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that grows out of a sense of humility within the Reformed tradition.

"The Reformed tradition says that our community is called to try to articulate and embody the Truth the best we can, and that may mean sometimes that we disagree with the way our own forbearers did, people in our own tradition – even founders of our own tradition, like John Calvin," Spach argued.

"Is it the case that the people who founded this college thought that homosexuality was wrong? I would say probably so," Spach said. "They also were in a culture that justified slavery using scripture. Now, we would look around and say...though, slavery is mentioned in the Bible in certain ways, I do not want to support it today using the Bible. I disagree with them."

"Within the Reformed tradition, that's actually an appropriate thing to do," he continued. "You are continually being reformed by the Spirit of God as you seek to be faithful in your own context, in your own situation. Just because people may have said something and done something 150, 200, 300, 400 years ago that are in my tradition, I'm not beholden to all those things exactly. I need to think within my own context."

Many student comments pertained to The Davidsonian's decision to publish the article. One student compared the article to hate speech and pointed out that Davidson's Code of Responsibility includes an anti-discrimination clause. She expressed concern about whether the article would cause some students on campus to feel unsafe.

Spach responded, "I don't think it was hate speech. I think it was an honest expression of this person's beliefs. I may find them objectionable, but I think the right to express your opinion is something that we need to hold. It's very important in the community."

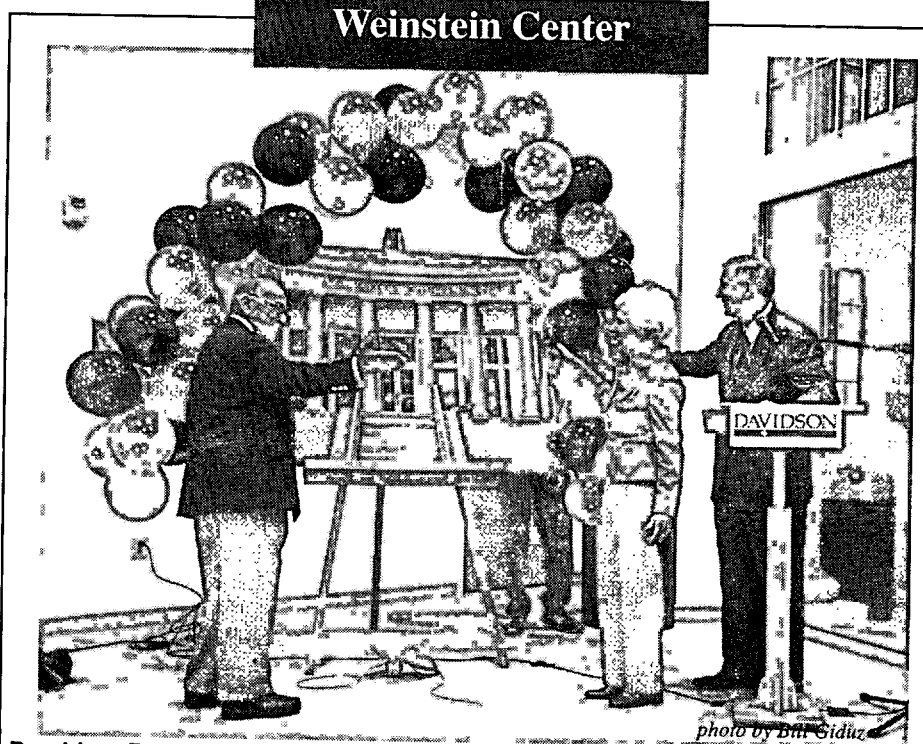
Another student suggested that the article wasn't a statement of beliefs but rather was an expression of hate hiding behind religion. A third student posited that if the article been about African Americans or Muslims or Jews, it would not have been published.

"Part of the challenge that we're going to face if we're going to be a diverse community is that there are religious particularities that matter to people," Spach responded. "They shape people's identity; they shape how people view the world. There are other people for whom religion is not part of their identity; it doesn't shape their view of the world. Part of the challenge of being in a diverse community is that you've got both types of people together."

