

## **The Twinkies Project**

*by John Farrow*

Evidence continues to mount that college kids simply have too much time on their hands and are neglecting other important aspects of the college experience, like tapping kegs and going to football games. The proof comes from none other than prestigious Rice University (motto: A change from potatoes).

I speak specifically of the TWINKIES

(Tests With Inorganic Noxious Kakes In Extreme Situations) Project. In this study, Twinkies were subjected to a series of tests to measure resistivity, oxidation, solubility, maximum density, and radiation in an effort to determine their essential properties. I am not making this up.

However, the test results must be viewed with some skepticism, if only for the fact that the study was premised on the assumption that Twinkies are a food. This, of course, is the subject of much heated debate in the scientific community.

What is presently known is that Twinkies are 66 years old this year (hopefully not the ones in your store, although they are rumored to have a 100-year shelf life) and are made from some 40 different ingredients, including five shortenings (not including axle grease) and a secret combination of three leavening agents. Twinkies certainly will help build strong bodies in at least one way: width.

The first finding of the study was that Twinkies will not burn unless first doused with alcohol. This, thankfully, will lay to rest once and for all those silly stories about spontaneous Twinkie combustion.

In fact, dousing anything in alcohol is a good way to improve combustion, as a college friend discovered one night at a

woodsie after he poured vodka on himself in the hopes that his date would lick it off. Unfortunately, he got too close to the fire. Suffice it to say that after things calmed down, he was awarded an extra beer for best impromptu solo interpretation of "Wipe Out" in triple time.

In the resistivity test, an electrical current was run through a Twinkie with no discernable results, much like the brain of a distance runner. Twinkies simply do not conduct electricity. Therefore, Twinkies could have a future as an insulating material, the study concluded. However, problems with durability must be addressed, given the eating habits of critters that hang around electrical wiring.

But perhaps the most controversial results came from putting a Twinkie in a microwave. The Twinkie collapsed, turned brown and gave off noxious fumes that were compared to sarin gas or Elizabeth Taylor's latest fragrance. The conclusion of this part of the study was that microwaving a Twinkie is definitely a bad idea.

Not stated was whether this whole study was a bad idea. Probably not, at least in the eyes of a college student, as it provided a lot of Twinkies for consumption in the name of science. For details, see <http://www.owl.net.rice.edu/~gouge/twinkies.html>.

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