

Sinking Hopes in the Sunken Lounge

During your average dinner at the Dining Center, you will undoubtedly encounter bad food, good friends and a degree of racial separation. It's a well-known, but rarely mentioned,

Haverfact that a number of minority students choose to dine in the Sunken Lounge away from the white majority.

They have every right to and I'm not writing this article to impugn that right. Still, things could be better.

To me, racially separate dining is out of place at a liberal and diverse community like Haverford. Separate dining spaces were one of the hallmarks of the Jim Crow South and it's a mystery to me why any sort of replica of that injustice would willingly be enacted. I think it's sad that there is no space in the capacious left and right sides of the Dining Center for all students of Haverford to feel comfortable. I believe it's distressing that students with so much in common only focus on what makes them different. In this situation, comfort is the key word. Of course, it is easiest and maybe best to be amongst your own. If the students who

dine in the Sunken Lounge feel so uncomfortable and alienated from the rest of the Dining Center, then there is a larger issue at hand than merely comfort.

The irony in this dilemma is

Lionel Warshauer *Columnist*

that many of those who dine in the Sunken Lounge are the same people who clamor the loudest for diversity. Diversity is not merely the granting of concessions from one group to another. Diversity is a mutual effort which involves sacrifices and understanding from all sides to work. Merely paying lip service to diversity just doesn't cut it. Recently, there have been demands for more diversity in the student body and administration: does that mean the Sunken Lounge will have to be expanded? An expansion of that sort would be nothing more than a contraction of social justice. As long as there is racially separate dining, how diverse a community can we honestly claim to be? It just seems to prove that we all love to talk about diversity, but, in the end,

it's more of a theory than a way of life. Only when diversity affects the most basic things we do can we start to make grandiose statements about how diverse and liberal we are. What can be more basic than who we choose to eat with?

You may well ask: "So what do you want?" I want change. Not sudden, revolutionary change, but change nonetheless. If we live, study and socialize as a community, why is it that we can't eat as a community? I don't

think. Perhaps not tomorrow, next week or next semester, but sometime before I graduate, it would be a testament to Haverford's diversity to see either the Sunken Lounge integrated or the right and left sides being totally integrated. How can it really be any other way in the 21st century? What good would all of the monumental civil rights gains of the last half century be if, in the end, it's just a lot easier to be with your own? It would seem like a

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all of a sudden expect everything to be perfect and harmonious, but I certainly don't think racially divided dining is the answer to any-

shameful waste of hard-earned justice. What's there to lose by at least trying? Isn't diversity worth it?

On stereotypes and wrong impressions

Dear Editor:

I am upset that your editorial staff finds it appropriate to allow Lionel Warshauer, HC'01, to abuse his privilege as an editorial columnist to vent his pent up frustrations with things he has no knowledge or experience of. He gives the community and alumni a small taste of what it is to be an upper class white male on the outside of the people of color sphere at Haverford without trying to actually learn or know more about it before he critiques it.

I was angered by his commentary on the Sunken Lounge—a commentary that I basically view as from the mind of a scared and lazy boy. He basically scape-goated the twenty students of color, if even that many, who sit in the lounge for the racial separation at the DC. He blamed people for sitting with their friends for a social problem our campus. And now he has the gall or as he would say, he "put his ass on the line," by first incorrectly attributing the actions of Pedro Urquilla, HC'00, to be representative of a group that he is affiliated with,

i.e. the Sons Of Africa. Secondly he was really wrong in saying that SOA is only comprised of black men. I know that there are also Latinos in the group. And just because you see black men in the group, you can't assume that they all come from the same cultures and backgrounds. Thirdly, how could you allow him to blatantly disrespect this group by saying that it is full of b.s. and how could you let him reduce the justifications for any of the group's endeavors to be that it's "because they're black and they're angry?"

I have talked to many people and apparently Warshauer is the only one willing to believe in his own misinformed and hateful rhetoric. I find his editorials trifling and an abuse of his privilege as a staff writer. I am also curious to know if the staff is willing to say that they agree with him. I don't think you should allow your columnists to make such hurtful and ignorant "opinions" without finding out how they can substantiate them.

This is the second week in a row that Warshauer has written some-

thing about which he has no real experiential knowledge and no one seems to care how the *Bi-Co News'* inclusion of his pieces hurt the very population that they are about. Maybe it's because none of you are people of color and therefore never have to spend your life proving yourself to others. Maybe if you were black, asian, latino, philippine, or lebanese you would feel the same pain that I do when I read such statements coming from an educated white male.

If this is the kind of education that Haverford supports, and if this is the kind of berating that students of color are going to have to deal with week in and week out, then I want no part of it.

I am tired of having my race, my gender, my class thrown back at me as if it were a social flaw. The criticisms made in Warshauer's articles are not about people's actions. They are based on race and his warped and biased view of how the races at Haverford interact. The races at Haverford DON'T interact. That is the problem. But if people really feel, as Warshauer does, that we, the students of color of Haverford College, are segregating ourselves, or if they feel that whatever thing we do we do it because we're black and we're angry, then you are not inviting us into the community but further separating us from it.

I am tired of hearing Warshauer's opinion on matters that won't take the time to learn about. I am tired of having to read apologetic articles like Joe Kaufman's because there was a lack of communication. Just like the students of color on this campus have to work hard to figure out ways to bring our culture to the whites, the whites have to take the time to talk, to really ask questions and really discuss fears, insecurities, and concerns with students of color before they go writing uneducated and trifling articles about things they really don't know.

Thanks for hearing me out.

Sincerely,

Zakia C. Martinez