

A question of pride

Confederate flag stands as affront to African-American pride, reminder of slavery, racial inequality

Confederate flag represents Southern pride, way of life for many Southerners, Americans



CHRISTIAN ROBBINS

The Klux Klan, White Power America and the Neo-Nazi regime. What to all of these and other hate groups have in common?

All of them proudly display the Confederate flag as a symbol of their "pride" and their firm belief in the "Old South." Hate groups do not promote the Confederate flag because it is trendy or has pretty colors; they promote this flag because it epitomizes the purpose of their organizations, it epitomizes honor and hatred.

The Confederate flag for many African-Americans represents all of the "would be" doctors, lawyers, artists, scientists, writers and leaders that could have positively impacted the nation, but who were instead held captive on this land for over 400 years.

To some it represents the African-Americans who were mached, beaten and frightened into submission for attempting to exercise their right to vote, for insisting on equality and for trivial infractions such as looking at a white person in the eye. These are the realities of the "Old South."

Yet to many, the Confederate flag represents Southern pride. The South has many things to be proud of, but the legacy of ignorance and hate that is exemplified by the Confederate flag should not be a boasting point. Simply because the Confederate flag is a part of the South's past does not make it a symbol of pride. Germans do not proudly display their swastikas. Why? Because they are ashamed of this part of their past. Southerners should be educated about all of the connotations associated with the Confederate flag and the reasons it evokes many different feelings. They should not take pride in this bigoted symbol.

According to the Heritage Reservation Society, the Confederate flag is not a symbol of slavery because the Civil War was fought over states rights and economic problems, not slavery. Historian Epand points out the major argument the states wanted was the right to own slaves and the fact that the economy was based on the unpaid labor of slaves. Regardless of their misunderstanding of history, it does not matter why the Civil War was originally fought, today the Confederate flag is a symbol of slavery and of a system of inequality. It disrespects the contribution and accomplishments of all African-Americans.

Evidence that the Confederate flag is a symbol of inequality and bigotry was demonstrated when the flag was flown over the capital buildings during the Civil Rights Movement as a sign of protest to laws concerning desegregation.

Confederate flag proponents falsely contend that since no one currently living was alive during the Civil War, then no one should care whether the Confederate flag

is promoted or not. No reasonable adult can truthfully say the impact of slavery and inequality for people of color has not had a profound effect on society even today. Americans deal with the issue of race and inequality daily.

Others insist the average Confederate soldier's fighting had nothing to do with slavery, so the Confederate flag should be revered in the South and flown over war memorials. In comparison, the swastika was the symbol German symbol of pride during World War II. The average Nazi soldier's fighting had nothing to do with the Jews, so should Germans revere the Nazi swastika and display it proudly over war

human beings, until race relations improve in this country the meaning will never change."

There are people who support the use of the Confederate flag without any racial maliciousness; they honestly see the Confederate flag as a symbol of honor and tradition, but these people must realize the Confederate flag causes deep feelings

Aggies across this campus would probably think that it was outrageous if the Corps of Cadets marched into the MSC this week and



MARK MCPHERSON/THE BATTALION

which houses Medals of Honor given by Congress to men who showed great bravery and killed the enemy during war, it would be stupid. These actions would be seen as ridiculous because the events happened so long ago that the painful memories and old prejudices have long since faded. Even for the people who risked their lives in war those wounds have healed for the most part.

Why is it then if the Aggie Moms sell Confederate flags or someone displays the colors of Dixie, that certain students get upset? The Civil War took place over 130 years ago.

Seeing how there is no living

being Southern mothers raise Southern gentlemen. Life is slower and Southerners take time to enjoy things rather than rush, rush, rush. These are the things that many people believe is the cornerstone of Southern life and is represented by the Confederate flag, the flag of the South.

