



PERSPECTIVES

Our perspectives

STAFF EDITORIAL

Last month, The Davidsonian set aside space in the Perspectives Page to deal with the issue of gender. What followed was an outpouring of strong emotions and passions. Certain people candidly wrote what they felt about gender relations, and other people candidly responded. People on opposite sides of the fence have all been vehement in airing their displeasure at the Davidsonian for publishing certain articles.

Upon hearing such strong emotions and grievances, let me reaffirm the purpose of the Perspectives Page. The Perspectives Page is there for all students to express and articulate their opinions on various topics related to everything from campus news to international news. It is the mission of the page to be the canvas upon which students display their personal views. If someone wants to articulate his or her position on a certain topic or issue, he or she will always have the Perspectives Page.

It is important to point out, however, that the Davidsonian does not specifically endorse any particular viewpoint expressed in the Perspectives Page, except for the staff editorial. The page is open to all. It will never be the case that an article will be rejected on the basis of ideology or opinion.

This takes us to another important issue. What does get rejected from the Perspectives Page? We naturally accept most of what we receive on the basis of freedom of speech. That being said, there are instances where we have no choice but to decline an article. If an article is hate speech, containing prolific use of expletives and racial epithets with little merit, if such language warrants any merit to begin with, it will be omitted. Furthermore, slanderous writings will also be rejected. The Davidsonian is not a place to settle personal issues. It is a place to foster thought and discussion.

When people write an article for the Perspectives Page, it is my hope that debate and dialogue will be ignited on campus. Davidson College students are bright, hardworking, and active. These admirable traits, however, often lead to students being perpetually buried by a mountain of work. With so many commitments, students often become apathetic or forgetful of various issues being discussed and debated outside the Davidson bubble. Sometimes, it takes a controversial article to stir the campus body out of this apathy.

I thank the writers of the recent gender articles for their contributions to the Perspectives Page, and for opening up debate on campus about gender relations. I also wish to encourage readers to continue reading, letting the newspaper incite feelings and emotions, and to continue writing responses. It is important that students discuss issues of contention, to understand and hear all sides, recognizing and respecting the many different perspectives on campus.

The Davidsonian

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Response to Hope Cain: gender

LOGAN LEWIS
Sports Editor

I am writing in direct response to Hope Cain's article regarding gender from last week. While I find some of Cain's points sad but true, I think that most of her assertions consist of gross generalizations which do not apply to the majority of Davidson students. I believe Cain offers an excellent message, begging Davidson students to move beyond gender conflicts and seek mutual understanding.

Of course, I sympathize with Cain in that I believe that men and women often fall victim to common misunderstandings caused by sexual tension. At the same time, however, I believe Cain does a disservice to both men and women at Davidson, arguing that it is the norm for men to judge girls solely based on their Commons trays and for women to conclude that they are just "too good" for any man here. I hope to demonstrate a radically different Davidson experience, in which men and women are able to eat, talk, and even dance together without an expectation of sexual activity.

I will start with Commons. I enjoy meals on the dark side as well as the light side. Actually, the dark side is preferable because it offers round tables, which enhance conversations. I eat the majority of my meals in the company of both men and women. Our conversations do not consist of ranking women based on their physical attributes, and I definitely do not take the time to make a mental note of what each girl has on her plate. Are you kidding me?

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I understand that some males may think and speak in such ways, but I judge that these individuals make up a small portion of the population. I do not mean to excuse them, because I certainly do not condone their actions, but I cannot agree with Cain's conclusion.

It seems to me that Cain is suggesting that Davidson girls refrain from wearing sweatpants to Commons due to their fear that shallow guys will think less of them. If that is truly the case, then I am disappointed. I accept that some girls might evaluate themselves based on the opinions of others, but I do not really want to associate with those girls anyway. I have much more respect for girls who live without regard for the creeps and go as far as to dress modestly.

Switching perspectives, Cain writes that men fall victim to Commons slander. She goes on to quote a girl who says, "There are just no guys that are good enough for me here," and Cain even agrees with her. In her editorial comment, she admits, "we as girls have all thought this at some point or another." Again, I refuse to believe that the majority of girls at Davidson have thought that no guy on campus is "good enough" for them. There is a difference in believing that you will not find the right guy and thinking that you are somehow better than everyone else. Are the majority of girls at Davidson really that conceited? I hope not.

After attributing such condescending thoughts to Davidson's entire female population, Cain goes on to say, "it is difficult to find guys here that are not of the disrespectful, drunkard, spoiled, money-maker wanna be, momma's boy, typical-just-looking-for-sex-and-sex-only breed." If that is the perspective of the majority of girls at Davidson, then they have not taken the time to get to know the overwhelming majority of Davidson men. Because I find that premise faulty, I suggest that most Davidson girls do not actually think that way about Davidson guys. In fact, I agree that some guys here meet that

description, but they are in the minority. I am very sympathetic to those girls Cain mentions who have only encountered such disgusting guys during their Davidson experience. My guess is that these girls have restricted themselves by settling for this type of behavior. These girls should take some responsibility and seek to get to know guys who will appreciate them for their personality, intelligence, and beauty.

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After concluding that Davidson girls are uptight but not easy, Cain claims that all men at Davidson expect sexual gratification after a night at the Court. First, I believe that most girls would object to Cain's admission that Davidson girls are uptight, arguing that it is precisely generalizations like that which cause conflicts between genders. Furthermore, I take offense at the suggestion that guys automatically expect to have sex with each girl they encounter on the dance floor. Again, this may be true for some men on campus, but not for the majority. Although I do not believe that Cain depicts the attitudes of the majority of Davidson men well at all, I will address the scenario anyway.

Instead of assigning blame, preventative action may be in order. Logically speaking, grinding with a guy at the court, making out with him, and engaging in various sexual activities sends signals to the guy that the girl may be interested in something more after leaving the party. If a girl does not intend to send that signal, then she should not provoke him in that manner, leading him to conclude that she is just a tease. It looks like we are back to square one with misunderstandings due to sexual tension. I hope that now one can see how to prevent such miscommunications.

In Cain's advice to women, she gives sleazy guys a break, saying, "they appreciate [women] enough to go to a school where they will probably get much less sex, so...throw some of the appreciation back their way." To think that I made my decision to go to Davidson based on how much of an opportunity I would have to have sex is utterly ridiculous. I will

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not even try to make sense of Cain's final suggestion that her gender should "throw some appreciation" towards men. I just have a sense that most women on campus will not find that idea appealing.

Finally, I think Cain and I want the same thing for men and women on campus — mutual respect which will lead to greater understanding and more significant relationships. I have confidence that Cain portrays Davidson in an extreme and fictitious way, assigning blame and driving the genders farther apart. I hope that I have taken a more realistic approach to the social situation of the majority of Davidson students, illustrating that the majority of men and women on campus have already concluded as many second-graders across America have — that men and women are different, but somehow we coexist through a process of mutual understanding and respect.

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