

## A letter of thanks

As Wes and I began our year as Editors in Chief, a very unexpected event took place. The Davidsonian received a 1500 dollar gift to be spent as we (the new editors) saw fit. Jeff Batten '89 alumnus gave this gift to the Davidsonian in memory of his late uncle, Jim Batten '57. I would just like to take this opportunity to thank Jeff Batten for his consideration and generosity on behalf of the entire Davidsonian staff.

This donation could not come at a better time. Just a day before we found out about this event, the editorial staff had been discussing our need for a few cameras for the office. This money allowed us to bring the photo aspects of the Davidsonian up to 21st century standards. We purchased a Canon EOS Rebel with an extra Promaster Spectrum 7 Autofocus zoom 80-210 mm zoom (for those of you that are into the whole camera aspect of this endeavor) as well as a Kodak DC260 Digital Zoom camera. These cameras will greatly facilitate our photographic processes. The digital camera has already allowed us to capture events on campus and to use the pictures immediately. When is the last time that an event that took place on Monday made it into a Tuesday

Davidsonian?

I would also like to take this opportunity to wish our former Editor in Chief, Sarah Ogden '00, Photo Editor, Sallie McMurray '99, and OP/Ed Editor, Erin McKinley '01, the best of luck in the coming year. The spring semester has become a time of transition in the ranks of leadership positions, the Davidsonian is no exception to this rule. Some of the new Editors and Managers have been on the Davidsonian staff for some time and others are just now making their debuts. In both cases, the current staff seems pumped and ready to make this coming year one to remember.

John A. Dunwoody II

## This is perilous stuff

"Being Editor in Chief of the Davidsonian isn't easy" (so cliché, I had to put it in quotes). It's more than enduring late Monday nights (a.k.a. early Tuesday mornings) and fighting battles against Adobe Pagemaker 6.5. It's also dangerous.

Not to make us sound all hardcore or something — that's not the point. Chances are that most of us students chose Davidson over Massive State School X in part because we wanted to attend someplace relatively small. And here we all are, all approximately 1700 of us. We've all got facebooks and yearbooks and rumor mills to help keep up with who everyone else is. Guess what else we've got? *Zero* anonymity.

Somehow I'll manage to write an editorial for each of this semester's issues. Some of these will undoubtedly end up offending certain factions of the college population. I am anything but faceless in my capacity as editor — my signature is at the bottom of the editorial, my name is in the directory. I'm less worried, however, about the torch-lit, pitchfork-bearing lynch mob that might come pay me a visit in Watts 204 than I am about the quiet ones. After all, they say it's the quiet ones you've got to watch out for.

"I'm Editor in Chief next semester. I'll probably be making a lot of people really angry."

Wesley H. Goldberg

"Good!"

It amazes me how often people told me that. At least twice over the past few semesters, I've written articles in the Davidsonian that expressed my opinion, and each time, my gall and I have managed to offend and/or frighten several fellow students and professors. Sure, I've had my allies, but unfortunately, their names didn't appear at the top of these articles, while mine did. Thus I suffer the so-called "blowback" alone, serving as the whipping boy for all those who share my opinion. How is this "good?"

It could have been worse. I could have been dishonest in my opinion. How could this forum's (i.e. the Davidsonian's) integrity be maintained if we were to constantly dilute our opinions so as not to unsettle the masses? I suppose there's no point in writing an opinion unless it's *actually* your opinion. And if students or professors have significant, defensible gripes with anything that I choose to publish this semester, I hope they'll attempt to even the score by writing their own "Wes is an idiot" editorial in retaliation. That was my most sincere wish last semester, and it never happened.

We all owe it to ourselves to write honestly and not to fear possible discrepancies between our opinions and those of the majority. It's like James Brown said, "We'd rather die on our feet than be livin' on our knees." Speak your mind proudly.

## ◆ LETTER TO THE EDITORS ◆

### Changes in the Davidson Constitution

To the Editors:

Article XII of the Constitution of Davidson College requires that all proposed amendments to the Constitution "be published and comment invited from members of the Faculty, staff, and student body." In order to accomplish that directive, the Board of Trustees requests that you publish a copy of the following resolution in the next issue of *The Davidsonian*. The resolution was proposed to the Board at its October meeting and laid upon the table for action at the February meeting.

The copy preceding the resolution should

read, "The Board of Trustees hereby invites comments from the faculty, staff and student body on the following proposed resolution that would amend the Constitution. Please provide your comments to Bart Landess, Executive Assistant to the President and General Counsel."

