

The Davidsonian

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LETTERS

Davidson, stand for something

To the editors,

Is Davidson getting swept up in the "politically correct" movement that seems to be the popular trend right now? As the three senators who voted against the October 26 SGA resolution to extend trustee privileges to non-Christians, we certainly hope not.

Most students first choose to come to Davidson because of an atmosphere and character that are distinctively Davidson. For some, it is the integrity of the Honor Code. For others, it is the caring community of the

college. While not all Davidson students cite Davidson's heritage and relationship to the Presbyterian Church as a reason for attending, nearly all will mention a favorable attribute created as a by-product of that very relationship. The Presbyterian Church played an irreplaceable role in the formation of what Davidson is today. To ignore and dismiss that role is to jeopardize the many attributes of this college that are distinctively Davidson.

We came to Davidson knowing it is a Christian

school and happy that it is not a secular school. There are many Williams', Amherst's, and Wesleyan's out there, but Davidson has gained prestige because it is unique and not just another secularized school where "anything goes." If dissatisfied Davidson students read any promotional material before deciding to come here, they should know that Davidson is unique in that it respects tradition. If we had wanted an intensely secular school, we would not have

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Time for a new house

Davidson has never been able to support three women's eating houses. But we have only tried once, and for only one semester. Now is the ideal time to start another house and to keep the three we already have.

Consider: Rusk is strong. It always has been and it always will be. Connor is settling down with overwhelming membership numbers. Warner Hall, on the other hand, does not have an overflow of members, but it is still regarded highly and as an attractive choice. With these three houses meeting the needs of many of our Davidson women, we are almost guaranteed that many freshmen will join Connor, Rusk, and Warner Hall.

But we need another choice. Not only would another house insure more representation for women on Patterson Court Council and SGA, but it would offer a social alternative for women on the court. It would eliminate the overcrowding of the popular houses which keeps women's houses from experiencing the same camaraderie that the fraternities experience.

Davidson upperclassmen can support four houses. Now the question is: can the freshmen? For so long the freshmen class has divided itself into half, has split into two houses, and has left one house with minimal membership. But now a computer will keep a balanced number of freshmen in each house forcing a division of the freshmen class.

Does this system undermine the nature of self-selection, leaving the house selection not to the individual but to a computer? Possibly. Women could adopt an invitation system as employed by the fraternities to divide freshmen. But this system is no more self-selecting than the computer system.

It is important that we attempt to maintain four self-selective houses. After the January self-selection, we will know whether or not the freshmen are willing to participate in a truly self-selected four house Patterson Court for women.

We applaud the energy of the sophomores who are working to start a new house. We have seen similar efforts exhibited two years ago by this year's seniors and we realize the determination it takes to get a new house started. You have your work cut out for you--not only to open a house but also to sustain a four house system.

The history of a women's houses is a short one and should not dictate an impossibility of more than two strong Patterson Court houses.

A Modest Proposal

To the editors,

My joy at receiving the new *Davidsonian* was demolished--and then somewhat--by the letter from Dr. Kaylor, Professor of Religion. I cannot know what the intentions were in writing such an ill-considered, non-parodic piece, but the effect, I think, is discriminatory. The letter claims that the new Telephone Directory cover suggests an image of a dependent woman hanging onto the man at the other end of the line. Of course, this interpretation is only offered to prevent the reader from

seeing the true meaning of the artwork.

The text, addressed to "Sam," is not necessarily addressed to a man, as Dr. Kaylor would try to have us believe. Like many white, heterosexual males in academia, he has created a restrictive interpretation in an effort to cloak the obvious gay/lesbian overtones of the image, overtones Kaylor finds deeply disturbing, perhaps even threatening. After twenty years of coeducation at Davidson, the woman on the phone and "Samantha" are sharing a

moment of pride, a moment Kaylor dismisses as weak only because of his insistence on a phallogocentric, patriarchal--yea, testosterone-infused--view of the world.

Perhaps Kaylor's homophobia would be tolerated at other schools, but at Davidson we are open-minded, multicultural, heterogeneous, politically-aware, super-duper-diverse community of learners. Dr. Kaylor owes this community an apology, plus maybe some Ben & Jerry's.

Sincerely,
C. Andrew Peery

The reality of the invisible man

To the editors,

If I may I'd like to address Rafael and Travis directly regarding their Oct. 25 article.

Rafael and Travis, upon reading your article "Imagine," I sat back on the couch, closed my eyes and did my best to do just that. I pictured myself as a black woman: what I might look like, how that look might change the way I'd be treated, or the way I'd feel on campus and beyond. Of course such a reality, when not one's own, is impossible to capture with the imagination, but I tried anyway hoping it might contribute to my understanding of the Black struggle.

I will never know what it feels like to be an Invisible Man. I often think this is

much to my own disadvantage, and definitely to my loss as a fellow human being of yours. Your feeling of invisibility seems to be ever-present at this school, save in a few circles, and that is a terrible, painful shame.

Does it help for you to know that there are some visible people who know that? Do we have the right to acknowledge your struggle? Sometimes I wonder if, as a part of the visible majority, my role can only be one of silent submission and apology.

Travis, last year you told me that I was brave for asking Ce Scott's advice for whites when faced with "reverse prejudice." I asked a simple and honest question, unaware of the possibility of offending her, which I did.

Asking took no bravery, it took wanting to know; those two things should not be synonymous. Her answer--she didn't know what I meant by reverse prejudice; "Dear Abbey" could give me advice--hurt me, silenced me. I thought about talking to her afterward, but was afraid. Her response excluded me, not unlike your experience in the classroom.

I must thank you; your article has opened the door to the invisible and beckoned me back in. I am once again called to imagine. I have read Ellison's *Invisible Man*, and although visible, I have the ability to close my eyes and see darkness. But more importantly, I can close my eyes and see The Dream.

Sincerely,
Christy Block '94

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