

**DIVERSITY**  
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view issues in a black-

and-white mentality.

Perhaps she didn't say all of this—I have a bad habit of putting words in other people's mouths—but she did communicate

to me the idea that her classroom would not be a place of intimidation by one viewpoint—no matter what the viewpoint happened to be.

This is the piece that CORE 100 lacked.

I do hope that it is there now. I do hope that the professors and administrators understand the

need for students to be able to clearly and effectively present their ideas, whether they are mainstreamed or not. If it is not there, something needs to change immediately. We all have a right to voice our opinions. We are given this right by the Constitution of the United States. However,

not one of us has the right to deface property and write hate messages in bathrooms, elevators, and stairwells. But equally true: not one of us has the right to force any ideas, beliefs, or values on another person.

If this truly repugnant event teaches us anything, I hope that it teaches us

not just that hate needs to be abolished but that the education of a means of communicating ideas in a respectful manner is the only way to respond to hate.

I have been praying for those who wrote those symbols and messages, and I pray that you do the same.

## Ignorance and Hatred Are Not Welcome on Our Campus

By Meredith Beeman  
Staff Writer

When I woke up on the morning of March 1, I thought that it would be a beautiful day (even though it was a little windy). Then I walked into Joyner and it turned out to be a not so beautiful day after all. There were hate-filled, ignorant messages written in the bathroom. As a matter of fact, there were hate messages in just about every building on campus.

These messages attack people from every race, every religion, and every

sexual preference except for those of mainstream society. In other words, everyone was targeted except for white, straight, Christian women. Because I am a white, straight

Christian woman, I am ashamed and outraged that this person chose to target every other group but mine: every other group but the majority. One of the major tenets of this campus is diversity. As a college community, we signed a pledge, on our honor, that we would respect others and ourselves during our time here as students. Obviously, someone does not respect herself enough to honor the pledge that she made.

While we have students from other races, religions, and sexual preferences here, the majority of this campus is still white, straight, and Christian. It is very easy to attack the minority, especially in such a cowardly way. Make no mistake, writing anonymous messages on walls is cowardly. I am not

saying that people cannot have their own opinions. I am saying that people who express an opinion without owning up to it are cowards and something so blatantly hateful and ignorant cannot be tolerated.

Many American leaders and public figures have given statements regarding diversity and its significance and benefits. Jimmy Carter said, "We have become not a melting pot, but a beautiful mosaic. Different people, different beliefs, different yearnings, different hopes, different dreams." We as a campus are a group of "different people" with "different beliefs, different yearnings, different hopes, [and] different dreams," and we should be proud of all of these differences. The world would be an incredibly

boring place to live if we all thought the same things, acted the same way, and hoped for the same things. Booker T. Washington said, "I will permit no man to narrow and degrade my soul by making me hate him." Why would a person choose to degrade their soul in such a manner as writing messages that they cannot even claim? Why would a person choose to sell their soul for nothing?

I have Muslim friends, African-American friends, Indian friends, and homosexual friends and I am proud to say it. If someone wants to attack these members of the Meredith community, then they need to be prepared to attack me too. I will not stand idly by and watch while my friends are disparaged in such a

manner. It is time for the members of the Meredith community who have friends that were attacked to unite in a stand against these messages of hate. I encourage everyone who has friends that they value, whose race, religion, or sexual preference was mentioned in those messages, to find a time to talk with that friend and say, "I respect you and I will stand beside you and support you in what you believe." Tell them "I believe in the person that you are." Tell them that they should be proud of who they are. Use the messages of encouragement that have been sent by faculty and staff as examples and support your friends. What kind of a place would this be if we couldn't stand up for our own friends in their time of need?

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