



On Our

“The trust Davidson placed in me filled me with the determination to live up to that trust. The Honor Code became an integral part of my existence in all phases of campus life. By the time I graduated I could not imagine college without it.”

—David Huffines '42, class secretary

“I don't think we ought to make any claims that we are making the perfect society one individual at a time. But by and large in the rank and file you see it time and again: these are people of integrity.

—John Kuykendall '59, president emeritus



Honor

The best ideas are often the simple ones.



"Each Davidson student is honor bound to refrain from stealing, lying about college business, and cheating on academic work."

—*The Red Book*, official student handbook of Davidson College

The Davidson College Honor Code is such a simple, even self-evident concept that one prospective student last year remarked on what could be seen as a "narrowness" in the code.

"It asks students only to *refrain* from specifically, cheating, stealing, and lying, rather than exhorting them to engage in a life of active honesty and goodness," the applicant began, in response to the Honor Code essay question on the application for admission.

Then the applicant came to the heart of the matter, concluding, "However, Davidson's Honor Code seems to be the most effective and respected of any I've seen... A code has succeeded not when the words are perfect, but... when the principles of respect and dignity are so universal..."

That student is now enrolled as a member of the class of 2010.

A close look at the Honor Code today makes clear that Davidson's abiding insistence on—and, yes, exhortation to—the honorable life is alive and well. The Honor Code provides a still point, a center that *can* hold in the "widening gyre" of the human experience, of which William Butler Yeats writes so eloquently in his poem "The Second Coming."

Honor is central to Davidson life on this campus and well beyond it, in a world that demands ever more rigorous attention to right and wrong—from business ethics to political scandal, child rearing to international relations, athletic integrity to intellectual property rights, and on and on.

"What's important is a code of values, not just a code of conduct," says Hansford Epes '61, registrar and professor of humanities and German. "It may sound cliché, but things become cliché because there is some truth to them."

In this issue, the *Davidson Journal* invites you to pause for reflection on how honor informs this college's way of life, and yours.



> An unmonitored library exit is one of many privileges honored by Davidson students like Christoph Pross '10.

A History of Honor

*Honor and shame from no condition rise,
Act well your part: there all the honor lies.*

—Alexander Pope, cited in *The Davidson Handbook*, 1921–22

Many schools have honor codes of varying formulations, degrees, and seriousness. Davidson long ago made the honorable life a central tenet—perhaps *the* central tenet—of its enterprise.

As Mary D. Beaty wrote in *A History of Davidson College*:

By 1870, then, faith in student honor and responsibility in both academic and social matters had taken root at Davidson....

An article on the honor system in the June 1897 *Davidson College Magazine* pictures an unsupervised examination room with textbooks scattered about, but with “an invisible Presence, the Honor of the Class,” on guard....

“Davidson frankly avows her belief that Character is more important than Education, that Sincerity, Honor, and Purity are more valuable than Knowledge, ... true breadth of culture is found in the harmonious development of body, mind, and moral nature.” So wrote Pres. Henry Louis Smith in the *Davidson College Bulletin* for October 1904....

In the spring of 1910 the student body organized a student council of fifteen elected members to which “every student in College is on his honor to report all violations of honor or other practices which are a nuisance [sic] and disgrace to the student-body of Davidson College....”

It was these historical underpinnings that by the middle of the twentieth century had led to the unicameral student government/honor council upon which President Emeritus John Kuykendall '59 sat in his undergraduate days. It was a hard, and sometimes harsh, system of a single sanction: expulsion. And a student then expelled from Davidson had slim chance of acceptance at any comparable institution.

“I was delighted to come back (as president in 1984) and find that the Honor Council and the procedures were... a more balanced approach to things, with gradation of sanctions and the chance to come back to Davidson and redeem oneself,” says Kuykendall. He recalls that his senior year witnessed the separation of powers between the student government and a discrete Honor Council. That refinement was a harbinger of further evolution to come.

Grace and redemption—a quality of mercy, if you will—are concepts that have infused Davidson’s approach to justice from earliest days. For instance, Beaty wrote in a footnote on 1840s faculty hearing procedures for alleged student misdeeds: “If (the student) denied the charge, the faculty would accept his word unless the evidence against him was very strong.”

Today, the range of sanctions and the procedural safeguards that have grown to strengthen and protect the Honor Code help ensure that it reaches its fullest teaching potential—for those who break it as well as those who abide by it, says Dean of Students Emeritus Will Terry '54.

“I think having only a single sanction eliminates the educational value,” says Terry, who was the new dean of students in the early seventies when the Code of Disciplinary Procedures was developed. “I think you believe in grace and you believe in forgiveness, and you learn from your

mistakes. And I believe the Honor Council is less loathe to find a person guilty if they know it's not going to ruin the person's life."

Front-Loaded Trust

"... the credibility of a Davidson degree rests not only on the academic reputation of the college but also on the quality of the total life of the college community."

—The Red Book

Most students who have to leave the college community to reflect on a violation of honor come to cherish the opportunity to remain a part of the community, says Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students Tom Shandley.

"Almost without exception, students will return to Davidson," says Shandley, in his thirteenth year at Davidson. "And as hard as it might be at the moment, you will be welcomed back.

"The success of the Honor Code at Davidson in some ways remains a real mystery to me," he continues. "Despite rampant cheating in high schools and the temptations of the Internet, we have not had any increase in the rate of academic cheating. To be trusted at the front end, to have the college say, 'We believe in your integrity,' is a powerful statement. It can have severe consequences, but that only happens twelve to fifteen times a year."

Some of the hardest cases are the ones when peer reports peer, friend reports friend, says Kathy Bray Merrell '85, associate dean of students.

"I think it is one of the hardest things they do in their life, but they do it. The cases bear that out," she says. "I do think that students are fiercely protective of the Honor Code."

Truth comes out sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly. For instance, Shandley recently fielded a call from someone who graduated years ago, and needed to release the burden of a long-ago desperation that had led to cheating. Another time, a student came to the dean's office a week before graduation, after a panicked opening of a textbook during a closed-book test and said, "I cannot walk across that stage knowing that I cheated." So, the student did not walk, instead making the hard call to

parents and loved ones to announce that graduation would have to come after a price was paid to honor.

