

## Birkenstock

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... Europeans tend to pooh-pooh an American preoccupation with ethics in general, and an elected official's failure to possess any in particular. Rather condescendingly, the more "sophisticated" of our European allies think that we present an interesting and amusing example of Judeo-Christian hypocrisy at work. Perhaps we might be grateful not to be so worldly. Blessedly free of such inhibitions, in England it was rumored that normally liberal publishers in the scandal sheet trade secretly supported John Major for Prime Minister precisely because they could envision headlines like "Major Cock Up," or "Major Screws Again."

Where Italian governments fall faster than autumn leaves, what seems an astonishing breach of trust by President Nixon is merely a curious foible to the likes of Edith "Gaffe" Cr sson, France's former foreign minister. Imagine Jeanne Kirkpatrick declaring that all Canadian men were gay (tell that one to Janet Jones, Wayne Gretzky's wife), but American men were not. In the first place, scandals past would immediately invalidate the claim (Q: Why won't the Library of Congress let Senators check out any more books? A: They kept bending over the pages (Dah-Dump-Dump)). But there is also the feeling that to make such a spurious claim would be somehow disingenuous and lacking in humility. In fairness were it revealed that Ms. Kirkpatrick had some personal interest in that respect, no amount of attention would be spared in an effort to bring to public view all the relevant "facts."

Hence, the anguish with which Americans (in general) balance their taste for the lurid and the bold with an almost apologetic unease that seeks to expiate the guilt they feel. Would Clarence Thomas have received so much attention had it been startlingly exposed that a limited partnership with which he was involved had committed potentially criminal tax code violations? In fact, a *Post* revealed on *Nightline* the same day as the Anita Hill scandal began to break that Thomas had two separate liens

placed on him for nonpayment of taxes totaling three thousand bucks. Where was the outrage? Which allegation do you remember more vividly? It is difficult to imagine the Three Bigs (Gerald, Sally Jessie and Oprah (sorry Phil)) detailing Justice Thomas' tax problems with as much relish as the Anita Hill story and all the associated titillations.

Yet, through it all, every single pontificating individual who managed to squeeze in front of a camera, or type out a line of print was denouncing the "process," presumably because it was so distasteful. If reverse-discrimination is David Duke's code word for the nostalgia for good "old-fashioned" discrimination, then, quite possibly, the "process" that critics were decrying entailed its seaminess far more than its perceived unfairness to either party.

Literally for years, the hints, suspicions, and outright revelations about the S&L crises floundered on the economic pages where bad (read: "boring") news goes to die. But let the President's son be implicated, and suddenly the movement has a "Poster Boy." Never mind that deregulation designed by the White House, smilingly assented by the Congress, and gleefully implemented by inexperienced and only occasionally crooked bankers was more probably the cause. Should a smoking gun and an open mouth reveal, in the words of Charles Keating, that, hell yes he bought influence, then suddenly the Congress gets theirs as well.

We are saddened that our representatives felt at liberty to write themselves small (and not-so-small) interest free loans in the form of checks. But we are outraged that you, the American taxpayer, would for so long ignore the three trillion dollar loan, hardly interest free, that the bums felt free to write in all of our names "with the full faith and credit of the United States of America."

Who do you think is going to pay that bill? Not Ronald Reagan and Tom Foley. They'll be dead. There's just us, the surviving American taxpayers, whose real household wages just topped the 1973 mark. Think about that as you turn past the economic page to check on the color of that bra. Hey,

Teddy Kennedy himself is supposedly testifying. We can't wait for that! Hey, while he's up there ask him how he plans to fund the Unemployment Compensation Act. He'll probably tell you to tuck it on the deficit. You want scandal... that's scandal.

You want finger-pointing and demagogic blame to take away the sting of enjoying *A Current Affair* so much, at least make yourself useful. Direct your blame at the real problems this country faces. And when you blame people, as you surely will, blame them for not providing a means of securing adequate housing for the millions of Americans who cannot afford it. Or blame them for the fifty or sixty percent of high-school seniors who graduate semi-literate and not good for anything. Or, better yet, don't even bother to blame; identify the problem and attempt a constructive solution. Moral failings are indicative of our humanity and are thus excusable; failure to act humanely transcends immorality and cannot be excused.

And here's where this little tirade fits into your miserable lives. Apparently certain tidbits of campus life revolving around Patterson Court have offended various members of the community. While we certainly do not advocate begrudging the rights of the individual (even the infantile and gutless ones who urge us all to rot in hell, but don't bother to give us the satisfaction of knowing who cursed us to such an insensitive fate), we can expect more of certain individuals.

