

# Have We Forgotten The Meaning of The Declaration of Independence?

By Katja Altpeiter

"We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness;...."

-Declaration of Independence

This statement--the soul of this country, the heart of the American nation put in one sentence. Especially to non-Americans, the United States still represents the country of equality and of liberty where everybody can become happy according to his or her own ideals.

The fundamental values of the American Nation are proclaimed everywhere: equality, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness a thousandfold on posters, T-shirts, buildings, in newspapers, on the radio, on TV, in every politician's mouth, in every proud American citizen's heart!

But sometimes these "inalienable rights" do not seem so very inalienable. Even at a school like Davidson, at a "liberal" arts col-

lege, people sometimes seem to forget on which foundations their nation is built. Or perhaps those people just misunderstand the great words of the Declaration of Independence.

Many students seem to mistake the phrase "all men are created equal" as a premise for everybody to behave in exactly the same way. Of course, this way has to be their own. But the fact that not every American is born with sports shoes on their feet, and a baseball cap on their head should at least make them question this assumption.

Equality does not mean uniformity. Moreover, the idea of equality implies the respect for variety. It means that no matter if somebody wears a nose ring, no matter if somebody wears their hair shaved, no matter if somebody is black, white, red, yellow, no matter if somebody is Christian or Jew or Moslem, no matter if somebody is homosexual, heterosexual or bisexual, he or she is a human being like everybody else, and carries something inside that

deserves respect.

Liberty goes even further. The realization of the idea of liberty shows if someone has understood the lesson of equality. Of course, everybody wants to be free, wants to be able to express openly emotions and opinions. For those people who feel and think like the majority does, liberty is easy to obtain and self-evident.

Within their circle of similarly thinking people they feel free. Living in that circle of thoughts, they take the boundaries of their thoughts as ultimate. But the world goes beyond the horizon and very often goes beyond our own personal feelings and thoughts.

Only if people accept even those thoughts which lie beyond their own spheres of experience and only if those thoughts can be expressed deliberately can liberty be realized.

Rosa Luxemburg put this idea very bluntly when she said, "Freiheit ist immer Freiheit der Andersdenkenden!" (Freedom is always the freedom to think differently!)

## Depth! Relevance!

# How Many Bananas Does it Take?

By Frank S. Guzek

(with intro compiled by David Scott)

Our guest today has lost his way, confused, a wayward son. But he's still cool and doesn't drool, and his zipper's always done. You'd like him but, unlike him, we couldn't guarantee, that he'd like you, though you with we might beg to disagree. A tall but gainly sort, he's spun a tail or two, but never for Depth! Relevance! (a fault that you have too).

Sorry. Like our guest, we've lost our grip on facts. In diction, plot and decency, but... then again it wouldn't be, even more it couldn't be, Deep & Relevant to you... it wouldn't do if we'd construe to keep the proper syntax.

Now leaping like a dragon leaps straight for a virgin maid; we'll to our point and greet our guest and quit this serenade. His name is Frank and frank he is -- The Gooze -- he's cool and calm. And for his words we'll bag it now, this our little psalm.

Though I admit it begrudgingly, I too have found myself at that cold, lonely, post-pubescent crossroads. And quite honestly, I've gotten down on a knee or two while there. There are some dilemmas worth a handshake with ol' Nick. Frankly, such a bargain seems more and more reasonable as I weigh the cornucopia of benefits I've reaped at dpc against the mountainous debt I will face upon my triumphant graduation. Too bad Phil Rizutto isn't in the college loan business. The Stafford loan people don't strike me as very good ball players.

Don't get me wrong. I'm no different from any of the other

worker bees here at dpc. I've been overcome by the tremendous love of learning, the feeling of cooperation as we all push towards satori, each student encouraging the successes of his peers. Well-trained will we be as the job market looms. Competent dpc alumni able to amble authoritatively at the drop of a name, able to leap nimbly over wide swaths of turkey poop, and of course able to look snottily (snootily?) down our snoots (snots?) at our demographic peers who attended less prestigious institutions, with their creeping non-western influences.

(I actually heard a friend of mine say that at some of those schools there are homosexuals, and some people who aren't even Christian! Can you imagine? What Sodoms!)

But I digress. Back to the crossroads.

I think we are all familiar with those days. Days where you just can't seem to tell sh\*\* from sh-nola. Days where you can't find the comics and miss an episode of *Gil Thorpe* (I still can't believe Lenny Hull didn't take those steroids!). Days where each new morning is another dull grey swath in a sort of bitter, saccharine limbo. The kinds of days that force most white people to put on a cd of Kenny G. or Michael Bolton (because *no one* knows the blues quite like Kenny G. and the New Age Yeti). When every day is, in a nutshell, a *perfect* day for bananafish.