At whatever pace it works for a given student, the undergraduate experience at Davidson is an incubator, says N.C. State Rep. Grier Martin '91.

"We're practicing an honorable way to live, even if it's a test-tube environment, and the implications are huge," says Martin. "There's a tendency to say the Honor Code is a failure because there are violations. That's not really the measure. Just as students might fail a chemistry test, some will fail a test of honor at some point. Honor is a muscle, and if you don't exercise it, you won't be able to call upon it when you need it. Davidson is like being in the weight room."

Good Sports

*You play a fair game,
You play a square game...*

—Davidson Fight Song

On the NCAA Division I playing fields and courts of Davidson, the honorable life most often takes the form of exemplary leadership, says Jim Murphy '78, director of athletics. It is a traditional kind of leadership evidenced in strong team captains, surely.

"One of the most traumatic moments I ever had in my life was a first-year German class where it was a closed-book take home. It was midnight in the all-night study room, and I finished studying, put my books on the shelf, opened the test, and discovered it was a vocabulary test.... My grade on that test will forever prove that I did not seize the opportunity of reopening the book. I tell that story at Honor Council orientation every year."

—Harrison Marshall '79

Charlotte attorney and general counsel to Davidson College



> Abandon all backpacks, ye who enter here! Exam-time, cram-time backpacks pile up perennially, cloaked in honor, at the north end of Chambers.



But it is also broader and deeper leadership of morale that extends from one student to the next, on or off the field, in or out of the classroom.

"We're interested in attracting young men and women to Davidson College of the highest caliber, and the Honor Code creates an environment attractive to students who have proven themselves to be great leaders—or who *will* prove themselves to be great leaders," says Murphy.

Bill Mebane '51 put the broad question of honor and leadership on the playing fields succinctly in a recent class note: "After the commotion in big university athletic programs, aren't we glad we went to Davidson?"

The school's reputation is well-known beyond the college family, too.

"The Southern Conference has a number of fine academic institutions," *CBS SportsLine.com* Senior Writer Gregg Doyel wrote during March Madness 2006, "but nothing like Davidson."

After the Davidson-versus-Goliath game of Wildcats and Buckeyes, the *Charlotte Observer's* Tom Sorensen offered kudos for a tournament and a game well played. "The seniors were a joy to watch and to spend time with. There was honor in the way the coaches coached and the team played. Even the fans were impressive, making more noise in the first half than their Ohio State counterparts whose campus is an hour away," Sorensen wrote.

Good Business

"There have always been people who don't think the Honor Code works because they don't live in a world where it works. That depends on what kind of person you want to be when you get out."

—Will Terry '54

Dean of Students Emeritus

In the business world, Davidson's Honor Code often bucks the conventional cynicism of today's ethics headlines.

"The Honor Code is kind of a no-brainer in terms of staying grounded and keeping the long view and the right view in perspective," says John Chidsey '83, CEO of Burger King.

Earlier in his career, Chidsey came to a now-infamous merger of two large companies, in one of which substantial accounting

"I do believe there is a direct parallel between corporate ethics and the Honor Code. What I remember about the Honor Code was that it was all about individual integrity, ethics, and accountability within a framework of Davidson's institutional values."

—Gary Long '73
Bahrain, COO Investcorp

irregularities soon came to light. "We were growing so fast, we could have swept that under the rug, but we never hesitated," he said, recalling the plane trip to Washington, D.C., to come clean with federal officials.

"The Honor Code and the way Davidson treated you and the way you treated others at Davidson sort of sits in the back of your mind through the years," Chidsey says. "I wish that more schools instilled and inculcated that sort of code of honor or way to live life."

To that end, John and Lisa Robinson Chidsey '83 established the Chidsey Leadership Program at Davidson in 2004. The program is a broad-based, interdisciplinary effort to develop leadership skills, while encouraging engagement in civic leadership, alumni leadership, and business and other pre-professional development programs.

More business schools are starting to look at real-world ethics from a similarly interdisciplinary viewpoint. *Harvard Magazine* reports on the trend at Harvard Business School in its July/August 2006 issue. The school's Shad Professor of Business Ethics Joseph L. Badaracco, Jr. offers an elective course, "The Moral Leader," that consistently draws a crowd to study ethics and leadership issues through literature. "I think the students sense a lack in their own training," Badaracco tells the magazine. "The rest of the curriculum focuses on analytical techniques and doesn't leave much room for self-reflection."



> Self-scheduled exams, an honored blessing, help assuage Davidson students' blue book blues.

And R. Glenn Hubbard, dean of Columbia's Graduate School of Business, offers this advice to today's teenagers in an article about ethics in business in the June 26 issue of *U.S. News & World Report*: "Pick a good liberal arts school, and learn how to think."

Live and Learn

"...responsible maturity is more likely to develop when members of the college community are both free and obligated to wrestle with principles of conduct and to accept full responsibility for their own actions and decisions."

—*The Red Book*

The educational value of the Honor Code, perhaps particularly in the liberal arts context, is a theme that surfaces time and again in conversations on the topic.

"In our first-year courses, we tend to be more forgiving and use it (application of the Honor Code) as a teaching experience," says Mary Reynolds Babcock Professor and Chair of History Sally McMillen. "It depends on the level of the course and what year the student is at Davidson. I really try to put a tremendous fear in them, because in our profession, it doesn't matter if you *intend* to (plagiarize) or not."

A professor's experienced judgment about intent can be critical. Once, a student of hers left off a footnote—purely through negligence, McMillen suspected. Rather than putting the case forth right away to the

Honor Council, she called him in to her office for stern, immediate, and constructive remedy.

"He was mortified when he saw his mistake, but... I knew him to be an honest person," she says simply, with the assurance that Davidson's close student-faculty relationships afford.

But even in the relatively idyllic intellectual ambience of Davidson, the issue of plagiarism in the cyber age—intentional or not—requires constant vigilance.

"Until you say that honor is honor and plagiarism is what it is, you're not going to quit biting your own tail," says President Bobby Vagt.

