

Staff Editorial

Continue to diversify Patterson Court

The Davidsonian applauds the establishment of an Alpha Phi Alpha chapter on campus. Historically black fraternities traditionally foster great diversity in their membership, and, by all accounts, Alpha embodies the core Davidson values of service, leadership and scholarship.

Patterson Court expansion, however, needs to be examined. A group of young men wanted an opportunity—to participate in an organization familiar to their families and focused on certain ideals—that Davidson didn't offer.

What will happen when a group of young women want to participate in a historically black sorority? Or a historically white sorority?

Men on campus will soon have four options on Patterson Court: to join a historically black Greek organization, to join a historically white Greek organization, to join an eating house (CoHo) or to remain independent. Women have exactly half of these options.

By the way, while only 31 percent of males on campus are Patterson Court members, a whopping 47 percent of females are in eating houses.

Bottom line: that's discrimination. Men have more general options (Greek, eating house, independent) as well as more specific options (Sigma Phi Epsilon, Kappa Alpha, etc.) while participating in significantly lower percentages.

Davidson's well-established Greek system has consistently catered to white men. The chartering of an Alpha Phi Alpha chapter will most directly benefit minority men.

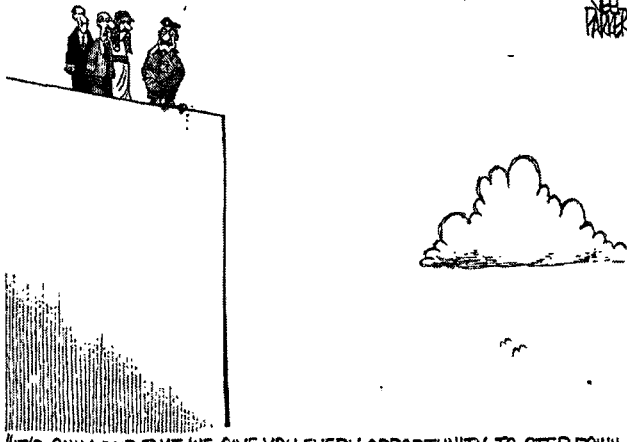
If we're going to start offering demographically specific Greek organizations, no argument against sororities can stand up.

Even the process of chartering a new fraternity chapter reflects a sense of gender inequity on Patterson Court. The group of men who decided last semester to pursue this option met with little opposition. In fact, only seven commitment signatures are required to apply for an Alpha chapter charter, though Davidson turned in 12.

You can bet that there are seven women on campus who would like to join a sorority for the same reason these men want a historically black fraternity—family ties, an international network of contacts and a specific sense of tradition.

Unfortunately, women who have requested the establishment of a sorority chapter at Davidson—and they have, more than once in recent memory—have been denied that opportunity.

Davidson's effort to diversify its Greek culture with the addition of a historically black fraternity is great. Now it's time to include the women.



IT'S ONLY FAIR THAT WE GIVE YOU EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO STEP DOWN...

Students deserve cable in rooms

In response to the Jan. 22 article "Honor Code applies to cable TV splicing, too," I find Davidson College's policy regarding the theft of cable overly severe. Not only is Davidson an extremely challenging school academically, it does little to offer students outlets. While some students are able to drive themselves constantly and diligently keep up with the work load, many others realize that this is college, and that it is healthy to have fun and relax every now and then.

I do not think that Davidson students are experiencing the famed "best four years of your life." I believe that as a student body we would unanimously agree that our college experience is significantly different than that of students from every other college—in both a good and bad way.

While we enjoy Davidson's small size, our accessibility to professors, buildings, and the town itself, among other things, Davidson nevertheless leaves a few but extremely important things to be desired, namely leisure.

The College's policies too often hamper our ability to have fun and relax with friends. I find it perplexing that we are not allowed to watch cable TV in our rooms—even if we are willing to pay for it. I am surprised that TVs are not on RLO's list of prohibited dormitory items. Having cable TV in our own room is a small luxury that every student should be able to enjoy.

The problem that exists is that there is only one small TV equipped with cable available for an entire floor, or dorm in the case of the sophomore apartments. The hall lounges are outdated, uncomfortable, and unaccommodating—often there simply is not enough space for a group of people to enjoy a program together, and the dilemma will always exist amongst students wanting to watch different programs.

Until something is done to mitigate this situation, splicing cable is sadly the only option for some.

Andrew Gibbons '05

Not every Christian is an "extremist"

I learned a few things from Laura Filosa's cartoon in last week's Davidsonian. First, I realized I am not a good liberal by today's college campus definition. Second, I discovered that neither are some of the self-professing good liberals on campus. Let me explain what I mean.

