

12

The lack of commitment to black student enrollment

Michael C. Brooks

Mr. Anton Bruce's commentary in the February 20, 1989 edition of *The Davidsonian* was relevant and beneficial by showing the frustration that many blacks have come to feel during their stay at Davidson. Upon reading Mr. Bruce's article, one must remember that his purpose was to give a black perspective of Davidson from the only point of view which is equipped to do so, that of a black student. Although some of what Mr. Bruce wrote about has obviously rubbed a few people the wrong way, as was shown in the concurrent editorial "Perspectives," I as a fellow black student can relate to his intentions and even more importantly to his frustrations.

I would therefore like to extract one portion of his commentary and give an expanded opinion. I am speaking of the commitment made by the administration and trustees to increase black enrollment at Davidson. In truth, the data shows that "lack of commitment" would be a better term to use. The one major document that can be used to comment on Davidson's lack of commitment with regards to black enrollment is the *Report of the Task Force on Racial/Ethnic Concerns to the Davidson College Community*.

The task force, appointed by President Kuykendall in 1984, was composed of 5 students, 4 faculty members, 5 administrators, 3 alumni, 3 trustees, and a recorder. Some of the more familiar names among the group include Dean Terry, Dr. Bruce Jackson, Dr. Malcolm Partin, and our previous Asst. Dean of Student, Paula Moore Miller. The purpose of the Task Force was to seek ways to move toward the goals of Project '87, a set of ideal standards put forth by a group of black students in 1983 to improve black life at Davidson, by taking "a critical look at the environment which the college provides black students and the experience which that environment affords." Project '87 had the following as its goals to be met by 1987: 1) At least 100 black students enrolled, 2) At least 10 black American professors, 3) At least 5 Black Studies courses, 4) A black Dean of Students, and 5) By 1990 a black student percentage reflective of the national percentage of 11-12%.

There are those who would argue that the college was not given a sufficient amount of time with which to meet these goals. However, as of February 23, 1989, only one of these goals has been met and none of the others have shown any signs of a progressive trend. For example, in 1984 Davidson College had 52 black students enrolled. We now have an enrollment of 56 black students. To paraphrase a line from the recent Racism 101 Forum, at this rate it will be almost the 2050 before the first goal is ever met. In 1984

Davidson College had 4 black professors. We now have 5 black professors, 3 of whom are visiting and 1 who will be leaving after this year. In 1884 we had 0 Black Studies courses and to my knowledge we still do not have any Black Studies courses. The one goal which has been met was the placement of a black Dean of Students. I am not implying, of course, that anyone was actually holding their breath for these goals to be met in three years, but it seems that after five years there should be considerably more evidence of progress.

In conclusion, I feel that until a committed attempt is made by this institution to increase black enrollment, there will continue to be frustration, alienation, and even anger unnecessarily experienced by some of its black students. Simply having more blacks here will not cure these problems, but it will definitely be a major step in the right direction.

If any information found in this commentary is misstated, or if there is any present information which might counter my assertion, I welcome any form of correction to better assess the problem of increasing black enrollment at Davidson College.

Michael C. Brooks is a sophomore economics major from Lorton, VA.

RUSH TO DIE, from page 12

Such a channel would be to have OPEC oil producing Arab nations put pressure on the West to bring Rushdie to trial or to curtail the publishing of the book. What the Ayatollah's remarks have done is to further spoil the reputation of the Arabs in the Western world. As it is, they are looked upon as terrorists here.

There was a possibility for the first time in several years of talks between the PLO and Israel, and a chance for America to put pressure on Israel for its continued human rights violations, but the Ayatollah's decision has painted the Arabs again as an unpredictable creed of people. In a Western world where the word "Arab" has become almost synonymous to being a terrorist, the Ayatollah took a hasty and an unnecessarily radical decision.

Rushdie definitely stands at fault; for he being a Muslim

himself knew quite well that the book will not be heralded by the Muslims anywhere in the world. But his fault is not grave enough to take him to the grave. Also, there were better ways of resolving this so called challenge to the Muslim world. The deaths of rioting Muslims in India, Pakistan, the storming of the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad, and now the involvement of the radical Shiite Muslim faction the Hézbollah [which has taken upon it the task of eliminating Rushdie], could all have been avoided if the international Muslim community had taken a more diplomatic approach to the matter. Instead, their delayed action left the issue in the hands of people like the Ayatollah, who seems to have taken upon himself the role of being the "Rambo" of the Islamic world, at a time when we in the West are getting quite bored of seeing *Rambo* reruns.

Nusrat Khan is a freshman from Pakistan.

VANDALS, from page 1

yard; however, Hassell considers the crime "prank theft" since more valuable items, like cassette players, were left alone.

In the advanced painting studios, two students' finished paintings were also kicked in and punctured, and thus totally destroyed.

Hassell contacted both campus security and the county police since the incident was "a crime." The police came and took photographs and fingerprints and have discovered through footprints that three distinct people participated in the crime.

In the future, Hassell will have Lingle Manor locked each night and checked regularly by the campus police. Hassell hopes that since the incidents are "flagrant violations" of the Honor Code, anyone with any information about the incidents will report it to the Dean of Students' office.

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