

Staff Editorial

Last month in this space, we noted that, despite some flaws, the lottery "system usually works." We stand by that. But perhaps whether lottery works isn't the issue. Now, the question is whether the system is a lottery at all.

Issue: Suggestions for Lottery Night

RLO says that they disregarded lottery numbers in the interest of creating a functional community. The merits of that decision could be debated. But we're not challenging RLO's right to overlook lottery numbers. By choosing to live in college housing, we agree to abide by RLO's policies, no matter how arbitrary or inconsistent they appear.

But if our lottery number is only one factor in a decision that also considers our social house and preferences of our potential neighbors, than we deserve to know that. No more than 60% of any floor in a residence hall can be made up of members of a single house. This rule is well-publicized and commonly understood. RLO needs to take similar measures to make sure the intricacies of room assignments are accessible to students.

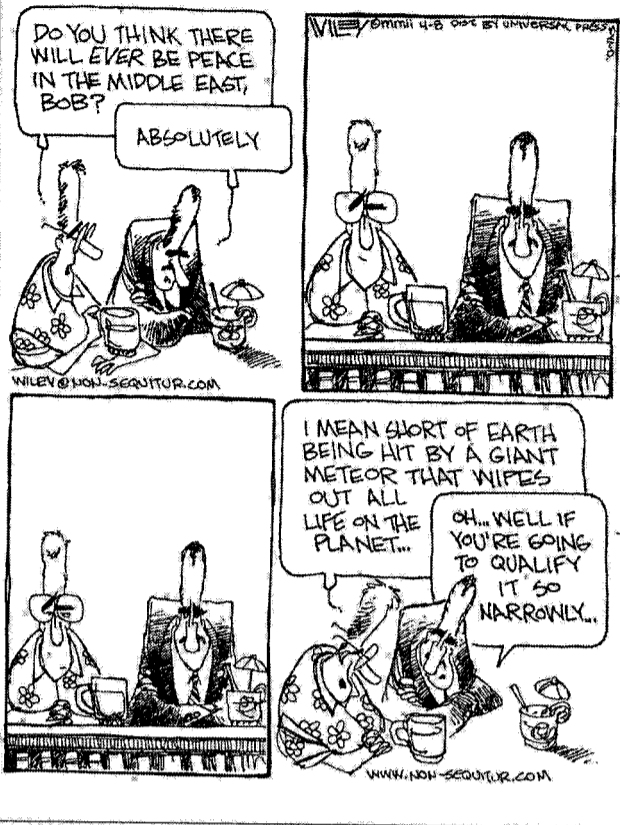
RLO maintains that by letting rising seniors rank apartment preferences they do not guarantee that apartments will be assigned accordingly. Maybe the policy is articulated in the fine print of something we read. Regardless, most of the students taking part in lottery are unaware of this loophole. Unfortunately, RLO has the right to place us wherever they choose. But we have the right to be informed that they will exercise that power, sometimes at the expense of our preferences.

Lottery may not be completely impartial, but it should be completely visible. Since students are unaware of RLO's policies, one group of seniors is understandably confused about why they were passed over for an apartment in favor of a group with poorer numbers. Now, RLO is in a tricky position. Does it stick to its policy and allow the higher numbers to keep the apartment? Or, in an attempt to placate the lower numbers, does it award them the apartment and nullify the original assignment? Either way, one party is wronged. If the assignments stay the way they are now, the lower numbers suffer because they unknowingly participated in a situation they did not understand. If, in an effort to maintain a fair appearance, the higher numbers are moved out of the apartment, then they will be displaced because of a controversy that they didn't start.

The dilemma could have been avoided had we known from the beginning that we can't expect good lottery numbers to mean a good apartment.

NON SEQUITUR

by WILEY



On Feminism, Part II

In response to "Feminism and Davidson" (Letter, March 27)

Beth Vazquez' article makes some excellent points: the ludicrous nature of the term "feminazi," the importance of Davidson students thinking carefully about what feminism means and the acknowledgement that it can take multiple forms.

I'm troubled, however, that the article offers as a key example of feminism the choice to "do something nice" for others—i.e. Beth's decision to do laundry for her boyfriend versus going to class.