"If you say as long as you keep your religion out of the public sphere – you don't say anything out of your religion that's going to offend people – then you're not allowing the people for whom those are important things to be fully a part of the community," he argued. "You have to give space because atheist or secular points of view can be at times as oppressive as religious points of view have been at certain points of history."

In response to students' challenges about whether Michael Spangler's article should have been published, Brett Willis, Editor-in-Chief of The Davidsonian, responded, "The editorial staff took this article into very serious consideration when we were thinking about publishing it. We went through careful revisions of the article and sent those to Michael, and he approved those revisions. We also sent the article to the administration, where several members of our administration saw it, and they approved our revisions also."

"I feel that this is a very culturally relevant article right now, not just at Davidson College, but in American culture in general," he continued. "Because of the cultural relevance of that, I do not feel that it is hate



President Ross and Marcus and Carol Weinstein at the dedication of the Weinstein Center, which houses the Dean Rusk International Studies Program, on Tuesday night. The Weinsteins donated \$2.2 million to the College in honor of former president Sam Spencer.

speech. Nowhere in the article did Michael come out and say, 'I hate homosexuals.' He may have said, 'I believe that God hates the idea of homosexuality,' but we felt, as an editorial staff, that nothing was directed at people of that sexual orientation themselves.

"The last thing we want to do on this campus is limit free speech," he asserted. "We may personally disagree with the article, but I don't feel that as an editorial staff we have the right to limit what we publish based on our personal beliefs."

President Tom Ross '72 chimed in to explain that when he was a student "there were articles and discussions about whether women belonged here. That was the issue of the day. Part of what frames the context of these kinds of issues is the times in which we live."

"Issues of diversity are hard," he observed. "They're hard to talk about, but if you don't talk about them, it's worse. The kind of discussion that occurs is important to building a community of respect and a community not just of tolerance, but one where we can embrace difference."

One student garnered applause for his comment: "I don't support what Spangler said in the article, but I do support The Davidsonian's decision to publish it ... In spite of the fact that I don't agree with Michael Spangler at all, I think it's a great thing that there are hundreds of people in this room tonight who actually care about what's going on, who actually are thinking, and talking, and discussing about this issue and advocating for the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender members of our community."

Spach challenged the community to think about how to speak and write about difficult issues, "How do we articulate what we're saying? To me that may be as important as what we're saying – is the way in which we go trying to articulate it so that it can actually be heard by others. It's easy to say things in ways that people get their defenses up, and for good reason, because they feel afraid. I think that's one of the challenges, not just at Davidson, but in our culture as we become more and more diverse together."

Several students acknowledged that while they do not agree with Spangler's point of view, they still respect him as a Davidson community member. "I feel that a lot of people have attacked the author of the article specifically," one student said. "And I think that it must be hard also for people who believe these things to feel safe in our community when a lot of the responses were personal attacks... I think a lot of good may have come from this article, because now we're all gathered together talking about it and being open and discussing these different perspectives, and I think that people in relation to this issue should be thinking about the safety of LGBT, but also people who have different opinions from the majority."