Sexism and bigotry is clearly inexcusable and inhumane. Passing off obviously prejudiced and ridiculous antics as non-offensive in origin because of a "humorous" motivation is clearly no defense. Viewing and presenting any human as intrinsically "lower" than another human is wrong. While we can acknowledge an individual's right to express any position they hold, we need not respect or excuse the idiotic.

So, scrawlers of swastikas and creators of sex kittens feel free to dabble in the offensive; it is your inalienable right. But don't deny society the opportunity to prove that it can still respect humanity by denouncing your acts of artistic aggression.

allowed to make an educated decision. Without a campus wide referendum we will never know exactly how the issue stands; thus responsibility lies with the leaders of the eating houses, fraternities, independents, and freshmen. A closed ballot should be demanded to deter the peer pressure which was previously involved.

Davidson College was founded on, and should continue to exercise the Christian values established in 1837. It would be a shame to see the standards that have been upheld for so many years eat away at the moral fiber of the Davidson College community. Davidson College has heard from the few who support this radical movement, now let's hear from everyone else.

Sincerely,  
Lucy Herriott, '93  
Kelly Perry, '94

Your cruel comments were completely unnecessary and unfair. I suggest you go meet the guy, and I think you'll understand.

Sincerely,  
Matthew D. Bumstead '93

## Herriott

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fee paid with each student's tuition.) Where should our money go?

One Davidson student says, "I was under the impression that I was only signing as an advocate of their [homosexual] civil rights. I didn't know that I was signing in support of an organization on *this campus* ... I don't know what's going on." Behind this voice there may be many others who are equally misinformed about this moral issue. Students need to be made aware of all the facts and

## Rainbows

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our problems to just disappear if we all sit around and think about rainbows. It just seems we can find other ways to work together, rather than letting tension and animosity get the best of us. We've got too much to give to the world to be so negative all the time. Idealistic? Maybe. But, really, what's so wrong with looking for the bright side? Why does constructive criticism have to be negative?

Finally, I must close by addressing Ms Player and Ms Holloman. Do you two know Tom Koonce? As a personal friend of Tom's, I, along with many others, felt extremely offended, hurt, and outraged upon reading your calous comments.

Maybe you two just had a bad day or something; I don't know.

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## Honor

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side five experienced members. As their forerunners had done, these veteran council members serve as examples for the newcomers. Freshmen quickly learn how the council is meant to operate: what kind of questions are appropriate and what kinds are not, and which mindsets should be maintained and which are best avoided. In a similar vein, lessons learned from past cases, which can be crucial to a councilmember's decision, can be carried by a member to provide new insight into future cases.

Random jury selection would eliminate any contribution knowledge and experience from prior cases could provide. Each case coming before the council would be decided by a group of students with little, if any, experience with procedure and precedent. The proper role of a councilperson in the proceedings, proper lines of question -- in fact, virtually every aspect of the hearing -- would be new to each juror. Time better spent in debate and deliberation would be tied up in explanations of what is "normally done" and why. And in the end, solemn decisions of suspension or eviction would be made by students who, while competent in decision-making skills, may lack sufficient experience to hand down such important verdicts. Personally, if my guilt or innocence was on the line, I would want as much expertise on the other side of the table as possible.

The new proposal would also radically redefine the role of the Honor Council Chairman. Under the current system, the Chairman's vote is one of six on a panel and is no more or less important than those of the other five jurors. I fear that, under the random selection proposal, the independence of these remaining five votes would be at risk. Since the Chairman would most likely be the only voting councilmember who had served on a previous case, the possibility that a juror would feel pressure to

follow the Chairman's lead would increase. This is not to say that Davidson students are wishy-washy or incapable of making up their own minds. However, the fact remains that people in unfamiliar situations often tend to look to those with experience for guidance. In the context of an Honor Council trial, this could be extremely dangerous.

As I said before, I can understand how this proposal may seem to be more "democratic" in the sense that it may more closely represent the perspectives of a diverse student body. The system is already democratic. Each year, students have the right to elect three of their peers to represent them on the council. The people on the ballot are not goose-stepping pawns hand-picked by the college administration; they are by contrast, your friends, your hall-mates, your fraternity brothers and fellow eating house members. Moreover, they are people who, by placing their names on the ballot, have made a public commitment of their willingness to invest time, energy, and talent in the Honor System. Students vote for the individuals they feel are the most qualified and worthy for the task. In short, random jury selection would deny students the right to choose those people who will be willing and able to be the best, most dedicated council members. Seen in this light, it seems that the current system may be more "democratic" than random selection.

The Honor System is Davidson's most treasured tradition, and the sense of community and trust it engenders makes Davidson unique in higher education. Not only am I confident that random jury selection would be to the student's detriment, I also fear that the modification would permanently alter the character and appeal of Davidson College. For these reasons, I strongly urge the student body to reject the random jury selection proposal.  
Peter Bynum,  
Former Chairman of the Honor Council