

Take a seat for something

Forty years ago, four students about the age of many Meredith students, sat down for what they believed in. Forty years ago, four black students sat at a whites-only lunch counter.

From the Editor

They made history in a few brief moments; they changed their own lives and the lives of others.

They exercised their right to eat where ever they pleased.

Forty years ago on Feb. 1, 1960, the sit-in that was not planned and that would never be forgotten happened.

Indeed, the four freshmen from N.C. A&T in Greensboro went into Woolworth's and ordered Cokes and doughnuts, a typical unhealthy college snack.

However, when those four students were refused service, they had an atypical reaction: they did not leave. By the same token, they did not yell. They simply sat.

Eventually, 5 p.m. arrived, the store closed and the students left along with all the other customers.

Their simple action provided a cornerstone for similar sit-ins all over the South.

Civil disobedience, first written about by American transcendentalist writer Henry David Thoreau, provided the stepping stones for Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr.

Those students may not have even known about civil disobedience, yet they knew what they had to do.

Their courage and their conviction, even 40 years ago, should be a reminder to us all of the past and its failures and achievements.

In retrospect, we do realize the magnitude of the tremendous courage that those four students had, the convictions they felt so early on in the Civil Rights Movement.

Yet we must question ourselves. Have we forgotten the convictions of those four black students? Have we taken civil rights for granted for so long that we are reverting back to its pre-movement form?

While these questions may seem extreme, there is no better time to think about them than during February, Black History Month.

Meredith Herald

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How to reach the Herald:

If you have an article idea for the staff, contact the office at 760-2824. You can also e-mail the paper at <maxwell@meredith.edu>. All ideas will be considered but may not necessarily be used.

Battle flag debate continues

ALEXIA ANDREWS
Staff Writer

I was born and raised in Summerville, S.C. My father was born in Mobile, Ala., and my mother was born in Germany.

I was always raised to respect anyone and everyone no matter their religion, race, creed, age or sex.

Yet I believe that the Confederate battle flag should be flown over the state Capitol building of South Carolina.

To me, the flag is not a symbol of hate, but instead it symbolizes the people who were willing to risk their lives to fight for what they believed in.

More than anything in this world, I hate apathy. The battle flag is a symbol of the lack of apathy that the Confederate soldiers had.

I do not believe in flying the flag to show hate, racism or white supremacy. By no means do I see myself as better than anyone of any other race.

I simply believe that a flag that symbolizes the lives of men (both black and white) fighting for what they believed in should fly.

Men that were black and white fought side by side on the Confederacy's side to win separation from the Union.

Unlike the Confederacy, the Union's soldiers were segregated.

Southerners are not more

racist because they fly flags or fight wars or speak out about how they feel.

Rather, they are passionate about what they believe. There is little room for apathy but plenty for southern hospitality.

By flying the Confederate flag in South Carolina, we show that threats and law suits do not keep us from fighting for what we believe.

Along the same lines, I approve of those who are fighting against the flag because they are also fighting the war on apathy.

The point has been argued many times, and it seems that the people of South Carolina have spoken: We want the Battle Flag to fly high over the Capitol.

Part of the reason that former Governor David Beasley was ousted by a Democrat is that he wanted to take the flag down.

Governor Jim Hodges was the first Democrat that South Carolina had elected in many years partially because we want the flag to fly.

If the majority of citizens feel the way I do, that the flag should fly, then the citizens should rule.

I understand that to some people, it is a sign of racism and oppression, but I question if these people really understand what the majority of South Carolinians see the flag as representing.

Most of the people I know are not racist, yet they believe that the flag should fly.

I do know a few people who can be considered racist, yet it is these very people who are apathetic about the flag.

Even now, I do not understand why the NAACP is boycotting South Carolina while Georgia's state flag includes the battle flag in its design.

All the citizens of South Carolina want is to fly a flag that stands for all the relatives they lost fighting a war they believed in; we do not ask to include it in the design of our flag.

I find myself growing weary of retelling my views on this issue because it is so controversial, but I cannot preach against apathy if I practice it.

I despise people who use the battle flag as a symbol of hate, I disagree with using the flag to scare people and I am certainly not writing this to offend anyone.

I am writing to voice my opinion, and I am writing in the hopes of urging others to do the same, even if their opinions are different from mine.

So let the flag fly. If you disagree with its flying, let it be known, but do not be apathetic. Apathy is what kills the souls of good people.

Letters to the Editor Policy:

Everyone in the Meredith community is invited and encouraged to write a letter to the editor. All published letters must be typewritten with a contact name, address, and telephone number.

All letters must be signed by the author in order to be published.

The *Herald* reserves the right to place any other article submissions on file until needed or to choose not to print them. The *Herald* also has the right to edit submissions for space restrictions, grammar and style.

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Submissions must be received by 1 p.m. on the Monday before Wednesday's publication. Submissions include letters to the editor, press releases and feature articles.