I am a staunch opponent to the Roe v. Wade decision. From the sidewalk chalk drawings and recent articles in the Davidsonian I can clearly see this opposition is not in line with true liberal thinking. However, I have recently discovered I have some unexpected company. Laura Filosa's cartoon highlights the contradictory stance many take on the issue of abortion.

The cartoon partakes in the gross generalizations that are frowned upon in the academic setting and usually reserved for traditionalists. The cartoon asks what is the biggest challenge to Roe v. Wade. The first picture depicts a group of "religious extremists" protesting the decision. The "extremists" call for the killing of abortion doctors and the damnation of everyone involved with abortion.

My problem with the picture is its subjective and general content.

I question the definition of "religious extremists." This term is often thrown around with no concrete understanding as to what it truly refers to. I am a Christian. The Bible teaches me to respect and protect human life and dignity. Does my commitment to this principle and my subsequent challenging of Roe v. Wade mean that I am a "religious extremist?"

Please don't get me wrong; I view the killing of doctors and the violent condemnation of abortion in the name of religion as detestable. However, the cartoon generalizes so much that anyone challenging Roe v. Wade on religious grounds is considered a "religious extremists." Perhaps some would argue this is far-fetched and reading into too much. I disagree.

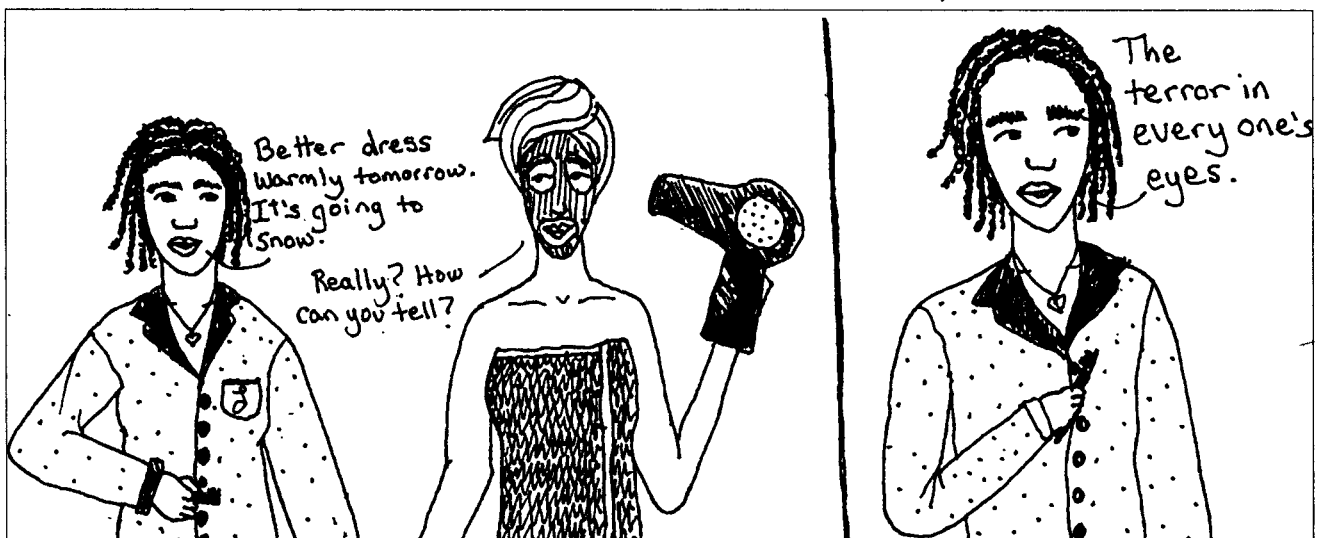
For instance, suppose the New York Times ran a cartoon that asked the question "what is the biggest challenge to national security?" The cartoon then depicted Arabs boarding planes while subtitled "religious extremism." The cartoon would undoubtedly be condemned, and rightly so. Such a cartoon takes the actions of a very tiny minority and projects it onto the majority.

While the cartoonist could defend his or her position by saying only violent extremists were depicted, many Arabs would nonetheless rightly feel misunderstood, stereotyped, and targeted. College campuses would frown upon such close-mindedness and generalizations in a pursuit of tolerance and the liberal ideal.

The recent cartoon in the Davidsonian manifests that such ideals are inconsistently applied when certain stances are not in conformity with certain agendas. Religion has effectively been portrayed as archaic and destructive when placed in the context of the abortion debate. Just as Arabs would feel their ethnicity attacked by the hypothetical column, the recent Davidsonian cartoon has the same effect upon those whose opposition to Roe v. Wade is religious. It's not a matter of who's right or who's wrong, rather a consistent treatment of both sides in the debate.

David Dupee '04

and now **A DOXA' FILOSA**
WITH LAURA FILOSA



The Davidsonian

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