

Editor's Corner- October, 2020

Since we last updated our website in early August, a number of developments have occurred at Washington and Lee, and The Generals Redoubt has responded to several of them. Not all of these developments were negative. For example, President Dudley announced that the university would open for in person classes in late August, and we applauded him for that decision. We have since learned that 90% or more of students are in Lexington. We recognize that each college or university has to deal with the pandemic in its own way, but we believe that President Dudley made the right decision and we have told him so.

Unfortunately, a number of the developments at W&L have not been so positive, and we have felt the need to respond to these as well. In late July or early August, a group calling itself Not Unmindful sent a letter to the President and Board outlining its reasons for changing the name of the university and omitting the name of Robert E. Lee. We have responded to their letter, demonstrating some poor historical research on their part, particularly with regard to Lee. At the same time, we have said that if the name of the university is not changed, we would be glad to work with members of this group on challenges facing our alma mater. Copies of both of these documents can be found in our "Letters" section.

In early September, we learned of a course being taught to freshmen this fall and entitled "How to Overthrow the State." We learned of this through various national media outlets. How these outlets discovered that this course was being offered we do not know. We wrote our own letter about the course to President Dudley. We did not question the content of the course or state that it should not be taught. We did say that we questioned the common sense and good judgement of those who allowed the course to be taught under this title. Our letter to President Dudley on this subject can also be found in the "Letters" section of the website.

Not long after the controversy over "How to Overthrow the State" erupted, a conservative freshman decided to run for the Executive Committee. He posted a campaign ad on his Instagram account. Shortly thereafter he began to receive uncivil remarks from some of his fellow students, calling him and his supporters "racists" and using vulgar and profane remarks. We have placed all of this exchange in an article on our "Articles" section. Around the same time, another freshman student posted a video which was widely distributed. In this video, the student expressed her opinion about some of the developments at Washington and Lee. We must warn you that the video contained profane words and gestures. The Generals Redoubt has not taken a position on the video, and we certainly believe in complete freedom of speech and expression both with regard to this student and the students mentioned above. However, some individuals have contacted us to state that the manner in which the student expresses herself violates the Washington and Lee tradition of civil discourse. We have included one of these responses to the video in the "Letters" section.

Despite some of these negative developments, The Generals Redoubt remains optimistic about the university's future. We are hopeful that the Board will maintain the name of our university and will continue to honor our namesakes. We are hopeful that we can continue to work with the Board and university to preserve our history, values, and traditions. We remain optimistic that the university will recruit students and faculty who also honor our namesakes. Finally, we look forward to working with all groups to meet current and future challenges to our beloved alma mater. It is because of our hopefulness and optimism that we have launched our second annual fund. We have attached our annual fund appeal letter under the "Support Us" section of our website.

Neely Young,

Editor, The Generals Redoubt