

Editorial: Separate but equal

by Shannon Batts

The day we left for Easter break, I was sitting in my history class and we were discussing the "separate but equal" laws in the South during and after Reconstruction and the Civil Rights Movement. A student in the class asked a question that shocked me. To most of the white students in the class it was just a regular question, but to me (the only black student) and others who may be more socially conscious, it was an ignorant question that spotlighted the racial undertones that are so subtly ingrained in our society.

These were not her exact words, but they were similar: "If they (black people) wanted to be so equal, then why do they have schools like Howard University (an all-black school)?"

Nor more than forty years ago, black students would not have been able to attend schools like Meredith or any of the other originally white colleges and universities. The only schools that black students could attend were all-black colleges like Howard University, NCCU (North Carolina Central University),

A&T and St. Augustine. Since integration, black students have trickled into almost all colleges and universities. Even though black students are a regular part of originally all-white school, they are not an integral part of the predominantly white college or university. That's where schools like Howard and NCCU come into play.

Black students have to be an integral part of a predominantly black school. It's similar to when men ask Meredith women "Why do you go to an all-girls school? If you feminists have fought so hard to get into ours, then why are you going to one with just girls?" Here at Meredith we can feel comfortable in our surroundings. We know that we are an integral part of our college. We can come onto this campus and find people similar to ourselves to relate to and share life experiences with. Students at predominantly black schools like A&T and NCCU are probably enjoying a similar experience. They can walk onto their respective campuses and be surrounded by people who share similar cultural and economic backgrounds, and with whom they can discuss what

it's like to be black in America. That's similar to how we discuss what it's like to be women in a "man's" world. Moreover, any white student (male or female) in America, can walk onto almost any campus in America and be surrounded by other students racially and economically similar to themselves.

Students of any color, age, gender,... etc., should attend any college or university they see fit. My point is not to discourage or encourage all-white, all-black, all-male, all-female or all-anything colleges. My point is about why people might separate by choice. Usually they are searching for a way to

find equality, not a way to go backwards and re-enter the "separate but equal" conditions.

I'm not trying to open a can of worms, or make people angry. But if this makes you angry, maybe you should consider the source of your anger. I wrote this because of my realization of the importance of the girl's question in my history class and the ideologies or general beliefs it exemplifies. It's important for us as students to examine issues of this nature so that the future will contain less racial assumptions and undertones.

Meredith Herald

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Senior Class Meeting

Our very last one ever!

Very, very important information about
Baccalaureate, Class Day and
Graduation!

Monday, April 18
9 p.m.

Carswell Concert Hall
See you there Class of 1994!

Only 32 more days!

Astronomy Open House

Thursday, April 14

8-9:30 p.m.

Library roof

Everyone is invited!

Bring a pair of sunglasses!!