She writes, "doing someone nice for someone I love makes me happy and that's a huge part of what feminism means to me—it's about men and women making choices that make them happy, regardless of who our culture says they can and cannot be, what they can and cannot do."

In the interest of underscoring this kind of altruism as the key goal of feminism, the letter unintentionally reinforces the very gender split Beth purports to complicate.

It is true (and appropriate) that men and women (and men and men and women and women) have to compromise in relationships with one another every day. But does making a partner happy necessarily make Beth's a "feminist" choice? Couldn't doing the laundry have waited until class was over? There are choices—and there are choices.

Beth's choice to do laundry rather than attend to her education reinforces the same old gender role in which women are asked to put the comfort and convenience of others over their own development. Clean socks may make her boyfriend happy, and by extension Beth—but that they're of a higher concern than her own education *isn't* feminism.

Ann Fox, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, English
Gender Studies Concentration Coordinator

Response to Nota Bene

I am writing to respond to comments made in the College Republicans' inaugural publication of *Nota Bene* about the Reproductive Rights Alliance's "Faith and Choice" week.

Obviously the author did not understand the point of this event, which was not to promote a particular point of view about the relationship between abortion and religion, but to provide an opportunity for people of all beliefs to discuss these issues in a respectful manner. While we are indeed a pro-choice organization, "Faith and Choice" week was intended to bring together Davidson community members of various faith and political backgrounds, in order to understand one another in regards to the abortion issue.

The relationship between one's religious and political

beliefs is complex, and we were expecting to shatter, not propagate, stereotypes.

The author argues that, "no serious moralist can justify the act of terminating a pregnancy because it presents an inconvenience, however major to a woman."

I disagree—there are faith traditions that do acknowledge the ability and right of a woman to make a very difficult, very personal decision. Take a look at position statements of any number of traditions on the abortion issue, and you will see that many religions understand how difficult and tragic the situation of an unintended pregnancy can be, and how important it is to ultimately leave the decision to the woman facing such a situation.

In addition, I find it enormously offensive that the College Republicans would take such a hard line stance on the abortion issue, owing to the fact that there are in fact many Republicans who would call themselves "pro-choice." I have been told by student Republicans on this campus that the declaration about "Faith and Choice" week was offensive and alienating.

I would encourage all political groups to be aware and respectful of the diversity even within their ranks.

Kristine Harrington '03
RRAD President

Anti-semitism at Davidson

I returned just a few hours ago from a wonderful Passover seder where I sat amongst a group of Jews and discussed what it was like to be Jewish on this campus.

I told them about my feelings over the recent panel discussing anti-Semitism in the post-Shakespearean era. The panel had apparently upset a large number of Jews in its approach to such a problem.

First, the panel did not have a single Jew on it. From the evidence I have gathered, a Jewish professor was asked to sit on the panel. He could not, but how difficult would it be to ask another Jewish professor or even a Jewish student? The chaplain has a list of every Jewish student on campus, so one would not be difficult to find. How can a Gentile discuss the existence or non-existence of modern day anti-Semitism if they have no firsthand experience with it?

Second, some participants constantly remarked on how the post-Holocaust world is afraid to laugh at many of the jokes. Is it a bad thing that mass genocide has sobered our look on "cracks" at Judaism?

Third, they remarked that a Jew was treated no differently than a woman during Shakespearean times. Regardless of whether this statement is true (I am not a history scholar), I believe that the view and treatment of women has evolved greatly, while the view and treatment of the Jew has not.

Fourth, they made a conclusive statement that anti-Semitism does not exist in America today. This is a blatant lie, and any Jew living in America can back me up with firsthand experience and personal examples.

At the Passover seder, we discussed the anti-Semitism that we have personally faced on campus from other students, including statements like: "Jews go to hell," "Why do Jews always feel the need to rub in peoples faces that they're Jewish?" "Why are Jews so sensitive about Jew jokes?" "Do you just use [Yiddish] terms to show off the fact that you're Jewish?" "Jews always make other people feel like they should be pitied."

Many of these comments are brushed off as ignorance. Still, to stop and read these comments, and to have listened to stories of anti-Semitism, saddens me more than I can put into words. But the saddest part is that these comments came from educated students at Davidson College. Anti-Semitism still very much so exists today, and it exists on this campus.

Katharine Lurie '03

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The Davidsonian

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