From that standpoint, the simplicity of the Honor Code's language is a good counterweight to all the Googly minutiae that the Internet has introduced to the plagiarism scene in recent years, says Honor Council President Bryant Kirkland '07.

"The wisdom has been to err on the side of broadness, and trust that people at Davidson are intelligent enough to apply the broad principles of the code to specific instances without spelling everything out," says Kirkland.

He points to the simple, precise, and notably brief passage from the Red Book that defines cheating, stealing, and lying.

"That's as specific as it gets," Kirkland says. "That's as specific as it needs to get." ♦

"I sat absolutely stunned for a long minute, and then mumbled something like 'I don't believe I can answer that question.' Seventeen years after leaving Davidson, that great Davidson Honor Code was still with me! At 91 years of age, I have thought of that incident many times since...."

—**Frank M. Toole '36**,

recounting an instance of potential cheating on the German driver's license exam while serving in the Army in 1953

A Code for All Seasons

How It Works

Most of the dozen or so Honor Code cases at Davidson in a given year are cases of admitted guilt, says Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students Tom Shandley.

"There is a moment when students are confronted with the evidence, when you see most violations are not malicious," he says. "A student felt backed into a corner and did something careless and dishonorable. But, generally, they won't then deny it or try to back away."

The dean of students role at the beginning of the hearing process is to determine, with investigative work by student solicitors, if there is enough evidence to bring charges.

"I help set the table," sums up Shandley.

In cases that proceed to hearing, the Honor Council alone determines guilt or innocence, if necessary, and then imposes sanction(s) ranging from a "high minimum" upward, says Bryant Kirkland '07, chair of the Honor Council. A typical starting point for a plagiarism violation would be a recommended "F" in the course and "authorized withdrawal" from other courses that semester. That effectively retroactive suspension might then be followed by a semester or more of suspension from campus, sometimes with a requirement to formally apply for reinstatement. Provisions for non-academic violations include social probation, restitution, fines, community service, etc.

It is not unusual for the Honor Council to spend six or more hours on a case, late into the night in Phi or Eu Hall or in the Dean of Students Office conference room. Present are the Honor Council chair, the vice chair, six council members chosen randomly from the pool of thirty, any alternates, two defense advisors, two student solicitors, the accused, and the accuser, if applicable. Outside witnesses are present only during actual testimony, and there are no administrators and no lawyers in the room.

A student has five days to appeal an Honor Council decision to the Review Board. That board can sustain the verdict and

sanction, change either or both (but not increase the severity of penalty), or send the case back to the council. The Review Board consists of two students elected separately from the regular Honor Council, and three faculty members drawn from the Student Conduct Council (see below). If an Honor Code sanction involves suspension, the accused has the right to appeal to the president, who can alter the sanction but not the verdict. That is rare.

"When I was in the president's office, I changed three in the course of thirteen years and was probably wrong on two of them," says President Emeritus John Kuykendall '59.

Truth of the Matter

The concept of "clear and convincing evidence," coupled with "burden of proof" and "standard of proof" is the point where justice and honor meet in Davidson's system, says Harrison Marshall '79. Marshall, a partner at Helms Mulliss Wicker in Charlotte, is general counsel to the college and advisor to the Honor Council.

The standard of proof in a criminal trial, he explains, is "guilt beyond a reasonable doubt," and the burden is on the state. In a civil trial, the standard is "preponderance of the evidence," and the burden is on the plaintiff.

"The Davidson Honor System is somewhere in between," says Marshall.

Davidson's Honor Council system differs in another subtle but important way from a legal trial, as well as from many other college and university judicial systems: The burden of proof at Davidson is on the truth itself. In other words, *both* sides in the case—represented by two student solicitors and two defense advisors—are explicitly instructed to search for the full truth of the matter, rather than merely the best legalistic interest of the accused or the accuser. That means that Davidson defense advisors are duty-bound as well as honor-bound to report any evidence of guilt that they might discover in the course of their work, says Luke Farmer '04, who was a defense advisor.

"People have told us how meaningful

*"On my honor
I have neither
given nor
received
unauthorized
information
regarding this
work, I have
followed and
will continue
to observe all
regulations
regarding it,
and I am
unaware of
any violation
of the Honor
Code by others."*

**The Honor Pledge
of Davidson College**

it was for them to have us present, not to defend the mistakes they had made, but to lend a listening ear and to serve as a voice of compassion at such a rough point in their lives," says Farmer.

In Honor Council orientation work, Marshall says he often takes a lecture and Q&A approach.

"It's good to show them that this is not a mathematical exercise," he says. "Students ask if you can convict in a 'he said/she said' case. The answer is yes, because you can also look at motives and credibility, you can use your judgment and your common sense. You can reach the point of clear and convincing evidence. You might *not*, but you *can*..."

Balance of Powers

The Code of Responsibility and the Honor Code, taken together, present a two-tiered system with a single range of sanctions, says Ernest Jeffries, the assistant dean of student life who handles Code of Responsibility cases.

"The Code of Responsibility is based upon the belief that Davidson's educational purpose can best be advanced in a context which emphasizes the responsible use of freedom, as opposed to license..." says the *Red Book*.

Students who admit to a Code of Responsibility infraction go before the Judicial Committee, composed of Jeffries, three randomly selected Honor Council members, and a faculty position filled by a member of the Student Conduct Council, a legislative body concerned with the broader governance of the honor system.

Cases of sexual misconduct are handled by a separate board. "As in other matters, Davidson College students are expected to live up to a higher standard of conduct with regard to sexual activity than those set by state and federal law," the *Red Book* states. The college actively supports a student's right to press criminal charges, and also makes available a range of mediation and on-campus adjudication that could make a criminal trial unnecessary. The possibility of proceeding to criminal charges remains always at the discretion of the accuser throughout the process. Sexual misconduct cases that proceed to hearing by the Sexual Misconduct Board run an average of about two per year, says Shandley.

Due Process

All the procedural pieces of the honor system fit together much more tightly today than they did in the years of a more authoritarian approach by the administration says the Hon. James Dickson Phillips, Jr. '43, retired United States Circuit Judge. As a newly minted attorney early in his career, he recalls being "appalled" at the "lack of any real rudiments of protections and due process guarantees" in the Honor Code of his day. By the early seventies, he was helping craft the Code of Disciplinary Procedures that would carry the Honor Code forward.