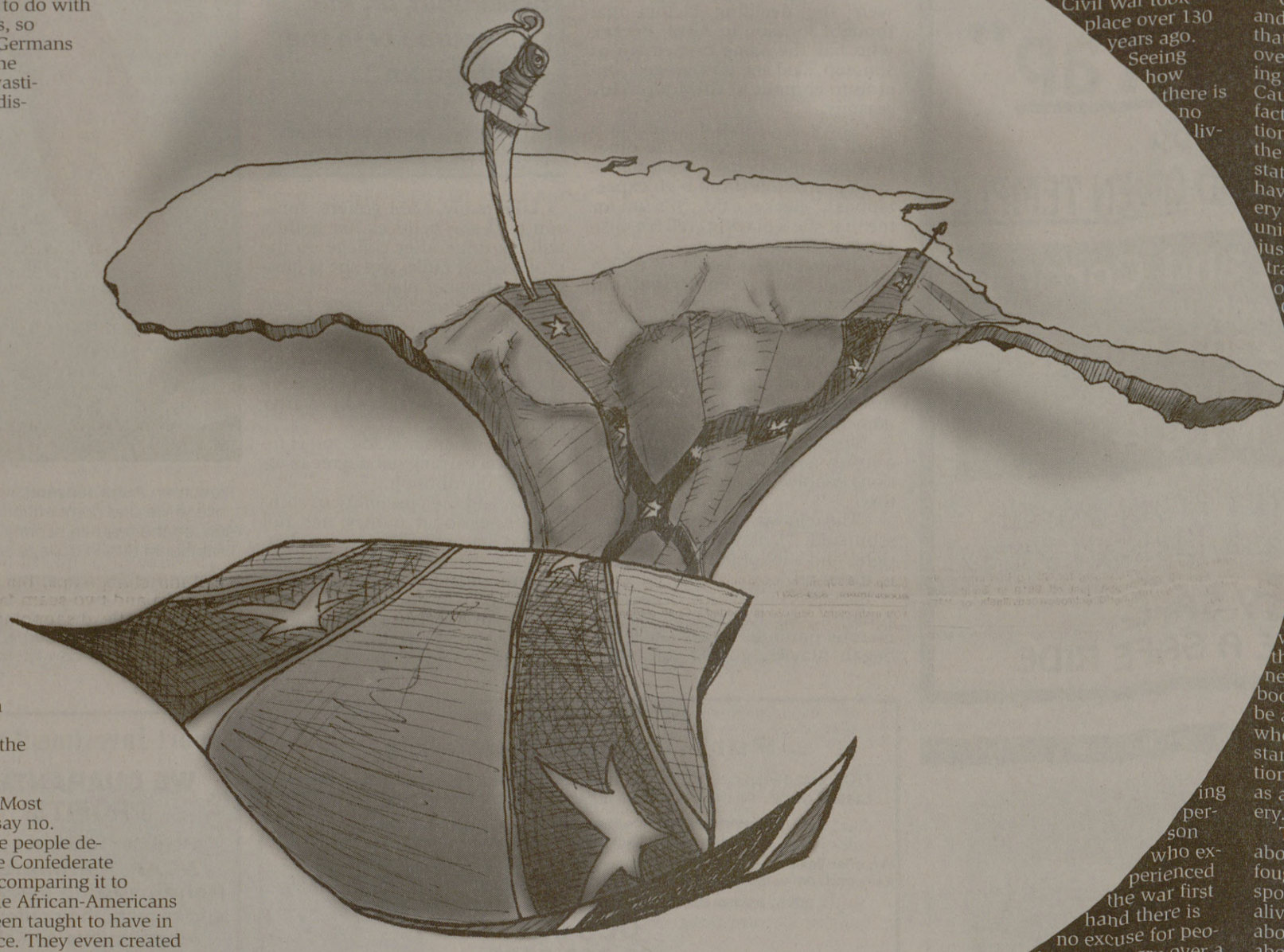
The notion about the Confederate flag being a symbol of slavery is a stretch. The only thing that will stop this warping of history is education. By hiding the Confederate flag and making it taboo does nothing for educating the masses.

Only when the flag is displayed and discussed will people realize that the Civil War was not fought over the issue of slavery. According to the Texas Declaration of Causes for Secession economic factors and unequal representation in Congress is what led to the secession of the Southern states. President Lincoln would have kept the institution of slavery if it would have preserved the union. The southern states were justified in their anger and frustration with the system because of the flagrant disregard of the Constitution by President Lincoln. The President only issued the Emancipation Proclamation after the war had been going for three years. The reason was that Northerners were willing to let the south go. Lincoln needed a rallying point to garner Northern support and slavery was it.

According to the National Archives and Records Administration the freeing of slaves was only applicable in states that had succeeded not in loyal slave states. Slavery was a non-issue at the onset of the war but because the winners of conflict write the history books Lincoln was made out to be a great humanitarian. Only when people learn the circumstances leading to the emancipation will the flag cease to be seen as an object that stands for slavery.

The skewed understanding about the reasons the war was fought is keeping this absurd response to the Confederate Flag alive. Everyone who has learned about Texas history has learned about the six flags over Texas. Each one of these flags has added to the cultural diversity and uniqueness of the Lone Star State. The Confederate flag represents one piece of this diversity. The history books should not have to be rewritten because uneducated people get offended over something they do not understand. The Confederate flag represents a large part of this state's history and culture as well as states throughout the south. To do away with the Confederate flag would be a slap in the face to the southern way of life and to the history and culture that makes the south what it is.

Russell Page is a senior political science major.



memorials, on T-shirts and on the back of pick-up trucks? Most would say no.

Some people defend the Confederate flag by comparing it to the pride African-Americans have been taught to have in their race. They even created trendy t-shirts with the nice little slogan, "You wear your X, I'll wear mine." The exhibitors of these garments should ask themselves the following question: How many white men or women were raped, lynched, enslaved or disenfranchised because of Malcolm X? No Malcolm X paraphernalia can compare to the violence and intolerance the symbol of the Confederate flag possesses.

