

PERSPECTIVES

Alcohol and college

STAFF EDITORIAL

Our lead story this week marks part one of a three-part series exploring alcohol use at Davidson. This week's article provides an overview of the alcohol policy changes in effect this year. We focused first on outlining what comprises these changes because discussions around campus about the new alcohol policy are what prompted The Davidsonian's investigation into campus alcohol culture in the first place.

Next week we'll be taking a closer look into where these changes came from and what campus committees were involved with this process. Given that 91% of Davidson students think that the social atmosphere at Davidson promotes drinking, campus alcohol use undoubtedly is relevant to members of this community.

The series will conclude on Oct 6th with an article highlighting what the alcohol policy changes mean for students. We will cover how the college plans to continue to grapple with alcohol-related issues in the context of a campus where learning, responsibility and safety over punitive enforcement are valued.

Issues pertaining to excessive alcohol use and underage drinking on campus are not new, nor lacking at colleges and universities across the nation. But given Davidson's close-knit, intellectual community whose ethos emphasizes honor and trust, students are in a unique position to make sense of such issues by dialoguing respectfully with each other. Discussing alcohol use shouldn't be a polarizing topic causing students who frequent the Court and drink regularly to grow defensive at the mention of alcohol policy changes. Nor should students who position themselves on the "up-the-hill" side of the divide negatively judge those who prefer to socialize differently. Rather, we should be engaging in conversation, asking tough questions about what social life on campus should and should not be, with the hope to shape a culture wherein alcohol does not dominate social interactions and wherein it can be enjoyed safely and responsibly.

For most, college is the first time when independence is truly established and choices that are difficult and complex have the potential to create both good and bad enduring consequences. Personal growth comes from reflecting on choices made. Davidson is intentionally not a dry campus, and administrators have no plans to change this. Adult life entails making one's own decisions, and while choices pertaining to alcohol are just one small subset of the many life choices we will face, it provides an appropriate analogy for other decisions. All students have the freedom to figure out for themselves how they will answer pressing questions: How much am I going to drink or not drink? What's my limit? How are my actions affecting others? How do I want to spend my time? As Dean Perillo aptly put it in a recent interview, Davidson provides an environment where students can grapple with these decisions and grow in the process. This growth begins with you, and student willingness to engage in stimulating conversations outside the classroom with peers, faculty, and staff about issues that matter to them will only enhance social culture on campus for all.

The Davidsonian

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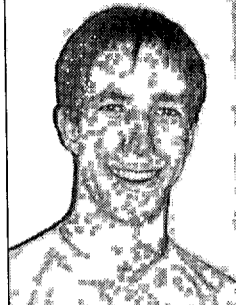
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Let's keep the Bush tax cuts

sin cera



BOBBY DESPAIN

Good news lies just around the corner for our economy. After all the bailouts and stimulus packages have done to aid American businesses and workers, tax hikes will get to take a turn. If you make any income at all, you can expect to give more of it to the government. According to Deloitte Tax LLP, a family of four making \$50,000 a year would owe the government \$2,900 more. A family of four making \$325,000 a year would have a tax increase of \$5,400, while the same family making \$1 million a year would have a tax increase of \$56,300. Currently, those who make roughly \$400,000 or more are forced to pay more than one-third of that to the government. Once this tax hike hits, the government (and this is just the Federal government mind you) will take nearly 40% of earned income. At the same time the income tax rates rise, so will the long-term capital gains tax rate and the dividends tax rate. Now, President Obama and several members of Congress have proposed maintaining the current tax rates, but only to a point. They say the country cannot afford the lower tax rate for those making over \$250,000. In the President's words, "This isn't to punish folks who are better off - God bless them - it is because we can't afford the \$700 billion price tag."

While the intention might not be punishment, it is in reality. As you succeed financially, the government takes more and more of your success. Eventually, you find yourself at gunpoint working two of every five days for the government. This punishment is not limited to the producer. Do you know what the wealthy do with their money? They spend it and thus grow economies. The top 5% of American earners account for 37% of consumer

outlays such as merchandise purchases and interest payments. Take away more of this wealth, and down goes consumer spending and up goes unemployment.

