

OPINIONS

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Grant gays legal right to protect equality & justice

By Anna R. Kirkland

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. wrote "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." Homophobia robs thousands of American citizens of their dignity and security.

Without civil rights protection for sexual orientation, thousands of Americans suffer from rampant institutionalized discrimination. Our society is one of the most viciously homophobic in the world; gays can lose their jobs, be denied housing, and even have their children taken away.

In 1991 the Cracker Barrel restaurant chain fired several employees simply because they were gay. An openly lesbian mother in Virginia lost custody of her two-year-old son because of her homosexuality.

Most Americans agree that gays should not be discriminated against (65% of respondents to a *U.S. News* poll said they want to "ensure equal rights for gay people"); however, they mistakenly think gays are already protected by federal anti-discrimination laws.

We like to think we live in a just society that gives all its citizens an equal chance to pursue happiness. The ugly reality is that those among us who are attracted to the "wrong" sex are excluded from the proclamations "All men are created equal" and "Equal justice under law." How can those of us who love justice not be frightened?

The passage of a Civil Rights Act to protect sexual orientation is the first step in granting equal rights of citizenship to homo-

sexuals. Congress must answer unjust acts by affirming that one's sexual orientation is neither a lifestyle choice nor an attribute that determines other character traits.

Gays cannot change who they are, and the individuals in the gay community are as varied as their heterosexual counterparts. Once our laws recognize homosexuality or heterosexuality to be as immutable as skin color, those who discriminate against gays will no longer have the tacit permission of government to do so. When that day comes, justice everywhere will have been strengthened.

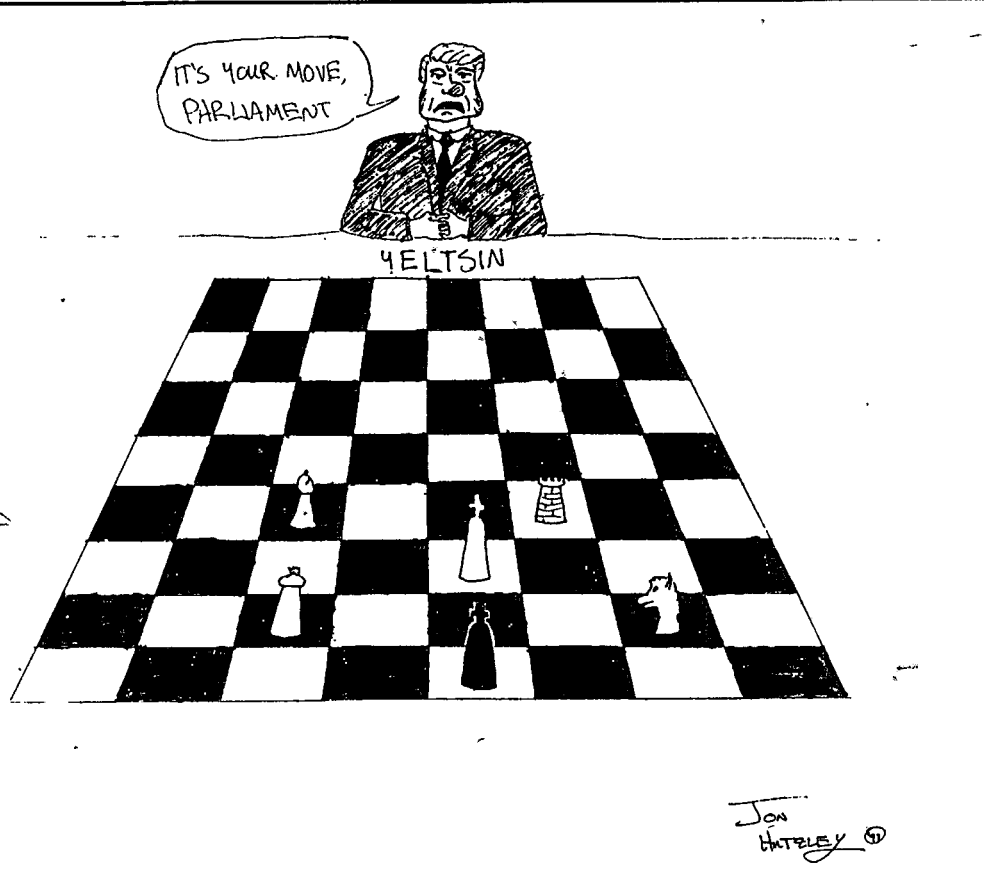
Various statements characterize the misguided opposition to gay rights. "God hates fags." This sign which appeared on the cover of *Newsweek* sums up the religious

opposition to gay rights in any form. According to the *U.S. News* poll, religion is the most important influence on people's views toward gays. Among religious respondents, a staggering 79% oppose gay rights.

We must remember that the United States is not a state governed by Christian Biblical law. I do not underestimate the clout of the religious opposition; however, I hope our members of Congress recognize that it stems from an irrational hatred which has no place in our laws.

"Gays want special rights." How can the right to keep your job, get housing, and raise your own children be "special"? Homosexuals are not asking for rights beyond

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A Response to the critics

By Alex Crumbley

I have good news. I have figured out what everyone's problem is. If we fix this problem, everyone will be happy. Unfortunately, I risk losing my livelihood as opinions editor by revealing this problem to you. But I am willing to perform such self-sacrifice for the good of my fellow Davidsonians.

