

I Am an American: Reflection on Black History Month

By Lenny Mac Allister

I am an American.

I celebrate, believe in, and live by the colors which make up our flag. I see the red and remember the blood shed by our American fathers to uphold democracy, to uphold equality and freedom, and to establish peace. I see the white and envision the clouds of the great sky above us; I envision the purple mountains majesty and the amber waves of grain which make the land of this country so beautiful. I see the blue and I feel the brotherhood between my fellow Americans; I see the Dodger Blue, the blue of our Olympic teams and the blue of America's teams. I relish our tradition and the celebration of our leaders, our victories, and our beliefs through holidays, events, folklore, and the telling of our history, like we Americans so often do with worthy people and events.

I am an American.

I, like our forefathers, live in a colony (this colony of Davidson College), hoping that this originating colony could become a model society, full of quality citizens, in the hopes that these citizens could expand in number and be influential to all those around. I, like Thomas Jefferson, come to a colony; looking for relief from religious and cultural oppression; looking for the perfect society where there is freedom of all natures. For this, I am on the battlefields, fighting a world-wide war against ignorance, fear, and violation. I am fighting for a world independent of these enemies, so that the knowledge and other good that I have to offer can be influential to the world around me. As I do this, I am spreading my American colors by protecting the American ideas and beliefs; I am waving my American flag through expressing all my cultures and my individuality, part of the collective individuality

which makes America what it is. I am an American through being in tune, knowing that my identity is a vital ingredient in the United States melting pot; I realize that my color adds richness and that my culture adds spice to the mixture that my American sisters and brothers stir together.

I am an American.

It is not that my voice is any louder or any ruder than any other American voice; my voice is not used to beg, or whine, or complain any more than any other American voice is. It is only that my voice may be sharper, for the truth and contrast of color is painfully obvious when there is wrong, but to accept this pain and realize the meaning behind it rather than deny or ignore it is a step of positivity; there is much pain in childbirth, but the end result is life.

It is not that my walk is any cooler, or my thoughts any dirtier, or my presence any scarier, than any other American's. So often, I am the victim when I walk down the dark alley, when I walk the pathways at night, as the guns fire, the comments fire, when the heads droop and the walking paces quicken. My nature is not of violence or trouble; my American nature is to share and to be confident, to be proud and to be respectful. My culture is community; my religion is love.

I am an African-American.

To say this is to say that my American subculture of African-America is special, that this culture, full of my people's experiences as well as my own, is unique unto all others, yet similar to the subcultures of other Americans and people of the world solely in their individualities. To say this is to know, to teach, to show, that the ingredient of my African-American culture is as important to the melting pot as all the rest; that the final result of the American mix-

ture relies on this ingredient. To be of my culture is to know that I must use my words and my beliefs as weapons to kill our African-American and American enemies of ignorance, prejudice, and unwanted conformity; these evils are what Thomas Jefferson and Dr. King fought against, what Malcolm X and Patrick Henry died fighting against in pursuit of freedom, and what you and I look eye-to-eye with today. To embrace and to respect the African-American culture is to see and to know that my African-American sisters are as beautiful and as worthy as our blond-haired and blue-eyed American sisters, and that my African-American brothers are as capable and as intelligent as other American counterparts; that for every Madonna, there is a Jasmine Guy, and that for every Thomas Edison, there is a George Washington Carver. To be proud of the African as well as the American is to know, to show, and to teach that the leaders from Black America were just as important, as powerful, and as influential to the American society as others were. It is knowing and showing that Fred Hampton's leadership and actions to feed and help the homeless and poor in the late sixties and early seventies were as helpful and worthy of praise as Billy Crystal's *Comic Relief* efforts are today; it is to know and make it understood that Dr. King and Malcolm X were as vital to the shaping of America as we know it as J.F.K. and Franklin Delano Roosevelt were.

Fellow Americans, to ask, to demand, that my culture, (this African-American culture), my leaders, and our plight be examined, studied, understood, and celebrated, is not for me to be rebellious or radical, separatist or racist; it is merely for me to be American.

Lilly

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1- Some women have stated publicly that at times they feel uncomfortable coming to SAE to monitor and/or bartend. In an effort to quell these fears the brothers of SAE have established a dual monitor/bartender system. When a woman is on duty there will be a brother on duty with her at all times. Likewise, when a brother is on duty then a woman will accompany him. Allowing two people instead of one to perform these duties will not only increase communication between various members of many houses but also make the monitor and bartending jobs more enjoyable.

2- We also have adopted, from the SAE National Office, a new method of judicial process within the fraternity. This new system is an elaboration on a former system that existed in the house. The Executive Judicial Board has the supreme authority to make all decisions concerning proper sanctions for any brother who has failed to exhibit gentlemanly behavior. The National Office has been informed of this and is in full concordance with our decision. The punishments levied will be disclosed fully to the entire house and to the Dean of Students.

