

Where's the separation of church and state?

An article titled "God and Country" appeared in the June 27 The New Yorker magazine. Hanna Rosin writes both intriguing and disturbing information about a feeder college for the national Republican Party.



VICKI ISACOWITZ
On education

Tucked away in Purcellville, Va., Patrick Henry College trains "a new generation of Christian politicians." Although it states to lack any affiliation with a denomination, Patrick Henry is labeled a Christian college. Eighty-five percent of its students come from a home-schooled environment where their evangelical Christian beliefs are intertwined with the rigor of academics.

Parents of these students sought a "Christian college with a 'courtship' atmosphere ... where dating is regulated and subject to approval." Congressmen asked Farris for a pool of home-schoolers to serve as potential interns and staffers. Building Patrick Henry, also known as the Evangelical Ivy League or Harvard for Homeschoolers, is the solution for such parents and politi-

cal figures. Home-schooling parents and conservative congressmen are the two groups that prompted Michael Farris' desire to found the school. As a lawyer, minister, and Patrick Henry's president, Farris works for Christian causes.

cal figures.

A 10-part statement of faith is signed by all students enrolling at Patrick Henry. The condition of the statement agrees that "Hell is a place where 'all who die outside of Christ shall be confined in conscious torment for eternity.'" Western Civilization from a Biblical perspective follows a "Christian Classical" model of curriculum for the first two years of study. Government is the most popular major at Patrick Henry with only a few students majoring in literature.

A "business casual" dress code is required of the student body. This rule is implemented as preparation for the office environment that awaits these students upon their graduation. The intended offices for Patrick Henry's students are those in Washington, D.C.

Internships with Republican politicians or conservative think tanks are regular experiences for the students who will eventually be hired as part of our nation's political body.

The White House awards 100 students with a three-month internship three times a year. Let it be known, there are only 300 students at Patrick Henry. Sixty-one graduates left the school in 2004, pursuing careers in the White House, staff of conservative members of Congress, federal agencies, and the FBI.

Several thoughts come to my mind after reading about Patrick Henry. It's great to know that if students entering college want to find themselves a political career, attending Patrick Henry is an excellent opportunity for making this dream a reality. Whether Patrick Henry will

admit a student from a different religion, or even an atheist, is a concern. Why does religion play such a huge role in placing motivated politically driven students? Who decides that evangelical Christians have an "in" over other religions when talking about gaining political positions?

It's true that some industries are dominated by certain religions, but as far as I know, the CEOs are not necessarily feeding in these people from a certain source because of their religion. Correct me if I am mistaken, but isn't our country supposed to operate under the concept of separation of church from state? According to Rosin's article, this is not necessarily the case.

Growing numbers of conservative-minded people who live according to strong religious

beliefs are entering the Republican Party, expecting other Americans to share their same values and beliefs. These people are the ones making decisions on controversial issues, such as abortion, stem cell research, and other civil rights. This fact is not only true, but disturbing and unsettling to those who think and live differently. Will we still be a country of the people for the people with such views as our governance?

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