The suffering the Confederate flag signifies is deep and painful. Leatrice Porcher, civil rights activist, stated, "The reason they (whites) wear it is not important because to blacks all it symbolizes is bigotry and hatred. Most blacks see it as a slap in the face of civil rights. It shows they (whites) would rather see blacks as slaves than as equal

ings of disrespect, hatred, senseless murder and bigotry. It is possible to have white pride without disrespecting and mocking black pride.

All Southerners should have pride in the South, in their community and their culture, but by promoting the Confederate flag as the symbol of Southern pride excludes and offends a large amount of Southerners. The Confederate flag should be abandoned and a new symbol of peace that respects, if not encompasses, all should be adopted.

Christian Robbins is a junior speech communications major.

threw out the Japanese, Korean and Vietnamese displays for international week.

The fact the the Memorial Student Center is dedicated to the memory of men who died fighting against people from these countries would not be justification for such violence.

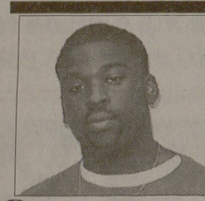
Likewise, it would be shocking if German and Japanese students protested around the statue of Colonel Rudder because he is remembered for leading a surprise attack on German soldiers. If German and Japanese students held a vigil on the grass of the MSC,

argue, concerns what the flag stands for. To many native Southerners the Confederate flag stands for many things. It stands as a symbol of pride for the actions their ancestors took standing up for what they believed in and fighting the oppression of the Yankees.

Others see the flag as a symbol of Southern life. South of the Mason-Dixon line people act quite differently than Northern folk. For example, everyone has heard of our famous Southern hospitality, no where else on Earth can you find it. Down here men hold doors for ladies and respectfully address them as m'am, the reason

Society's double standards unfair to members of both genders

What is good for the goose is good for the gander." In an era when this country has witnessed such technological advances as the Flowbee, the Clapper and Ron Popeil's spray-on hair in a can, it is a shame that the progress of sociological equity between the sexes is stuck in neutral.



DEMOND REID

The double standards that exists between men and women may have been necessary when everyone thought the world was flat but now, a double standard between the sexes is about as necessary as a life maker on the Titanic. The full brunt of the double standard bat comes down most heavily in the arena of sexual activity. Recently, Paschal Sheeran and other psychologists reported in the Journal of Psychology their findings from a survey they conducted on teenagers concerning social judgments of sexual activity. The respondents were to estimate the number of sexual partners of the average 20-year-old man and

woman and evaluate them on positive and negative dimensions. The researchers found that women were expected to have fewer sexual partners than men, and female sexual activity was judged more negatively than male sexual activity. This study is a statement about society as a whole.

Somewhere along society's evolution it became acceptable for men to poke anything in a skirt they could find, while women are expected to sit at home twiddling their thumbs. That just ain't right.

It is not being argued that all morality should be thrown out and this country be turned into Sexapalooza '99. Nor is it being argued that this entire country should take a collective vow of celibacy.

But rather a middle point between the two ideas, because sex is a gift from God that should be given in a long term, loving, monogamous relationship, preferably marriage.

This particular double standard has become so internalized that the perpetrators of it do not even realize that they are doing it. The majority of men who subscribe to the "I don't respect a woman who sleeps around" doctrine are probably the same promiscuous males who have plugged more holes than Fix-A-Flat.

Boys and girls, can you say "hypocrite?" Now before the females begin male bash-o-rama remember, much like Dennis Rodman, the double standard pendulum swings both ways.

The double standard of men having to foot the

"The economy is now good enough for every person to foot their own bill. This may not be Holland but couples can certainly go Dutch."

bill is as outdated as the musket. It is socially acceptable for a man to take a woman out and shower her with gifts and money, but if the positions were reversed the man would be viewed as some kind of lazy gigolo. What kind of Uncle Jed/Lil Abner backwoods-type logic is that? That just ain't right.

Maybe in the past when women were about as employable as an one-armed boxer it was okay for

the standard to be the man to always foot the bill. But it is 1999, and like Virginia Slims say, "You have come a long way, baby," so pull out that checkbook. The economy is now good enough for every person to foot their own bill. This is not Holland, but couples can certainly go Dutch.

To any man not heeding this sage wisdom keep in mind a bit of knowledge. No matter how much money a guy spends on a date, it does not entitle him to sex, that is just silly.

People who accept double standard pretenses seldom wish to own up to their personal shortsightedness. They tend to blame it on society. "It isn't me, it is what society says." A person should never let society do their thinking for them. It is society that has allowed ghastly abominations such as the institution of slavery, the Salem witch trials and Vanilla Ice's second album.

There may be two sexes, but their is only one race, the human race. Everyone in this race is equal and should be judged by the same sociological standards and any double standard is wrong.

Demond Reid is a sophomore journalism major.