Also, could the president explain why a revenue increase is the only way to keep the Federal government solvent? Let us say that the head of a family is worried he will not be able to pay off his house payments in the upcoming year. Does he walk into his boss's office and demand a raise in order to maintain his lifestyle? No, of course not. He has to cut back. Now, this is a concept unheard of in government, other than the military, but what it basically entails is decreasing the amount of money spent. This would mean avoiding multi-billion dollar auto and bank bailouts. It would mean avoiding massive stimulus packages and government run health care proposals.

What the country actually cannot afford is government spending. In the past week, the Los Angeles City Controller released an audit of funds received from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. So far \$111 million has been used to create or save 54.46 jobs. In other words the government has a job creation rate of \$2 million per job. No wonder the stimulus seems more of a depressant.

Now, if Congress and the President needed ideas on where to rein in spending, they could visit the Cato Institute's website, www.downsizinggovernment.org. While I would simply propose shuttering agencies like the Department of Housing and Urban Development or the Department of Health and Human Services, Cato has singled out specific programs. At least it would be a start. For example, they propose cuts to the Department of Agriculture, which would save \$108 billion every year. In seven years that would more than cover that \$700 billion the President is concerned about.

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Eradicating feminism in society

KATHERINE BURD
Guest Contributor

I am no feminist. Feminists, to me, make an issue of their femininity. They seek out ogling males as an excuse to get angry. They insist on taking down their own carry-on from overhead storage, even if they are four-foot-eleven and walking on crutches. They insist on driving to the first date. They hate Maggie Thatcher. I am no feminist.

However, I do believe that some feminists are worth listening to; these days, though, women, instead of men, are the ones who should be listening closely. When Mary Wollstonecraft wrote "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman" in 1792, she addressed a largely male audience (no wonder, since most women could not yet read). While her primary arguments were potent in a society where women could not yet vote, much less become professional athletes or control commerce, it is the intricacies of her work that resonate still. Those intricacies reveal the power that women can possess, if only they take advantage of the equality they now have.

Wollstonecraft wrote of women that "love, in their bosoms, taking place of every nobler passion, their sole ambition is to be fair, to raise emotion instead of inspiring respect; and this ignoble desire, like the servility in absolute monarchies, destroys all strength of character." The truth of this statement in modern society shows that it is not only equality before the law, but rather an intelligent consideration of their own behavior, that will bring women respect. The romantic heroes of Jane Austen or Louisa May Alcott's works were feminist ideals because they rejected society's mandate that women should seek only to be married, not to improve their minds. They are heroes for the same reason today; while expected behavior for women is entirely different, the paradigm is exactly the same.

Young women, old women, girls, and middle aged

women relish the ability to stir emotion in another person. Wollstonecraft recognized the sexual power women have over men, and attributed women's legal inequality to men's fear of a female's potential when removed from a sexual context. While many of the barriers holding women back from exploring deeper disciplines, most women turn back to their power in love to define their life's experiences. This is true in both heterosexual and homosexual circumstances. "Raising emotion," as Wollstonecraft stated, gives one the immediate sense of control, never mind that it is this precise action that allowed for the subjugation of women in the first place. Women would willingly place themselves in the same position they were in over two hundred years ago in lieu of "inspiring respect," the very right for which they claimed to fight in their ardent "feminism."

One must not complain of inequality in the workplace if one insists on wearing their most revealing outfits to court parties. One must not blame men for their unemployment if they are relying on physical assets to get a job. One must not blame their unhappiness on their ex-boyfriend if they insist on forming their life around their association to another person. As Wollstonecraft so sagely advised, this "destroys all strength of character."

That is the problem with feminists. They do not understand that it is women's behavior, not men's, that holds us back. If women leave too-tight clothing and over-critical attitude behind and respect their own opinions, they can take advantage of their mental capacity and used the liberties they now possess to take control of the world in which they live. Feminism, as a political mechanism, is obsolete—it is time for women to simply be women. That is feminism of which we all want to be a part.

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