"We approached it with a view to tighten it up and give it some more regularity, without shunting aside the normal college administration's powers, those in particular of the dean of students," recalls Phillips. "And, all of this is ultimately subject to litigation in the state and federal courts, so what we were concerned about was to provide a good record that would be the basis for any attempt later to litigate the issue."

That aspect of care in procedural matters is arguably even more important in today's litigious society, says Marshall.

"As the college's lawyer," says Marshall, "the reason I like to do orientations and mock trials is to make sure the process is being carried out according to the Code of Disciplinary Procedures."

The strong procedural structure also helps attenuate faculty or parental tensions that inevitably surface from time to time.

"I think we've passed through a couple of seasons when a number of the faculty are somewhat disenchanted," John Kuykendall says. "I think it all pretty much evens out over time."

From the standpoint of the dean—recalling Shandley's "setting the table analogy"—the Code of Disciplinary Procedures shores up that position as keeper of the process.

"I deal with the before and aftermath," says Shandley, "and the student's reactions. And the parents..."

Parental involvement is one area where the simplicity of days of yore clearly "no longer obtains," says Kuykendall. "When I was sitting on the Honor Council, if a parent had shown up in the Dome Room of



Chambers, we'd have told them to get lost. It was none of their business."

That's not likely to happen today, and parental involvement is a real factor to be considered, says Dean of Students Emeritus Will Terry '54.

"There are parents who want their children not to be held responsible for their actions—which, I guess, is why they act irresponsibly. And I have seen parents box their children in in such a way that the student cannot say, 'I did it,'" says Terry, recalling one student many years ago whose sense of honor as a Davidson student was already so well-developed that he felt at one point he had to apologize for his father's behavior.

"The student was willing to take the punch for his own mistake," recalls Terry, "and ultimately, he took it and went.

"And he came back." ♦

—John Syme

A Matter of Academic Honor:

Hansford Epes speaks on our community of trust

Every August, as Orientation winds up toward the start of the semester, Registrar Hansford Epes '61 stands before the incoming class to explain a few things. Moments later, each of them will sign the Davidson College Honor Code. But first—as registrar, as professor of German and of humanities, as an alumnus—Epes speaks to these teenagers about the threshold they are crossing into young adulthood and membership in this academic community.

Against a backdrop of wild, wild West information-gathering on the Internet, Epes offers a pedagogical examination of plagiarism that could stop a train. Most importantly, he establishes the whole of today's vital Honor Code as something greater than the sum of its parts.

Imagine yourself once again as a freshman, happy and excited, a little bit grown up and a little bit homesick, as ready for college as you can be, seated with some 460 of your new best friends in the appropriately dramatic space of the Duke Family Performance Hall. Professor Epes takes the lectern. After establishing comfort and context with his audience, Epes moves deftly into the well-charted territory of his remarks with characteristic dry wit and crystalline candor.

He says...

Many teachers emphasize that revising is part of writing, leaving you to wonder, for instance, whether revising a paper written for one class might produce an acceptable paper for another—it doesn't; or whether citing your sources can

safely wait until the final revision of your work, like some sort of non-essential decoration—it can't...

I assume that you have thought about plagiarism before. I suspect that your thoughts on the subject have become unavoidably cluttered; and I hope that if I can ask you to do anything this evening, it is to clear away the clutter and get to the principle: plagiarism, unlike other writing errors, is a matter of honor....

In addition to principles, you might even consider a practical rule—for which I adapt a phrase we may consider common knowledge: Do ask; do tell. Ask your teachers what their expectations are; tell what your source was if you have any doubt whether you need to...

The Honor Code is not a set of rules, but an affirmation of ourselves as a community. That affirmation does not separate advantages from responsibilities, because we cannot justly rejoice in opportunity without welcoming the responsibilities that accompany it. The Honor Code is a seamless web; its core values of trust and responsibility bind together all of its strands. Since we are first and foremost an academic community, the main supporting strand is the academic one. If it unravels, the trust that allows self-scheduled exams or take-home tests goes with it; if that trust were to disappear, the damage to the community would be disastrous.

Ours is a community of learners. We help each other to learn, and one ultimate purpose of citing and documenting sources lies in helping fellow learners. As a community of

learners, we value ideas highly, and we show our gratitude to the many who help us shape our own....

Ours is a community of service. In a society that happily has come to understand that each of us lives in the community of all humankind, and of nature as well, we may be tempted to believe that the communities we speak of serving are in various ways other than those in which we routinely live. But we do live in the communities of a morning class, or an afternoon seminar, or a lab at whatever time. We serve those communities by being models of taking responsibility for our own actions and our own work and by expressing our gratitude to others for helping us learn.

Ours is a community of trust. Trust means that we have expectations about each other. But with matters of academic honor, as of all other kinds, our highest expectations should be of ourselves: to embody the values we admire, to make the Honor Code our own, and to be able to say—in my case, nearly fifty years since I first signed the pledge that you will sign this evening—that the Honor Code does far more than express an ideal. I can tell you, on my honor, that it has for longer than even I can remember served and enriched and enlightened the Davidson community. I trust you to cherish its benefits, to treasure its responsibilities, and to keep its light aglow. ♦



Honoring Bronze:

Jean d'Aire, Auguste Rodin, and the Davidson College Honor Code

C. Shaw Smith, Jr.

Professor of Art History and Humanities

What does a hollow bronze sculpture, Rodin's *Jean d'Aire* in the Belk Visual Arts Center, have to do with the Davidson College Honor Code?

Well, everything.

In 1347 during the Hundred Years War, Edward III of England held the city of Calais, France, under siege for eleven months. To avoid the complete decimation of the city, six of the town burghers were forced to surrender to the English army, on the condition that their coastal city would be spared. The French men came to the center of the city, barefoot and bareheaded, in long shirts with nooses around their necks, carrying the keys of the city. Imprisoned by the English forces, they were to be hanged or possibly taken to England. Their fates were unknown as they marched grimly toward their destiny.

