

Letters & Submissions

Letters to the editor are always welcome. Submissions must include your name, contact information and class standing. Letters from faculty and staff and members of the community are also accepted. The Pendulum reserves the right to edit obscene or potentially libelous material. Lengthy letters or columns may have to be trimmed to fit. The Pendulum may also edit for clarity and grammar. All submissions become the property of The Pendulum and will not be returned. Send submissions to pendulum@elon.edu.

The Confederate flag is a sign of oppression

I am writing in response to Alex Sewell's article concerning the virtues of the Confederate flag.

The author began his article by stating that he was "appalled and offended by the editorial's lack of respect for [his] cultural heritage."

Have you not considered the fact that the Confederate flag is offensive to the African-American heritage?

This controversy is age old and has been discussed time and time again; several times in *The Pendulum*.

Yet I will once again state the opposing argument with the hopes that some might become slightly more sensitized to my point of view.

First and foremost, I find it quite laughable that the author refuses to recognize the fact that the Civil War was fought because of slavery.

It is true that there were other factors that led to the war, decentralization for example, but the Antebellum period was characterized by rising hostility caused largely by slavery.

The Kansas-Nebraska Act and the

Missouri Compromise, legislation put into place to pacify tension between the pro-slavery South and the anti-slavery North, are just two examples of hostile situations that were able to be quelled before the Civil War actually broke out.

Industrialization, trade and federal control of states were all points of conflict; however, the major overarching point of contention was slavery.

I am not stating that Abraham Lincoln wrote the Emancipation Proclamation to ensure liberty and equality for slaves, quite the contrary; he was a politician, a strategist and the president of the United States; it is obvious he had ulterior motives and I do not fault him for that.

I am sure that many of the founding fathers and previous presidents were slave owners and held racist views towards African-Americans.

However, that was a completely different time period and thus not applicable. What was right in 1863 is not necessarily right in 2007.

The South seceded from the Union and adopted the Confederate flag or "rebel

flag" as its national symbol.

If one fought for the Confederate Army that implies that he agreed with the Confederacy principles and reasoning for secession, which was primarily because of slavery.

The Confederate flag is a symbol of disunity; a dark time in the history of the United States.

I do not think the Confederate flag is a bad image in itself but it carries a huge amount of historical baggage; baggage that offends and hurts fellow Americans.

Why would you want to display a hurtful image? To you the Confederate flag may symbolize your past but to me the Confederate flag represents the suppression and oppression of my heritage.

Have a little bit of sensitivity. The swastika, for example, was used by a number of cultures for 3,000 years and was a symbol of good and prosperity.

Adolph Hitler then adopted it as the symbol of Nazi Germany.

No one will ever look at the swastika in the same light again because of his actions and because it has become a symbol of

hate and oppression. It carries offensive historical baggage.

The symbol itself is not negative, but it was used in a negative manner. The Confederate flag represents a similar pain for African-Americans as the swastika does for Jews.

I am not saying that you should not feel pride in your heritage, but I am asking that you step into another's shoes.

Imagine that you walk into a store and see an image that represents a time in history when your ancestors were viewed as less than human, as chattel, as property.

It is extremely uncomfortable and hurtful for an African-American to walk into a store and see the Confederate flag displayed with pride.

It is for us a symbol of the period in time when we were neither welcome nor recognized as equal Americans.

You should refrain from displaying the Confederate flag, not out of shame, but out of respect for others.

-Whitney Hamilton, '09

A new speaker phenomenon

I have noticed a phenomenon at recent cultural events that annoys me. Students, probably mostly freshmen in global classes, will go up to staff and faculty members who are at the event and get them to sign a sheet of paper documenting that they were present at the event.

This trend is becoming more and more widespread because I see it more at each new cultural event that I attend.

It bothers me because some professors are assuming that students cannot be trusted on their own to attend cultural events that are assigned for their classes.

All I can think of are the signed hallway passes that were required for any movement within the schools that I went to before college.

I believe that the pettiness of requiring a signature to prove that a student attended a cultural event amounts to a form of hand-holding.

It is tacitly acknowledging that in many ways, college is not much more than an extension of high school and of adolescence in general. It is important that stu-

dents start to take control of their own educations.

If they don't want to go to these cultural events, then it is their prerogative. They are simply missing out on the rich intellectual contributions that these speakers make to our campus environment.

Students should go to cultural events because they genuinely want to, not because they are forced to by their hand-holding professors.

Many individuals who don't want to be at these events show this attitude by disrespectfully leaving in the middle of the lecture.

Cultural events are for all of the Elon community to enjoy. Professors, please stop asking your students to get signatures to prove that they attended the event.

If they are interested in going, they will. As the saying goes, one can lead a horse to water but cannot force it to drink.

Professor cannot force students to enjoy speakers.

-Charlie Remy '07

Are you interested in writing about the newest happenings around campus?

When you hear of the latest tidbits of information, does your inner gossip queen tickle?

Do all your friends come to you for advice about the latest trends, music and movies?

Then you should consider trying your hand at the interesting and uniquely rewarding field of journalism.

For more information, e-mail *The Pendulum* staff at pendulum@elon.edu. Please include your name, contact information and class standing.