WHEREAS, the current external relations efforts of Davidson College (the "College"), including fund raising, publications, WDAV, stewardship and other matters are administered by the Vice President for Institutional Advancement and staff reporting to that office and overseen by the Institutional Advancement Committee of the Board

of Trustees; and

WHEREAS, The Trustees of Davidson College (the "Corporation") believe that the title "College Relations" more appropriately describes the full range of activities administered within the area of Institutional Advancement, and that the change of name from Institutional Advancement to College Relations would be useful for purposes of describing the external affairs work of the College;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the name "Institutional Advancement," wherever it may appear in the Constitution or Bylaws of the

Corporation, be changed to "College Relations" and that the title of the corporate officer currently holding the office of Vice President of Institutional Advancement be changed to Vice President of College Relations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any other actions necessary or prudent to effectuate the change hereby authorized be taken by the President and other officers of the College.

C. Barton Landess  
Executive Assistant to the President and General Counsel

## Gender Resource Center opens its doors to the Davidson campus

To the Editors:

The Gender Resource Center (GRC) officially opened its doors to the Davidson College community on Thursday, January 28, 1999. Before discussing what's behind the doors at the GRC, we'd like to pose the following question to the community: just what are the doors being opened to? Foremost, we see GRC's doors opening to a little piece of American society—a piece that enjoys some of the best that this society has to offer. We're blessed with an abundance of talented, intelligent, ethical individuals. But just like the whole, this piece of America can count among its problems discrimination against women, minorities, and homosexuals. Many of us have not faced such ugliness personally, but hear about the "unreported" incidents of racism, date rape, gay-bashing, and sexual harassment on this campus.

A poll of 202 Davidson College students last Fall, carried out by Dr. Byeong-Chul Park's Sociology 371 class presents some provocative starting points for a campus-wide discussion of gender and race issues. The pollsters distributed themselves over a number of sites on campus, selected to yield an approximately random sample. Based on the responses, the sample breaks down as follows: 103 first and second year students, 99 third and fourth year students; 95 females, 106 males; 158 "white," 44 "non-white." The students were asked to stipulate whether they "Strongly Agree(d)," "Agree(d)," "Disagree(d)," or, "Strongly Disagree(d)" with a number of state-

ments dealing with race, gender, politics, and their experiences at Davidson College.

- 20.9% of the sampled females and 43.7% of the sampled males Strongly Agreed or Agreed that "A wife should help her husband's career, such as by giving extra time to young children, even if it limits her own career opportunities."

- 17.9% of female and 40.5% of male respondents Strongly Agreed or Agreed that, "In the United States today, almost all of the discrimination against women that once held them back has been eliminated."

- When presented the statement that, "Feminists express my views about women's issues," 47.4% of female and 13.8% of male respondents Agreed or Strongly Agreed.

On issues of race, the disparities between those respondents identifying themselves as "white" and those who did not, to which we collectively refer as "non-white," are even starker.

- 19.1% of white and 46.7% of non-white respondents Strongly Disagreed that, "In the United States today, almost all of the discrimination against black Americans that once held them back has been eliminated." Remarkably, 25.2% of white and 20% of non-white respondents Agreed or Strongly Agreed with this statement.

- 36% of white and 71% of non-white respondents Agreed or Strongly Agreed with the statement that, "The U.S. needs strong affirmative action policies."

Students were also asked questions about discrimination on the Davidson College campus.

- 23.7% Agreed or Strongly Agreed that the sexual harassment of women is a problem at Davidson College. While there was no significant statistical difference in the rate at which males and females agreed that sexual harassment is a problem here, there was a gender disparity among those who disagreed: 19.8% of sampled males, but only 6.5% of sampled females Strongly Disagreed with the statement.

- 41.4% Agreed or Strongly Agreed that the harassment of gays and lesbians is a problem at Davidson College. Once again a gender disparity emerged in the pattern of disagreements: 19% of the male and only 4.5% of female respondents Strongly Disagreed that harassment according to sexual orientation is a problem.

- 24.5% Agreed or Strongly Agreed that the racial harassment of blacks and other minorities is a problem on the Davidson campus. Breaking down this percentage by race reveals a striking racial disparity: 18% of the white and 47.7% of non-white respondents agreed that racial harassment is a problem here.

You might object to the methodology or wording of the survey, but its results evince a persistence of non-random patterns along gender and racial lines. You may not think that discrimination with regard to gender, race, or sexual orientation exists on this campus. But whether it exists

or not, the *perceptions* of discrimination are real and affect the quality of the Davidson College experience for all students. Consider the responses to the question, "In general, how satisfied or dissatisfied have you been with your social life at Davidson College?" Only 5% of white respondents but 20.5% of nonwhite respondents were "Moderately Dissatisfied," or "Very Dissatisfied"; 16.8% of female vs. 31.8% of male respondents reported similar levels of dissatisfaction.

Silence about these issues does nothing to alter the damaging perceptions of inequality and discrimination on this campus. If you "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" that there is a problem—more importantly, if you "Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree" with the survey results—please come and express your views this Thursday at the official opening of the GRC, from 11:30-1:30. At the very least, you'll get a free lunch, and at most, you may be able to dispel some negative perceptions and even become "More Satisfied" with your social life. Behind the doors of GRC, we hope to provide an accessible, continual forum for discussing attitudes about gender, race, and sexual orientation.

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