In 1884 the citizens of Calais commissioned Auguste Rodin, one of the greatest of all French sculptors, to commemorate the event in which these ordinary men had so selflessly represented their sense of honor and duty. Ironically, this commission coincided with the era in which the Davidson Honor Code was taking root.

Jean d'Aire, "a very rich and much respected citizen and father of two daughters," was one of the Calais burghers. In the straining muscles of the clenched jaws, the tension of the bent posture that creates a deep rut in the lower back, and the almost prehensile feet that cling to the ground of *la*

bonne terre française, the artist chose to show Jean's personal anxiety and reluctance at the very moment of his dedication to duty. Using the naturalistic aspects of a laborer from northern France, he emphasizes the specifics of the model's body: a torn muscle in the neck of a man who carries heavy burdens, the winging shoulder blades of his flexed back, and the massive calves and carved thighs of a regular rider. Rodin even includes a curious detail to focus on the specifics of this particular man's body, a benign tumor that, because of diet and climate, was often seen in the abdominal areas of people from this part of France.

But against that system of detailed naturalism, Rodin does something extraordinary with this ordinary man: he places Jean's left arm in a position completely incompatible with the rest of his body. The psychological tension becomes dramatically physical. The arm itself maintains its intricate, precise musculature and coursing veins, but its naturalism collides with the naturalism of the trunk and legs, creating competing natures, just as the enlarged hands and the huge groping feet contradict the otherwise appropriate human proportions, even within the monumental scale of the body. It is precisely at this incongruous juncture of the abstraction and naturalism of the work that the viewer comes to what Rodin has commemorated.

The natural inclination for Jean d'Aire and his fellow burghers is somehow to avoid this clash with abstract ideals of honor and duty. At this moment, Jean d'Aire shifts from being an

historical person, or a nineteenth-century model, or even a figure of universal humanism, to become the reflection of our own daily existence. The absolute tension of an ordinary human being caught between nature and abstraction, between the flickering light of surfaces and the rigidity of form, between home and estrangement, between self and community, brings us immediately back to the Davidson Honor Code. Rodin's figures are everyday people who are not placed on high pedestals, but who are willing to do the right thing even when it is contrary to their personal interests. Finding the balance between abstract ideals and natural proclivities is a courageous and challenging act for any of us, be it as individuals or as an institution.

Perhaps this college is not the real world, but it is a world that we strive to bring about somewhere between the real and the ideal. Rodin reminds us that these acts of conscience, seen and unseen, public and private, should be a part of our campus fabric which is as strong and yet as vulnerable as bronze. The work's green patina speaks to the tradition of honor at Davidson; its hollowness reminds us of the necessity of rededication to fulfilling that promise.

The sculpture speaks to us every day in these extraordinary ways. Listen. ♦



> *Jean d'Aire, Nu, 1886*
Auguste Rodin
Bronze
Gift of The Pepper Family
Davidson College Collection
Tom and Katherine Belk Visual Arts Center



Ethics & Culture

or How the Davidson Honor Code Changed My Life

Elizabeth Kiss '83

President, Agnes Scott College

Davidson's Honor Code spoiled me for life. You never quite get over being part of a community where there is a pervasive, unapologetic commitment to a set of moral norms and you are not only *expected*, but *trusted*, to live up to them. In fact, there is something a bit crazy about honor codes: they appear to flout the laws of human psychology. "Give them an inch, and they'll take a mile"—that's supposed to be the smart way of approaching human behavior. Yet honor codes assume the opposite. They take a leap of faith and assume that if you trust people, they will become trustworthy.

What makes an honor code work, though, is a persistent commitment to creating and sustaining a culture of integrity, and that is something Davidson (and my new school, Agnes Scott) does extremely well. You have to talk about it, create meaningful ceremonies and rituals about it, make sure your faculty and staff buy in to it, and talk about it some more, until it becomes a core part of your institution's DNA. At our orientation, C. Shaw Smith talked up the Honor Code with his inimitable vaudevillian flair (while shooting blanks from a pistol, if memory serves). So did President Spencer and Dean Terry and—most crucially—our hall counselors. We were introduced to the notion of unproctored and (gasp!) self-scheduled exams. By the time our first trimester exams rolled around we were so intent on living up to the Code that we agonized over whether it was all right to ask someone "How're you doing?" during exam week. Over time, those anxieties eased and we realized that ordinary human pleasantries were not *verboten*. In fact, the way of life made possible by the Honor Code—leaving books and notes in the library, taking self-scheduled exams—came to seem normal.

This is where the part about being spoiled for life comes in. After Davidson, I found myself continually surprised by situations where people did not trust me and acutely aware of the corrosive effects of such distrust. Frankly, I resented being

proctored in graduate school (particularly after the bizarre experience of having one of my Oxford exam proctors fall noisily asleep and then, shortly after awakening and announcing that our time was nearly up, stride up to me and utter the following bewildering question: "Black onyx?" I stared up at him in total perplexity until it slowly dawned on me that he was inquiring about the stone on my ring).

Gradually, over time, I came to realize that the Davidson Honor Code had not only shaped my image of a good community but was influencing my life's work. Ten years ago, when I was given the opportunity to help establish an ethics center at Duke, I was introduced to an organization, the Center for Academic Integrity (CAI), whose mission is to promote academic integrity on campuses across the country and beyond. As luck, fate, (or the Presbyterians would say, predestination) would have it, CAI needed a home, and we were able to bring them to Duke's Kenan Institute for Ethics. Through this partnership I came to know remarkable students, faculty, and administrators close to home and around the world who were championing academic integrity at their schools and engaging in the difficult labor of culture change. At Duke, we were able to help launch a significant effort to strengthen the honor code culture that included the drafting of a new code, the introduction of a code signing ceremony, the establishment of a Provost's Academic Integrity Council, and a commitment to regularly assess the state of academic integrity through campus-wide surveys. Later, I was able to apply many lessons from these experiences to the Kenan Institute's work in business ethics, which helps companies craft ethics codes and infuse them through their everyday policies and practices.

CAI's founder, Rutgers professor Don McCabe, who has conducted academic integrity surveys with tens of thousands of high school and college students, likes to refer to the "20-60-20 rule." Twenty percent of students, he estimates, won't cheat no matter what, because they have a strong sense of personal integrity and ethics.