NFL Commissioner to speak

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News Editor

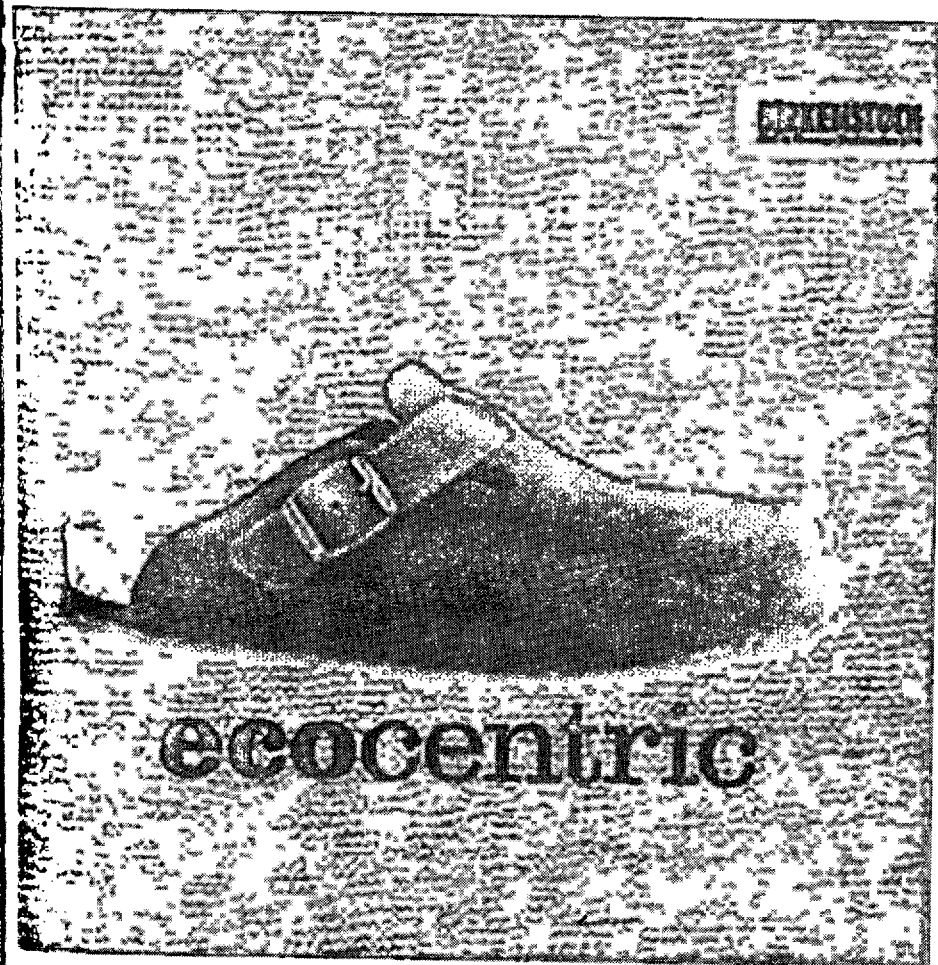
In celebration of the dedication of the Vann Center for Ethics, NFL commissioner Roger Goodell will be speaking at Davidson on Monday, Nov. 16 at 7:00 p.m. Goodell is known for his reforming actions, which have included strengthening the responsibility of NFL players and coaches to more strongly showcase the integrity of the NFL. Goodell graduated from Washington & Jefferson College in 1981 with a degree in economics. He then went on to intern at the NFL, eventually working his way up to being appointed vice president and then commissioner in 2006. As commissioner, Goodell has strengthened the NFL's personal conduct policy, making it easier for the NFL to discipline players, teams and coaches who commit transgressions on and off the field.

Goodell was responsible for the suspension and subsequent reinstatement of Michael Vick after the dog-fighting scandal in 2007. Later that year, Goodell fined New England Patriots' head coach Bill Belichick \$500,000 and took away the team's first-round draft pick after the Patriots videotaped play-calling signals of the New York Jets.

Goodell also served as commissioner during the suspension of Adam "Pacman" Jones, who was later released by the Dallas Cowboys for multiple off-field arrests and incidents. In the case of Plaxico Burress, the wide receiver that accidentally shot himself in the leg at a nightclub last year, Goodell has stated that after serving his two-year prison sentence for carrying an unregistered weapon, Burress will be eligible to be drafted again. Goodell's actions regarding these respective controversies set the stage for this discussion of ethics at Davidson this Monday.

In addition to being responsible for the disciplinary side of the NFL, Goodell has pressed for initiatives protecting injured players, increasing the penalties for drug and steroid abuse, technological innovations in the league and further expanding the \$6 billion per-year industry through contracts and advertising.

Goodell will speak in Duke Family Performance Hall, and the discussion will be moderated by Vann Center Director David Perry. Tickets are free, but required, and limited to two per person. Tickets can be picked up at the Union Ticket Office from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. during the week.



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