

THE BLUE BANNER

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF SARAH SHADBURNE

SSHADBUR@UNCA.EDU

NEWS EDITOR MAGGIE HADDOCK

MHADDOCK@UNCA.EDU

ARTS & FEATURES EDITOR TAYLOR SEXTON

TSEXTON@UNCA.EDU

ASSISTANT A&F EDITOR MADDY SHERER

MSHERER1@UNCA.EDU

OPINION EDITOR KATIE DEVOE

KDEVOE@UNCA.EDU

SPORTS EDITOR SARAH SHADBURNE

SSHADBUR@UNCA.EDU

PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR EMMA JORDAN

EJORDAN@UNCA.EDU

COPY EDITOR BRAILEY SHERIDAN

BSHERIDA@UNCA.EDU

LAYOUT EDITOR SANTIAGO BONILLA

SBONILLA@UNCA.EDU

ADVERTISING MANAGER TIFFANIE BOONE

TBOONE1@UNCA.EDU

FACULTY ADVISER MICHAEL GOUGE

The Blue Banner is UNC Asheville's student newspaper. We publish each Tuesday except during summer sessions, finals week and holiday breaks. Our office is in Karpen 019.

The Blue Banner is a designated forum for free speech and welcomes letters to the editor, considering them on the basis of interest, space and timeliness. Letters and articles should be emailed to the editor-in-chief or to the appropriate section editor. Letters should include the writer's name, year in school and major, or other relationship to UNCA. Include a phone number to aid in verification. All articles are subject to editing.

EDITORIAL

NIKE AD SPARKS PRIVILEGED PROTEST

EDITORIAL STAFF

thebluebanner@unca.edu

This past week, Nike released an advertisement featuring a close up of Colin Kaepernick with the words "Believe in something, even if it means sacrificing everything" written across his face. The ad sparked controversy and protests against Nike.

These protests include burning, ripping or cutting up Nike products to show disapproval for the brand and the "anti-American message" they supposedly send to their consumers. This "anti-American message" frankly, is not the case. Nike uses their platform to bring attention to systematic racism experienced by Black Americans every day. Meaning the "protest" really serves as a way for white Americans to continue to defend their advantage in society instead of coming face-to-face with the privilege they possess for being white.

The idea that this campaign is "anti-American" or "anti-military" fundamentally does not make sense. The military fights for our right to free speech and protest making this campaign and Kaepernick's kneeling in every way more American than the "protest" itself. The fact that Americans feel destroying their merchandise is the most effective way to get their point

across, only shows their privilege.

Millions of people across the country do not have access to adequate clothing or shoes, especially within the demographic being brought to attention by Nike, yet many of the protesters are throwing away or destroying their merchandise without blinking an eye. This socioeconomic divide is just one example of the tremendous disenfranchisement of Black Americans Nike and Kaepernick are trying to bring attention to.

Instead of destroying Nike merchandise, protestors should donate their unwanted Nike products to those in need. Not only would that be less wasteful, but maybe then they could find better, more effective ways to protest. According to Edison Trends, Nike's sales have gone up 31 percent since the release of the ad campaign, proving that the protests are ineffective and bring more attention to the topics that they wish to silence.

We at "The Blue Banner" stand by Nike as well as Colin Kaepernick and the message they communicate with the American public.

CLARIFICATION: In the last issue we insinuated UNC Asheville would be sending James Smith to San Francisco for the Global Climate Action Summit. He actually will be paying for his own passage.