

More letters

"The BSC is anything but racist"

Dear Editors,

I am writing in response to Marshall Smith's comments that appeared in last week's Davidsonian concerning racism. I would like to start by saying that, like Marshall Smith, I have felt uncomfortable a few times, because I felt like I was being classified as an "oppressor" because I am a white male, a traditional power holder. But I stress that these few situations were isolated incidents in one or two discussions. Sure it happens. White people can be prejudged just as black people can be prejudged. But these instances were not supported by some "militant" group.

What really disturbs me is Mr. Smith's description of the BSC as racist. I have only attended Davidson for one semester, but from what I've seen of the BSC so far, it is anything but racist. The BSC has held forums and discussions concerning racism and prejudice. These forums were eye-openers, and really made you aware that the end to racial prejudice is more than just passing laws. People's attitudes must change. People are people.

But that doesn't mean there aren't cultural or ethnic differences. I applaud the BSC's effort to establish a "black" fraternity. When this idea first came up,

there was an uproar about "separate but equal" and reverse discrimination. But when you really think about it, cultural roots and heritage should be celebrated by a common people. The end to racism and prejudice must come through understanding and accepting differences between people, and celebrating those differences, not through the elimination of those differences. Ignorance divides the races. For prejudice to be abolished, differences between people must not only be understood and accepted, but celebrated. What good is unity if individual and group characteristics are wiped out? We must seek unity in diversity. What is more beautiful, a garden of only red roses, or a garden filled with beautiful flowers of every shape, scent, and color?

In conclusion, the actions at the BSC, whether they are organizing panel discussions, pulling for a black fraternity, or setting up a celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday, are simply not racist. Everything that I have seen the BSC do is geared to education, understanding, and the celebration of African American history and culture. I fail to see why Mr. Smith thinks that that constitutes racism.

Ben Wiley, '93

Media Board ensures quality of publications

Dear Editors,

Two weeks ago you wrote an editorial supporting the return to elections as the means of selecting editors for student publications and other forms of media run by students (i.e. WALT). As appointed editors of the 1989-90 yearbook, we strongly disagree with your editorial. We feel that the system of electing editors results in publications of a quality far below what can be achieved by appointed editors.

We base much of our opinion on the publications of the past few years, especially those of the last elected editors of *Quips and Cranks*, *The Davidsonian*, and *The Wildcat Handbook*. The last elected editors for *Quips and Cranks* were those for the 1987-88 book. That book was essentially put together by one person over a two-week period in the summer. She was handed a box of pictures and asked to put together a book. The fact that she wasn't one of the elected editors says a lot.

Recent letters in *The Davidsonian* have criticized some of the material in the paper, but let's face it, at least we have one to read. That's more than can be said about the sporadic publication of the past two years, during which time

the paper was run by elected editors. Finally, consider *The Wildcat Handbook*. The Class of 1991 should remember the last elected editors of this publication. Their handbook came out in October, two months after it was needed. Even though it had gone through two printings, it was of generally poor quality. No one who has seen the last two Handbooks could deny that not only have they come out on time, but the quality has greatly improved.

If the performance of previous editors was not enough to convince you, consider just how fair student elections are for these positions. Most student publications come out once or twice a year; students have little concrete information on which to base their decisions, unlike the election of SGA or Union officers. Students don't know the qualifications or experience of the applicants. The elections thus tend to become popularity contests, and popularity contests don't often produce good quality publications.

We have said all this assuming that students care about these publications. While we're sure that many do, we have

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NBA, NBB and NBC need names now

Dear Editors,

Students moved in more than a year ago. Since then, the Baker Sports Complex has been completed and the baseball team has gained new locker rooms and a concession stand. Compared with these latest constructions, Buildings A, B, and C are no longer NEW. When will the Senior Apartments have names? Must Davidson wait until three benefactors give enough money to merit a plaque on the apartment they

choose?

I am tired of explaining which of the three buildings I live in to other Davidson students, friends, family, and inexperienced pizza deliverers. "Well, building A is closest to the baseball field, B is the southernmost one, and C is sort of across from the cemetery." NBA, NBB, and NBC need names. Soon. Got any ideas?

Ed Matthews
NBC 304

THE DAVIDSONIAN

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Davidson, let's not forget South Africa

The letter from Monroe Gilmour, printed on the opposite page, is a timely and commendable statement which addresses the complacency of Davidson's trustees in regards to the divestment of funds from companies doing business with The Republic of South Africa. The argument that divestment would inhibit rather than provoke positive change, supported by various individuals as well as governments, is unresponsive to the problems at hand. As a consequence apartheid has persisted longer than it should have. In the wait for the South African government to accommodate the native black majority, civilian deaths, detentions, infant deaths due to malnutrition, and general suffering have abounded.

Western nations as a whole have expressed extreme excitement for the recent political, social and economic turmoil in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, which in effect is challenging the merits of communism. On the other hand, South Africa has remained on the back burner for the majority of consciences. Could it be that human rights are more important for particular groups of people than others?

Although the recent release of ANC activist Nelson Mandela marks a pivotal turn in Afrikaaner politics, it is but the least which could be done to bring about change and equal opportunity. Because of this, for those who did impose sanctions, the time to lift them is certainly not now. More evidence of the government's sincerity to eliminate apartheid is needed. The next months will be revealing ones as the world observes South Africa.

What can Davidson do in the meantime? As we host a conference on German reunification, let us consider doing the same for South Africa. One step towards that goal is evident in the upcoming visit of South African Niko Smith of Koinonia, early next week. However, perhaps a series of forums can also be organized to allow discussion of this very important issue.

—m.m.

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