> *Unattended apples (facing page) and a phalanx of community bikes (below) for general campus use are everyday reminders of the Honor Code's cherished liberties.*

Twenty percent will cheat, no matter what, because we will always have those among us who bend or break the rules to their own advantage. But the 60 percent in the middle—most of us—will respond to cultural cues and behave accordingly. The trick is to foster cultures of integrity that, over time, might expand the top 20 percent who have internalized a strong ethical code.

This complex interplay between societal or organizational culture and personal ethics continues to fascinate me. And I am continually struck by the power of efforts that, like Davidson's Honor Code, are founded on the conviction that, if we articulate high ideals and trust people to live up to them, we won't be disappointed. Indeed, I see this spirit working magnificently in places far more wounded and challenging than Davidson, North Carolina, such as in South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

In a few days, I will speak to the Agnes Scott College Class of 2010 at their honor code signing ceremony. As I look back on my own first-year experience at Davidson almost twenty-five years ago, and reflect on how it has shaped me, all I can say is: Thank you! ♦

For more information on the Center for Academic Integrity, please see <http://www.academicintegrity.org>

The Girl

Advanced poetry class. Students around a table, the girl at the end, thinking with the tip of her pen between her teeth. I loved her poems, her slightly sensual,

off-beat love poems, with just a twist of irony. One November afternoon she read a new one, a step beyond. "It's beautiful," I said. The class agreed.

The trouble was it wasn't hers. Another student found the text and brought it to my office door. The copy burned in my hand. This could not be, I said.

She was good. Good enough to hold us all with her own words. There was no need for this. I paused, but had no choice. At the trial her parents glared at me. They thought I had

betrayed her. Before she left, she came to me and said she could not bear it if I hated her. I hugged her. "Come back," I said, "and we will start again. I believe in you. I love you."

Two years later, her exile served, she wrote again, better than ever. She and the four others in the new class road-tripped with me, told stories, laughed, recited poems together

behind the slight headlights of the car.

I still hear from her at Christmas. Yesterday a card came with a picture of her daughter whose face shone with her mother's pensive smile.

—Dana Professor Emeritus of English Anthony S. Abbott





The Honor Code: A Longer View

Gill Holland

Professor Emeritus of English

When I was invited to contribute some thoughts on the Honor Code to this *Davidson Journal*, the first thing that came to mind was that the Honor Code opens up possibilities for better ways of testing, and that means better learning. No test is a good test if the test-takers don't learn something. The Honor Code opens the way for better tests, tests during which students can learn and not just show how good their memory is.

Giving open-book, open-notebook tests in class and as take-homes, and providing study questions in advance all go hand-in-hand with the Honor Code. In my judgment, the quality of thinking in an atmosphere of trust changes into a better, more joyful kind of learning. By contrast, if you have ever had to proctor a test or take one that was proctored, you may agree that that set-up is in fact designed for *mistrust*.

The enemies of the Honor Code are real. It is true that a sly one could play tricks on us. But not if we continue to build on our strengths. These strengths are trust and respect—for those around us and for those who have gone before and will come after. This foundation is built on friendship and on principle. This is personal, "I-Thou" business, not impersonal allegiance to some abstract code. It is the friendship Shakespeare wrote about in Sonnet 30, which is a meditation on the heavy losses of life and on their restoration: "But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,/All losses are restored and sorrows end." (There is strong evidence that this friend is the poet's Savior.) This is the constancy that trust and respect bring.

The word "principle" may suggest legal systems. The word "system" can be dangerous, indeed enslaving; but if the rules are sound, following the system can save us from the misjudgment of a few. I remember serving on the committee that heard appeals. In one case the student solicitors had simply not followed procedural rules; in the judgment of the committee the trial

had been unfair, and the conviction was overturned. In a second case the charge was plagiarism. Once it was made clear that plagiarism meant borrowing with intent to deceive, the charges were dropped. The "system"—this system—worked.

Failure to document sources properly out of honest ignorance is not a matter of honor; it calls for a lower grade, not an honor conviction. Plagiarism is indeed a vile weed. But like run-on sentences and dangling participles—lapses that English teachers like to nail—poor documentation can be straightened out easily. Asking the students to turn in rough drafts ahead of time is a good way to clear out the weeds.

The college has changed since I arrived in 1961. No institution is static. Yet I like to think that the Honor Code reflects the light of the torch lit when Davidson was given its motto, "*Alenda Lux Ubi Orta Libertas.*" "Let Learning Be Cherished Where Liberty Has Arisen." The words "lux orta" seem to refer back to Matthew 4:16 in the vulgate Bible, which Marshall Ney would have known. Matthew quotes Isaiah to show the fulfillment of the prophecy that in Jesus a "light is sprung up" for the people who "sat in the region [of darkness] and the shadow of death" (Isa. 9:1–2; KJV). In the next verses Jesus calls Peter and Andrew, James and John, His first disciples, to follow Him.

The vast continent of North America must have appeared to be a shadowy region indeed in the 1830s, but no more so than the world is today. The graduates of Davidson College carry a light into the world. It is made brighter by the Honor Code. We must never take it for granted. ♦

> *Venerable and historic Philanthropic and Eumenean Halls remain central to the life of the college, from nighttime Honor Council meetings to political debates as pictured (facing page) during election season 2004. (above left) Gill Holland in class.*





> (above) An honorably serendipitous lost and found system—with emphasis on the “found”—is a way of life at Davidson.

> (above right) Self-scheduled, self-monitored exams are a staple of student life at Davidson.



Distinctly Davidson:

Known, Trusted, and Loved

Meg Kimmel '77

Director of College Communications

“What is it with you people?” I hear this question, or some form of it, time and again.

Maybe you do, too. I hear it most often at Davidson weddings. Another guest looks at me intently, brows knitted, hand on my elbow: “What is it with Davidson? Why do you all *love* each other so much?”

Usually the first thing any alumnus or alumna will mention when asked about their Davidson experience is the Honor Code. I have come to believe that the Code forms the taproot of our exceptional devotion to the college and each other.

