

to "you must buy your slaves from other countries."

Fortunately, we have decided that no matter what the bible says, slavery is immoral. We have decided that many "abominations" of the bible are irrelevant: executing those who work on the Sabbath (Exodus 35:2), being in the presence of a menstruating woman (Leviticus 15: 19-24), or eating shellfish (Leviticus 11:10).

Modern Christians, however, are unwilling to let go of their hatred of homosexuals. They are willing to fight tooth and nail to dehumanize and demonize our fellow humans.

Will we give them our tacit consent? Will we turn a blind eye to the violence they create? Or will we remember the needless death of the crusades, the horror of the Spanish Inquisition, the slaughter of Native Americans because of manifest destiny, the death camps for Jews, homosexuals and the mentally disabled of the Holocaust? We will say, "I don't care what your book says, I know what is right."

In 1814, Thomas Jefferson wrote, "In every country and in every age, the priest has been hostile to liberty. He is always in alliance with the despot, abetting his abuses in return for protection to his own."

Religion is based on fear. People have said to me "what if you're wrong, what if you go to hell because you don't believe?" I respond, "I'm not willing to live my life in fear."

Adolf Hitler said, "It is always more difficult to fight against faith than against knowledge." Organized religion certainly realizes this, and they have done an exceptional job of instilling this blind faith in the masses. Hitler also noted, "Make the lie big, make it simple, keep saying it, and eventually they will believe it."

Hitler understood these principles of propaganda, and he led the German people to murder millions.

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Religion uses the same tactics of fear to convince us and is responsible for far more deaths than Hitler's Germany. Despite this, we accept it, perhaps because it gives us comfort, perhaps because we're scared, or perhaps because we have not realized the damage it does.

Religion did not create slavery. It did not create homophobia, nor bigotry. It does, however, sustain these archaic beliefs. Religion, by nature, changes slowly, and the Bible changes little or not at all. It is time for Davidson to emerge into the modern age. We must forgo our ties to such an obsolete set of principles that have been used to slaughter and abuse human beings, and are still used to demonize them.

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The leaderless Presidency

Bobby Despain



The United States has a President, but not a leader. Unsurprisingly to anyone who did not drink the 2008 election Cool-Aid, Barack Obama is not a leader. He never has been, he never will be. His rise has not been based on past accomplishments, but rather just the notion he is supposed to rise. His presence has always been enough. So he is president of the Harvard Law

Review, then elected to the Illinois State Senate, and then the United States Senate. And the best he did at any of those places was to be present and vote accordingly. Instead of leadership, the United States has a presidency of phrases and bumper stickers and a Nobel Peace Prize.

For the number of times Barack Obama says "I will not rest," he vacations an awful lot. Now I do not begrudge the President for getting out of D.C. or golfing. The idea that you can vacation as President is a fallacy. Who can relax with nuclear launch codes and the Secret Service nearby? But you have to question why so often and the timing. He blasts corporations for sending their employees to Vegas and jets off to New York for date night. He speaks of the need for everyone to share in

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the sacrifices and then vacations in Hawaii or Martha's Vineyard. Golf and bicycle rides do not make a leader. For the most part, those are trivial and can be brushed off.

What cannot be brushed off is the complete lack of respect Barack Obama has shown the United States Military with regards to Libya. After dithering for

days, the Commander in Chief gave the orders for the United States to establish a no-fly zone and then left the country for Brazil. As American sailors launched cruise missiles and American B-2 pilots disappeared into the night, their leader danced. As the American military put itself in harm's way for a country that ordered and paid for a bomb that killed 190 Americans in the skies above Lockerbie, Scotland, the President of the

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United States played soccer with Brazilian children.

Now maybe this mission does not carry the weight of a D-Day or Iwo Jima, but if a President is going to order American soldiers into battle, it should not seem as an afterthought. This is not like remembering to set the alarm as you run out the door for vacation. Putting American soldiers in harm's way is the most serious decision a President can make. If Barack Obama does not see it that way, he can at least act like it. No matter how ignorant our country can be of our soldiers overseas, Barack Obama does not have a peacetime presidency. He has ordered American soldiers to Iraq and Afghanistan and because of those orders over one thousand American men and women have died.

And so in the midst of a Brazilian carnival, the United States is involved in yet another war. Now you can talk about the merits of this Libyan engagement and you can talk about its Constitutionality, but what is really on display is the utter lack of leadership our President displays. It is one thing to vote present in the Illinois State Senate, but as President the country cannot afford just present.

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Civility on the Perspectives Page

Sunny Lee

During my time as one of the co-editors of the Perspectives section, we've come across a few situations in which a student/alumni has sent in an article that contains questionable content that has the potential to grossly offend a group of individuals, or an organization. These articles force us to make the very unpleasant decision of whether or not to print it or substantively change the article.

Happily, in almost all cases we can ultimately decide to leave these articles unchanged and written exactly as they are - and for the overwhelming majority of cases, I believe that this is absolutely the right course of action. I feel very strongly that the goal of the Perspectives Page is to provide every student at Davidson with an equal opportunity to express their opinions and thoughts to the campus about anything pertaining to campus or

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beyond. To this end, I personally consider any edit of content - unless it is clearly and strictly in violation of the Davidsonian Code of Ethics, the Davidson Code of Responsibility, or other state and federal laws we are necessarily beholden to - an uncomfortable precedent for censorship that should never be broached casually.

While certain articles may express distasteful views that may offend certain groups or individuals, in most cases there is no explicit violation of any of the prior codes to a point that would warrant removal or censorship. Given the editorial nature of the Perspectives Page, we are morally obligated to print anything that does not exceed the leeway traditionally given to opinion pieces by state and federal law, established practice of collegiate and professional newspapers, or the Davidsonian itself in the past, and we will always continue to do so.

I would ask all students writing to the Perspectives page, however, to consider that writing an opinion piece is necessarily an act that engages the public, ostensibly

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intended to express a view, and that hyperbole and inflammatory rhetoric are more often detrimental to the efficacy of arguments than they are beneficial.

I would also ask everybody to consider what it means to be a Davidson student. Even in the absence of explicit legal proscriptions we are supposed to know right from wrong, an informed argument from baseless rhetoric, and how to treat our fellow human beings with the respect, dignity and empathy that they deserve. Though sensationalism and vitriol may dominate the culture of our media and politics, we're supposed to be above that - and when we lower ourselves to that level, in the end it's really ourselves we dishonor the most. So please, keep writing for the Perspectives - just try to keep it civil.

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