

Editorial: Women at The Citadel

by Traci Latta

This week Shannon Faulkner gained entrance into a highly traditional institution that prides itself on excellence. No, she didn't make it into Meredith -- she made it into The Citadel. I know you're probably going - 'Wait a minute, isn't that an all male institution?' Yes, it is, but that didn't stop Shannon.

I'm sorry, I know that as a woman I should be able to do what any man can do, but I also believe that there are certain things that should remain open to men and women only.

A few examples of these places are men's and ladies' rooms, locker rooms and traditional men's and women's institutions. As a student at Meredith, a traditional women's college, I believe that I am a part of a special group. When I run into another Meredith woman and I recognize her by the Meredith ring she is

wearing, I feel like a member of a special sisterhood. I don't think that I would feel as special if I ran into some guy in the Harris Teeter and he had on a Meredith ring. It's not that I don't think that he would be able to fare as well on our campus, but it's more the principle of the matter. This institution has been giving women a good solid education for over 100 years and has also built up a reputation as being one of the best women's colleges in the South. I am proud of my school and I personally would not want to see it go co-ed.

I am sure that the men at The Citadel feel the same way. Their school is one that prides itself on educating young men and instilling them with a sense of fraternity that they can't get anywhere else. I can completely understand how having a woman on their campus would break this feeling of brotherhood.

I feel like I have been watching a

media-blitzed version of the episode of *The Brady Bunch* where Marcia pushed to get into The Pioneer Scouts. Marcia was a real hard case about it and she got in, heck she even showed up the boys out in the woods. Peter even tried his hand at becoming a Sunshine Girl and he stunk at selling cookies, but guess what -- that was a TV show.

I don't think that Faulkner is going to have as easy a time as Marcia did. The men at The Citadel are not going to take this lying down and I don't blame them. If this institution tried to go co-ed I believe there would be a big stink.

Don't get me wrong -- I have faith that Faulkner can do anything that the guys at The Citadel can do (except to write her name in the snow), but I really don't think she should try to buck the system and ruin tradition for those guys. Gloria Steinem would probably be disappointed in me, I've probably upset a few of you women out there, but that's the breaks. There are just some things that shouldn't be tampered with -- the safety seal on aspirin, radioactive materials and traditional institutions like The Citadel -- and Meredith.

—Letters to the Editor—

"Let's stand united as Americans. Separately we will accomplish little." This unification message echoed in a sophomore's letter in the December 1 *Herald* represents the desire of most people. So, how can the very content of the same letter contradict her noble theme?

I'll take an educated position and refute the idea that minorities want the "tables flipped around" so they can persecute others. This idea, to me, seems to represent unjustified fear. Minorities, African Americans in particular, want an equal footing so that they CAN stand united with other Americans and have the advantages that an education at a college like Meredith can provide. It is not about power -- it's about opportunity.

There seems to be consensus on the idea of scholarships based on need and academics -- not color or race. This would open Meredith's doors to a variety of students who might otherwise not have the opportunity. This could help some of the many academically successful minority students who can't afford to go to any college, much less one that costs \$10,000 a year. However, there are too many minority students whose circumstances have placed them at an academic disadvantage through

no actions or choices of their own. Should we turn our heads, accept the "haves and the have-nots" mentality, when what we say we want is unity? What happened to "separately we accomplish little"?

The sophomore expressed that she "was not surprised, but enraged." Not surprised, but enraged: that an African American student at Meredith could expect her needs met as any other student would -- and say so? Not surprised, but enraged: that increased African American studies and faculty at Meredith could significantly enhance the education of every student? Like the sophomore, I also look forward to a world where color or race will not determine whether I get a job. I am not surprised, but enraged by the ongoing seemingly increasing idea of far too many, that the disparity existing among minorities and non-minorities will magically fix itself with "time and education." Once the sophomore and others with this viewpoint have opened their eyes to face this unpleasant reality with understanding, welcoming and instigating change, we WILL stand united as Americans. We have the same objective -- let's demonstrate that in the things we do and the things we say.

Sylvia Dixon Hackett

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