We bitch too much. Bitch, bitch, bitch. If we took the four hours we spend a week at meetings whining about this and that, Patterson Court and dorm noise and whatever else, and went running or read a book or went out and had a beer with some friends (oops! I said it! Beer! hee hee Beer! hee hee hee), we'd all be much happier, well-adjusted people. Plus, if we quit bitching and had a beer, cool people would like us.

I attended the "Future of Patterson Court" forum Monday night, unlike most students and unlike all of the faculty. It was not as constructive as it could have been because Those Who Know Best decided not to come. How can poor, misguided, chemically dependent college students decide their own fate without the guidance of the administration? We try to have a forum, and you don't come. What's the message there? "Go drink a beer, boys and girls, and quit bitching." Well, OK!

Many teachers and a few students have voiced complaints about my section having too many references to, well, BEER. To this I reply: the editorial section of a newspaper mirrors the population which produces it. If you think Davidson students like beer too much, you should have gone to the Patterson Court forum and said so. If you think my writers like beer too much, become one of my writers and say something you think is valuable.

I've also heard criticism of Chris Frampton. People say he shouldn't still be working on the paper because he's enrolled at UNCC instead of Davidson. They say they don't like the flippant tone of his articles. Well, think about the dedication it takes to work on something you don't get any credit for just because you care about it. That's what he's doing this semester. For whom? A bunch of people who bitch instead of saying "Thanks." So lay off him.

You may have noticed that this week's article is in quite a different tone than I usually write. That's for a reason. I want you to get fed up and write something of your own. If you have nothing to say, don't nip at the heels of those who do like an annoying little yip dog.

Time for a little inside information, compliments of the much-under-fire editor of the opinions section. There is no exclusive writers guild of select students who hide in the bowels of the Union and write naughty things. Each week I print my phone number and offer the entire school a chance to write. So if you don't like something in here, use your pen instead of your mouth, and do better. Otherwise, I don't want to hear it.

What are we selling? Marketing tells half the story

By Caroline Carpenter

Private liberal arts colleges like Davidson exert a tremendous amount of time, resources, and energy perfecting and promoting their public image. For the most part, this well-crafted package is based on fact, with a bit of polishing and refining along the way.

These finishing touches account for the discrepancy between the glossy brochure snapshot of incredibly intelligent looking students engaged in an utterly stimulating class discussion and the less picturesque reality of college life, complete with frigid, rainy days, endless reading, and even one or two tiresome class discussions.

This incongruity is an expected hazard of the college shopping process; a student must ultimately jump off the proverbial cliff, send in the deposit, and hope they were not misled by the fanfare of Admissions' rhetoric.

As a sophomore here, I have had a year to assess the validity of Davidson's own claims. Of course, there were some disappointments but none quite so disheartening as the stunning \$9.1 million Visual Arts Center. Granted, it is a wonderful asset to the Fine Arts Department and will undoubtedly enhance the comprehensive role of the arts at Davidson. However, for me, its glorious opening has re-

vealed some ugly aspects of our illustrious institution.

When I decided to attend Davidson two years ago, I was aware that there were not any classes offered in ceramics, and that it was possible that there was not even a pottery wheel on campus. This situation was not encouraging, but the planned construction of a new Fine Arts building left me optimistic. After learning to throw (the term used to describe creating ceramic pieces on a pottery wheel) and quickly falling in love with the exhilarating experience of taming a chunk of clay, first with sheer force and finally with the slight

pressure of a single fingertip, I continued working through various classes and programs over the next two years. I was by no means ready to abandon an interest which had so quickly become a vital part

of my life upon entering Davidson.

With the completion of the Visual Arts Center I hoped I would finally be able to resume throwing regularly. I was mistaken. During a conversation with Professor Cort Savage, who is responsible for the sculpture and ceramics aspect of the Fine Arts Department, I learned that there was indeed a wheel at Davidson, along with glazes, and several kilns. Unfortunately, I

There is a discrepancy between the brochures and the reality of college.

Clinical depression shouldn't be treated like brief sadness

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day to day basis. Sufferers of clinical depression often have chemical imbalances in the brain which anti-depressants are used to correct.

However, anti-depressants are not a cure-all which can be acquired as easily as Tylenol and must be used in conjunction with therapy. Patients are evaluated

carefully before being prescribed an anti-depressant, and like any medicine, the prescription must be followed precisely.

Furthermore, a clinically depressed person does not want to feel depressed, nor do they fail to understand what "makes life good." A depressed person is not capable of treating himself and often requires the aid of therapy, medicine, or both.

would be allowed to use these facilities only in the context of an independent study, the prerequisites for which are Sculpture I and II, courses which do not focus on ceramics, much less wheel throwing.

These requirements are not unreasonable, although I thought a compromise might be possible, considering my previous experience and that my interest was more extra-curricular than academic. Upon returning to school this fall, I talked to Professor Herb Jackson, Chairman of the Fine Arts Department, in the hopes of reaching such a compromise, and met with a similar refusal.

The situation was personally frustrating and rather surprising in

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