The Honor Code obliges us not to lie, cheat, or steal, and to report any incident in which the Code may have been broken. Most of us were raised with these rules, minus the piece about turning someone in. “Tattling,” in fact, was *verboden* in my family, and could bring a stiffer smack than the reported offense. But telling is key to the Davidson code, and, like the thorn on a rose, may be that ugly and painful part of its structure that protects its life and its beauty.

The honor that forms the foundation of academic life here is no secret. We talk about it all the time, and many students are attracted to Davidson specifically because of the Honor Code. They arrive ready to embrace it, and that readiness is cemented during orientation and built upon during every semester of academic work. They—like the rest of us—welcome the challenge of honorable behavior, but are wary of its prickly flipside.

Most honor violations are self-reported, but a few times a year, a distressed but courageous student, teacher, or staff member makes that call, takes that long walk to the dean’s office, and says the words. Bloody from the thorny part of the code, they uphold it still.

At Davidson we are fully recognized and respected as individuals, but the pledge we take—not just as freshmen, but daily, when we are performing and handing in our work of one kind or another—binds us not only to the fellow sitting next to us, but to all who came before and all who follow. It is understood that if you break this Code, you hurt not only yourself, but everyone, present, past, and future. Weighty.

But far from heavy, the Honor Code—its ethical beauty and its ethical challenge—is the leavening that creates our unique community. It lightens us. It civilizes us. The way to live here may not always be easy, but it is very clear. Grounded in the demands and lifted by the freedoms of living by this Code, we continue to cherish one another and our shared experience in this place. Like the hard work and hard play, the hard truth binds us through the years. At weddings or work, at reunions and meetings, and at funerals and memorial services, we encounter the familiar face of our community. We feel known. We feel trusted. We feel loved.

That, my friend the wedding guest, is the answer to your question. ♦



Honorable Intentions

A cultural etymology

Jeanne Neumann

Associate Professor of Classics

Honor (also spelled *honos*) in Latin meant “high esteem or respect accorded to superior worth or rank” but also a “high public or political office” (Oxford Latin Dictionary).

The progression of political offices leading to the consulate was called the *cursus honorum*, or course of offices. Honor was, to paraphrase Cicero, the reward of public virtue, of approbation in the eyes of one’s fellows, whether in public office (where the office was both a mark of the elected honor and an assumption of further honorable behavior) or in one’s dealings with others.

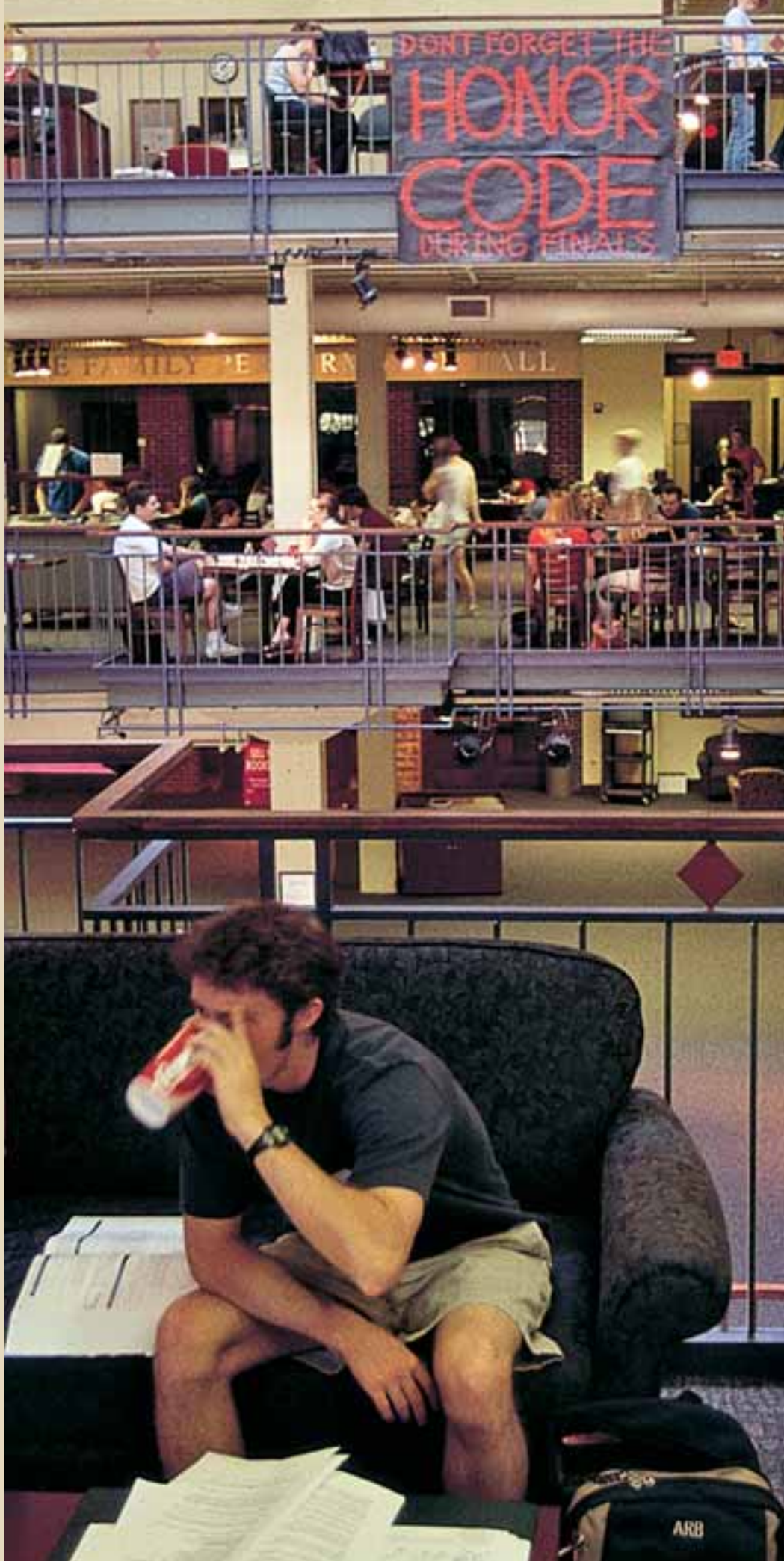
Ecce, with my translation:

Cicero, *Brutus*, 281:

Hoc modo, inquam. cum honos sit praemium virtutis iudicio studioque civium delatum ad aliquem, qui eum sententiis, qui suffragiis adeptus est, is mihi et honestus et honoratus videtur. qui autem occasione aliqua etiam invitis suis civibus nactus est imperium ... hunc nomen honoris adeptum, non honorem puto.