For those of you who don't know what bananafish are, be prepared for a morbid tale. They swim into holes where there are lots of bananas (and bananafish luuuuuu bananas) and then they just pig out.

They go completely mad. I think they can eat in the neighborhood of seventy-eight bananas. But once they do, they become so bloated that they can't get out of the hole and they die. Just like that. Seventy-eight bananas and you're pushing up daisies. How's that for a bowl of cherries?

This column seems quite relevant but not very deep.

Intense, and yet, wafer-thin.

I suppose this column is the Wheat Thin of the *Davidsonian*. I love those Wheat Thin commercials with Sandy Duncan. She is so adorable. And her message is an important one. You shouldn't have to feel guilty. At least, not about a thin piece of wheat.

I keep getting away from those crossroads.

I've considered that maybe I'm going through a mid-life crisis. A decent enough explanation, though it means I'll bite the dust before I hit forty. That's not even long enough to finish paying off those Stafford loans. But hey, if the education president insists on voodoo financial aid, I'll not complain.

MY COUNTRY, RIGHT OR WRONG.

But certainly not left, I suppose. I think politics may be a bit too relevant for this column. Although I must say that nothing warmed my heart quite as much as seeing Strom Thurmond throw his protective wing over Clarence Thomas (Uncle Thomas, to his closest friends) as the slings of outrageous common sense pelted the bulwarks of have-dom. You've come a long way, baby.

Don't miss part 2 of Guzek's Guest Appearance in next week's issue!

The "pursuit of happiness" seems to touch the practical aspect of human beings living together. It allows every individual to become happy in exactly the way he or she chooses as long as in that pursuit other people's rights are not impaired.

Does anybody who colors his or her hair red or green, does anybody who is feminist, ecologist or pacifist, does anybody who is homosexual or bisexual infringe on another's rights, just for being what he or she is.

Are not those people who do not accept other people's different tastes, different cultures, different religions, different sexualities those who violate "inalienable rights"?

I am shocked by the intolerance of many students at this college. Concerning the fact that

Davidson is a school that is known for its high educational level and that does not accept every applicant makes me even more thoughtful.

I remember many speeches on this campus which assured the students that they would comprise the future leadership elite of this country. The thought that some of the future leaders of one of the world's most powerful countries are so intolerant as to not even respect different kinds of sexuality besides their own scares me!

Let me remind you that for many Europeans, and certainly for a huge number of people in other parts of the world, the U.S. still is the country of equality, liberty and pursuit of happiness. You have a great heritage--try to take it seriously!

## F.L.A.G.

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to join a support group (remember, that's what *Friends of Lesbians and Gays* is all about). And if they aren't and have to ask mommy and daddy for permission, then they shouldn't be in college.

F.L.A.G. did get a charter as voted on by the members of S.G.A. As for your money, since some of you are concerned about the funding coming from the students' activity fees, get it back through a voucher or take your child out of school so you won't have to pay.

The subject of homosexuality needs to be dealt with in a positive manner. I feel this is the best way to go about it as do some of the homosexuals on campus. When you see a good friend beaten to a bloody pulp and left for dead just because of her sexual preference, you begin to wonder what kind of world this is.

This kind of situation is what F.L.A.G. wants to prevent by educating people. If it means having a chapter on campus, then so be it.

I hate to break it to you people, but homosexuality is here to stay; it's not going to just disappear just because you don't care to fund it.

Sincerely,  
Catherine Hines, '94

## Homeless

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a strong enough will to want to change his life and teach others from his experiences. There has got to be a way we can give the homeless a sense of self worth, encouraging them to do something with their lives.

I think there are more homeless begging for money on the street than those seeking help from shelters.

I'm not sure I understood the purpose of the vigil either. Sleeping on the street is only a minor part of being homeless. The lawn in front of Chambers is too far removed from the situation.

I think a better answer would be for Reach Out to spend some time with the homeless; they need to be told that they are their own special person, and if they want to change the way they live, there are people that want to help.

It is good to heighten the awareness of others, but until someone actually places themselves in contact with those that want help, nothing is going to happen.

Sincerely,  
Susan Criscione

## Hats

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there may be others like Mr. Atchison who don't agree with this policy. But as I see it, life is full of policies that at least one person is not going to like.

The contemptuous tone Mr. Atchison takes towards Mr. Holland is certainly uncalled for. Mr. Holland's return to Davidson is certainly one of the most positive things that has happened to our athletic program. If Mr. Atchison cannot see this maybe it is because his hat is blocking his view.

Sincerely,  
Wendy M. Lee, '94