

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

*The following petition was endorsed by over 1,000
Duke Students along with recent graduates:*

WHAT DOES A SOCIAL DISASTER SOUND LIKE?

On April 6th of last year a full page ad ran in The Chronicle signed by 88 professors and 16 academic programs and departments at Duke University. Weeks before any indictment was issued, in disregard for due process, our own professors projected guilt onto our peers on the lacrosse team. In the ad they not only tacitly supported the accusations of the now utterly discredited accuser, but praised protestors who similarly rushed to judgment, while levying baseless accusations of racism against our student body.

In a time of intense emotions and enormous stakes, when our community dearly needed a call for calm, for patience, for rational and careful thinking, these professors instead took a course of action which escalated tensions, spurred divisions along lines of race and class and brought our community into greater turmoil. Their actions also further undermined the legal process and most likely emboldened a rogue district attorney.

WE, THE STUDENTS OF DUKE UNIVERSITY, DEMAND AN APOLOGY FROM THE GROUP OF 88

As students who love Duke we are ashamed by the apparent decision of these faculty members to exploit a tragic situation to further their own political and social agendas. As an institution of higher learning we expect our professors to provide a model of intellectual integrity to which we can aspire—not to act with reckless disregard for fairness, justice and jurisprudence, and then callously refuse to make an apology or accept responsibility for their actions.

For those who would argue their ad has been mischaracterized we offer the following excerpts, which leave no doubt as to the material it contained—

“Students are shouting and whispering about what happened to this young woman...”

“If something like this happened to me...what would be used against me—my clothing? Where I was?”

“No one is really talking about how to keep this young woman herself central to this conversation, how to keep her humanity before us...”

“To the students speaking individually and to the protestors making collective noise, thank you for not waiting and for making yourselves heard.”

Some of the Group of 88 went even further in their ill-begotten rush to judgment. Some professors are alleged to have maligned lacrosse players in their courses; Professor Kim Curtis is alleged to have failed a student (with a 3.5 GPA) simply because he was a member of the team.

Other professors have made some truly shocking public statements, such as—

Prof. Houston Baker's claim of “Young, white, violent, drunken men among us - implicitly boasted by our athletic directors and administrators - have injured lives,” and his remark that the lacrosse team “may well feel they can claim innocence and sport their disgraced jerseys on campus, safe under the cover of silent whiteness. But where is the black woman who their violence and raucous witness injured for life? Will she ever sleep well again?”

Prof. Mark Anthony Neal's claim that, “Regardless of what happened inside of 610 N. Buchanan Blvd, the young men were hoping to consume something that they felt that a black woman uniquely possessed.”

President Brodhead has yet to come forward and defend his students against the assaults launched by his own faculty.

WE CALL UPON PRESIDENT BRODHEAD TO FINALLY STAND UP FOR HIS STUDENTS

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