In this way, I say, since honor is the reward of virtue conferred on someone by the judgment and enthusiasm of the citizens, the person who gains honor through their stated preference and votes seems to me to be both honorable and honored. But the one who gets power through some opportunity even though his fellow citizens don’t approve... I think such a person has won the trappings of honor, but not honor itself.

Cicero is here talking about “honor” in its meaning of “elected office” and its concomitant mark of prestige. But the sense that honor is conferred by the community according to merit holds true for the less tangible “honor” of the Honor Code. To me, at Davidson this means that a code of honor is a statement of community. ♦



In Their Own Words

First Impressions from the Class of 2010

Davidson's Honor Code demands a student's attention from the moment of application until graduation—and, hopefully, long beyond. On this page, a sampling of perspectives from the beginning of that journey, taken from this year's crop of Honor Code admission essays and from interviews with participants in the Davidson Outdoors Odyssey program.

"The idea that a student's character is the structure of the Honor Code can be seen in the code's language, 'Every student shall be honor bound...' This wording is based upon human principles rather than school regulations; thus the code attracts students who truly believe in the idea of an honor code."

—**Tareq Karim Alani**
Chapel Hill, N.C.

"Coming from a religious background, I view the decline in society's morals as perhaps the greatest downfall of our modern country. The place to stop this decline is right where, unfortunately, it often starts: the college level."

—**Benjamin Jacob Youngerman**
Madison, Conn.

"... either snitch on your classmate or suffer the consequences. I know that this portion of the Honor Code at Davidson is a necessity, for the entire system would falter and stand incomplete without it."

—**Lauren Robles**,
Palos Verdes Estates, Calif.

"Right now, I feel as if I act morally because someone told me to, not so much because it was my idea. Living independently in a community shaped by an Honor Code would force me to decide on my own to make morally correct choices."

—**Cora Woodroof**
Bedford, Va.

"Although it was initially intimidating, I eventually realized that all it required of me as a community member was to adhere to the requirements I had already set for myself to ensure my educational and social development, which would be stunted by cheating or stealing."

—**Will Rublee**
Temple, Texas

"The Honor Code gives the student the opportunity to mature and to grow. The trusting environment places your conscience in control of your actions."

—**A. J. Grant**
Mitchellville, Md.



> (clockwise from top left) First-year students Sarah Page Waugh, James Mayo, Jessica Givens, Sarah Oberst, and Jessica Reesse.

Odyssey!

After a week of working together as a team on a service project in Asheville, N.C., participants in the Davidson Outdoors Odyssey Crew Seven (Session One) had already begun to expand on their own application-essay perspectives about the Honor Code.

"It brings on a new responsibility and independence. You can trust the community and feel safe and relaxed," said **Jessica Givens** from New York, N.Y.

Sara Page Waugh from Ashland, Va., agreed: "It makes the transition easier from high school, because you don't have to worry so much about trusting people you never met before."

"It's a big comfort issue, too," added **James Mayo** of Buie's Creek, N.C. "You can be comfortable anywhere on campus."

"A lot of colleges have an honor code," said **Sara Oberst**, from Sherborn, Mass., "but Davidson really takes it seriously."

Jessica Reese of Telford, Tenn., summed up, "It's important to learn how to be respectful when no one's watching."



On Our Honor

Lost & Found?



A quick scan of the classifieds in *The Crier*, Davidson's daily e-newsletter, attests to the vitality of the Honor Code on campus, from the Saturday night lost and found to the Monday morning honor bound. Herewith, a semester's sampling. Edited for confidentiality, but we are not making these up... pledged!

Money found floating in a puddle at the crosswalk/stoplight between the VAC and Cunningham. Email amount to claim if it's yours....

Minute Maid fruit juice bottle found in machine dispenser of Student Union. Call T—at 5—and identify flavor of juice to claim.

Hi, I dropped some money at the Sunday 2 p.m. performance of *She Loves Me*. Sentimental value. If you found it on the floor of Duke and would like to make me very happy by returning it, please email Alice....

Lost white Limited cardigan on Friday night at Nappy Roots... was hanging from a tree near PiKA... maybe someone grabbed it? Contact....

Lost Verizon cell phone with black leather casing on it. Screen name = Carrie Lu. Lost Friday night on Patterson Court. I need my phone back before my parents come....

My camera left its case and its hiding spot in between the cushions of one of the couches at Warner on Friday night. I care less about the camera than I do about the frolicking pictures... there might even be some chocolate in store for you.

My cell phone slipped out of my shorts pocket between Belk and the Court on Saturday night... it has an orangutan as the wall paper and it says FOILED as the banner.

Money found right before the mini-bridge on the middle of the cross-country trail. Email to claim...

Vera Bradley bag found on the ground on the back side of B (apts.). It's cute and I wish I could keep it, but unfortunately it's not mine! Email if you think it's yours....

"As I consider the Honor Code from my vantage point of four decades, a pair of observations has grown more distinct over time.

"I fear we oftentimes focus on the negative aspects of the Honor Code at the expense of all that it allows. I have come to understand that the Honor Code is so much more about what we can do than about those actions that are prohibited. It is on this foundation of mutual trust that the Honor Code establishes, that all community engagement at Davidson—teaching, learning, athletics, service—is built. Countless are the everyday examples of what this frees us to be and to do.

"I have come to understand further that, just as Davidson encourages a lifelong love of learning, so, too, it fosters a lifelong commitment to this thing called personal honor; and each develops and flourishes with every passing year that we are away from this place. There are insufficient pages in any Davidson Journal to repeat the stories of the decent ends served by the living out of this code by the Davidson family in places near and far."

—Robert F. Vagt '69
President

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