3- Any brother who exhibits offensive, drunken behavior at a social function will be approached by one or more members of a select enforcement committee within SAE consisting of the President, Vice President, Social Chairman, and Warden. The person will be informed of his condition and promptly taken from the party. If necessary the offending brother will be summoned to appear before the Executive Judicial Board. Visitors to the SAE house are urged to inform the President or Social Chairman about brothers who are displaying ungentlemanly behavior.

4- In order to avoid confrontations where SAE brothers are antagonized by outsiders SAE will hire a security guard for all closed date functions held at the SAE house. The security guard will be furnished with a guest list made by the brothers before the party. Any person not appearing on this list will not be allowed in the party unless approval is granted by the President.

5- [This last option has not been voted on by the house at this time, but will be on March 3, 1992.] Any visitors from other schools who wish to attend a social function at the SAE house first must be taken to the campus police station by a member of SAE (usually the President or Vice President) where he or she will record all pertinent information relating to who he or she is visiting, where he or she will be staying, home and school addresses and telephone numbers, and any other information the campus police deem appropriate.

The brothers of SAE feel that these are logical and necessary steps which must be taken to avoid unnecessary and unfortunate events from occurring which might portray the house or the college in a poor light. We urge the other Patterson Court houses to follow our lead and adopt these or similar policies as well. By taking proactive steps to avoid situations and confrontations before they start we have the opportunity to restore Patterson Court to what it was intended to be, a safe place of social gathering for the students and friends of Davidson College.

Steven Lilly
President of SAE

Joe Cook and Blair Harkness:

Residence Hall Noise Spark Call for "Quiet Dorms"

Although no changes have been made in the current excess noise policy yet, the following groups have discussed quiet hours: the CCRL, the Educational Policy Committee, the SGA, the faculty as a whole, and the Faculty Executive Committee. Recent concern on behalf of some faculty members about noise levels in dorms and its adverse effect on student's academic performance prompted a survey of Hall Counselors and Resident Advisors concerning excess noise.

Joe Cook presented the completed report to the SGA on Tuesday, February 25. The Senate unanimously approved the recommendations and voiced considerable opposition to the establishment of a "quiet" dorm at this time. The SGA hopes this issue will be addressed by those more closely related to the situation: the student body, the Dean of Students, and the Residence Life Office.

The results of the survey show

that the noise problem is more prevalent in freshmen areas, but even in these areas an overwhelming number of Hall Counselors feel that the current policy is both adequate and appropriate. This data warrants further education about the current policy for addressing excess noise while not necessitating new policies or guidelines.

The current policy's basic premise instills a sense of personal responsibility and respect for other people. As stated in the '91-'92 Student Handbook on pages 9 and 10:

"If your rights to sleep or study in the room are being violated you should consider these options:

1. Speaking to the person or persons causing the disturbance and asking them to quiet the noise;
2. Contacting your R.A. or Hall Counselor, if the above does not work; or
3. Contacting Campus Police, if the noise is still a problem;
4. If unsatisfied with solution,

contact the Director of Residence Life or the Dean's office during business hours."

While we recognize the concern expressed by some faculty members, we believe that stricter enforcement of the current policy is preferable to any of the drastic measures recently suggested. The most extreme suggestion calls for the establishment of a "quiet" dorm. To live in this dorm students will be required to sign a contract agreeing to longer quiet hours and stricter penalties for violating quiet hours. Repeated violations will be handled under the Code of Responsibility. Unfortunately as of Tuesday the 25th, the Director of Residence Life was urged by the Faculty Executive Committee to actively pursue the implementation of quiet dorms. Because of faculty pressure, Dean Terry directed the Residence Life Office to circulate a survey to every student asking him or her whether or not he/she would live in a "quiet" dorm. As fellow

students we urge you to accurately and honestly complete this survey. This survey will determine whether there is any student support for a quiet dorm.

We feel that establishing quiet dorms would be detrimental to renewing the "spirit of community" alluded to by Dr. Kuykendall in his recent letter to the college community. Quiet dorms would create another dividing line to segregate this campus. Quiet dorms would also avoid the root problem: disrespect and intolerance for others. As students we hope that the faculty will join us in our common goal of creating a more open and responsible community. The results of our SGA approved survey deem further resolutions about quiet hours/dorms unwarranted and unnecessary at this time.

We will be happy to discuss any concerns you may have about this issue. Please feel free to call us: Joe Cook, x6191 or Blair Harkness, x6804.

Not happy
with the newly
proposed
Alcohol pol-
icy? Have an
alternative
idea or pro-
posal? If so
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Call Chris
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