some winning high school football team."

- A. Dick Butkus
- B. Truman Capote
- C. Marlon Brando
- D. Warren Beatty

9. "He is a high school quarterback."

- A. O. J. Simpson
- B. Omar Sharif
- C. Fran Tarkenton
- D. Woody Allen

10. "At 50 [he] is the same gawky, overgrown Irish bookworm-turned-class-clown."

- A. Carroll O'Connor
- B. Don Rickles
- C. William Westmoreland
- D. Steve Allen

11. "[His] mustache looks perennially like a paste-on job for a role in the high school operetta."

- A. Burt Reynolds
- B. Senator Hugh Scott
- C. Telly Savalas
- D. Walter Cronkite

12. "Like a prom king in a high school gym, _____ nodded to the subjects trotting back and forth before his throne."

- A. Henry VIII
- B. Abbie Hoffman
- C. Buck Owens
- D. Lyndon Johnson

ANSWERS

1. D; 2. B; 3. B; 4. A; 5. C; 6. A; 7. C; 8. D; 9. C; 10. D; 11. B; 12. D.

Status on My Mind

Mid-Term Exam

Directions: A list of social situations follows. Some contribute to one's status in high school; others don't. Indicate situations that are high status with a T for True, those that are low status with an F for False.

1. _____ Show up at the most popular hamburger drive-in with your parents at ten P.M. on a Saturday night.
2. _____ Be put in charge of yearbook picture captions.
3. _____ Forget your locker combination so a janitor has to open it as the halls fill up between classes.
4. _____ Arrive late to class often, but always with a flurry and a comment that makes the class laugh and the teacher smile.
5. _____ Your mother is elected president of the P.T.A.
6. _____ When you raise your hand in class, a big, round, dark mark is clearly visible around the armpit.
7. _____ Play piccolo in the band.

8. ____ On slave day, bidding is loud and long when you come on the block.
9. ____ When not at McDonald's, always sit at the crowded second table from the northwest corner of the cafeteria.
10. ____ Consistently be seated in class several minutes before the bell rings.
11. ____ Break your leg skiing and walk around school for a month in a cast covered with autographs.
12. ____ Earn a letter sweater, but wear it only occasionally.
13. ____ Carry a briefcase, usually fat with papers, in the hallways.
14. ____ Show up late to an important party.
15. ____ Make Honor Society your junior year.
16. ____ Ride your bike to school and park it next to the main door as the first bell rings and your classmates stream in.
17. ____ When you cruise the drive-in on Saturday night, there's lots of honking and waving.
18. ____ A girl with a small gold megaphone hanging around her neck asks for an answer on a test and you refuse because "it would be wrong."
19. ____ Be assigned to 11R English, the R standing for Remedial.
20. ____ Tan flakes of Clearasil fall from your face to the floor as you walk down the hallway.

Special Status Section for Women Only

1. ____ 30 AA
2. ____ pierced ears
3. ____ anklets
4. ____ cashmere sweater
5. ____ A rumor circulates that you went all the way.

Special Status Section for Men Only

1. ____ Your letter reads MGR.
2. ____ '57 Chevy
3. ____ Chess Club
4. ____ chest hair
5. ____ Future Farmers

ANSWERS

1. F; 2. T; 3. F; 4. T; 5. F; 6. F; 7. F; 8. T; 9. T; 10. F; 11. T; 12. T; 13. F; 14. T; 15. F; 16. F; 17. T; 18. F; 19. F; 20. F.

Women Only

1. F; 2. F; 3. F; 4. T; 5. F.

Men Only

1. F; 2. T; 3. F; 4. T; 5. F.

SEX IN HIGH SCHOOL

"A cock teaser for sure."

That is how one woman describes herself and fellow cheerleaders at a Southwestern high school in the mid-Sixties.

"We knew damn well what we were doing with those crotch shots," she explains. "The cunt shots, the kicks—we really dug that. We made up so many cheers to expose ourselves. We all knew. We didn't admit it, but everybody who could put in a kick or show their ass in a cheer they made up, it was immediately giggled over and accepted.

"It's like guys in high school are so horny. So with the pom-poms and lifting your skirt, it's like you're a big fucking sexual image. But it's like 'I'm pure because I'm here in a sweater.'

"It's cock teasing."

The woman saying this has since graduated into stripping and acting in porno films. With her is a former male cheerleader from Minneapolis who also acts erotically in movies and onstage. The two agree that exhibitionism linked their pre- and postgraduate careers, exhibitionism and a taste for crowd control. (Interestingly, the male cheerleader's background checked out; the female's didn't.)

Breasts, of course, were the focal if not the only point of female comparison. Breast size was the basic medium of exchange, the gold to which all other currency was relative. And woe to the pauper with but two small nuggets.

Yet, while the unluckiest women recall stuffing their bras with Kleenex and trying to get out of P.E., girls at the other extreme were binding their chests in a desperate effort to squelch an abundance of riches. High school is simply not a time when you want to stand out in any way. Actress Dyan Cannon recalls being so embarrassed by a forward-looking bosom that she stuffed oranges in her bra at night, hoping to hold down the swelling.

"You should have seen me when I was in high school," she said to an interviewer. "My breasts used to be absolutely huge. Really vim vam voom. I used to go around the house with oranges in my bra to make them flatter. I was so ashamed of

them. I wished they wouldn't stick out so much. I walked slouched over all the time so they wouldn't look so big."

NICKNAMES

In so status-conscious an environment, even something as innocent as nicknames takes on desperate significance: a precise barometer of one's social standing.

In the first place, you have to count enough to be given a nickname. A nickname means you're noticed. It means you're included.

An innocent question asked of a wide variety of people, "Did you have a nickname in high school?" most commonly provoked the response: "No, but I would have liked one."

"I really wanted a nickname," one woman said, "because I thought that having one would make me seem more popular. Consequently, I went around giving nicknames to everyone else in hopes someone would give me one, but no one ever did."

A nickname is not something you can give yourself. Others must bestow it upon you. Even a nickname you don't care for means classmates have recognized your presence, which isn't a bad thing to have recognized.

Those lucky enough to have nickname status could rely on this as a subtle but accurate gauge of status and its evolving nature.

Raquel Welch, for example, as a young teenager was known as Birdlegs because of her long, skinny legs. In high school, this was first changed to Rocky, then to Hotrocks—"after the equipment arrived."

Burt Reynolds says his home nickname Buddy got changed to Greaseball or Mullet by classmates, in recognition of his Italian-Indian origins, then reverted to Buddy after he began to win foot races. Some other childhood nicknames recalled by celebrities include:

Burt Bacharach—Happy
 Tom Bradley—Long Tom
 Mel Brooks—The Shadow
 Dyan Cannon—Frosty
 Julie Christie—S.O. (Show-Off) and Bugs
 Alice Cooper—Muscles McNasal
 Francis Ford Coppola—Science
 William O. Douglas—Peanuts
 Mia Farrow—Mouse
 Gerald Ford—Junie (for Junior)
 Pam Grier—Hawk
 Isaac Hayes—Bubba
 Dustin Hoffman—Dustbin
 Lauren Hutton—The Yellow Wax Bean

