

October 24, 2017

From: The VSA Executive Board
To: President Bradley

We, the VSA Executive Board, are writing to you on behalf of the students of Vassar College, especially those that are of marginalized identities and the hundreds that attended the Healing 2 Action meeting held on Monday, October 23, 2017. This is especially in reference to the event now entitled “An Examination of Hate Speech and Free Speech on College Campuses” - the event was previously titled “Hate Speech is Still Free Speech Even After Charlottesville” - taking place on Wednesday, October 25, 2017 in Rockefeller Hall 300 and the pain and anxiety that has caused among students. However, as we hope you realize, the issue is not limited to the event alone, but extends to a range of problems, both historical and contemporary. We draw your attention below to a list of actions that we suggest should be taken in the short term as the campus community gets together to discuss longer term goals:

- Acknowledge that the pain people are feeling is real and legitimate and that your future actions as President of the College reflect this realization
- Explore the breaching of the contract signed with William A. Jacobson on the basis of the information presented below
- Reach out to faculty to make them aware of and acknowledge the pain and emotional toll students are facing right now and will face this week, so that a strict adherence to deadlines on academic work is not an additional and unjust burden on students
- You reach out to staff members, especially those that are in and clean Rockefeller Hall to ensure that they feel safe and included in the community

Additionally, we would like to bring to your attention the actions taken by students this week led by our peers in the Healing 2 Action group:

- Safety teams are being formed to ensure students feel safe during this event. People who wish to attend the event will be advised on best practices and ways to engage and be safe at the same time.
- A community gathering is being organized in the library during the time of the William Jacobson event in collaboration with faculty members to not only reclaim the space after the despicable anti-black acts that occurred there in Spring ‘17, but also to gather and celebrate our community and show that our values are different.

Below are writings by Jacobson that demonstrate the many ways that he violates principles that we stand for as a VSA and as Vassar College. They show the ways in which they are racist, sexist, and transphobic actions and views that are antithetical to this campus:

<https://legalinsurrection.com/2017/10/progressive-stack-racialgender-speaker-hierarchy-an-occupy-wall-street-legacy/>

- In an online essay published Sunday, Oct 22nd on <legalinsurrection.com>, Jacobson publically criticized UPenn graduate student Allison Burtch for using the education policy/tactic of the Progressive Stack in her classrooms, which prioritises the voices of WOC, then MOC, then WW, then WM, calling it “racist and misandrist” betraying his belief in the oppression of white people and of men.
- In that same article, he referred to the centering of black voices/bodies at a BLM rally as “racial segregation”
- He quoted someone who said that “Anti-Semitism is a conspiracy theory”
- Further, he denied accusations that he is a white supremacist

<https://legalinsurrection.com/2017/10/its-still-the-illegal-immigration-stupid/>

- He has called accusations of racism made by the Obama campaign false, and regressive for society: “The suppression of legitimate political expression through false accusations of racism by the Obama campaign and its supporters is the defining theme of the 2008 campaign. This tactic, while it may be successful, is shameful and has damaged our society in ways we may not understand for years.”
- He undertook actions that undermined the Obama administration, including making claims that people only voted for him because he’s black,
- On immigration, he says that “open borders” and immigration represent the “growing lawlessness of society” and “poses an existential threat to our freedoms”
- He also believes that immigration policies based on amnesty (or the occurrence of immigration in general) will mean we don’t have a country (“no border, no country”)
- He references an older article in which he calls those that discuss racism, “anti - American zealots”

<https://legalinsurrection.com/2017/10/speaking-at-vassar-on-october-25-hate-speech-is-still-free-speech-even-after-charlottesville/>

- He was the headliner of an event formerly titled “Hate Speech is Free Speech Even After Charlottesville.” This title defends the actions in Charlottesville and should show that he’s a white supremacist.
- In publicizing his Vassar visit, he comments: “The event is open to the public. So if you’re in the neighborhood, drop by. I love that.”
- This is an active encouragement for other white nationalists to come to the event

<https://legalinsurrection.com/2017/10/all-is-proceeding-as-dreaded/>

- He utilizes a picture in which two white people appear to be raising their fists in the same symbolic manner as the Black Panther Party, this is clear appropriation and disrespect of the Civil Rights movement
- He believes that men stepping back and listening to women in the STEM fields, is damaging: “There goes STEM”
- He cites an article concerning the Associated Press’s decision to use gender neutral language, as “wrongheaded”

<https://legalinsurrection.com/2016/01/at-anti-racism-rally-whites-allowed-to-speak-only-after-people-of-color/>

- He is a police brutality apologist, citing that the “[murders] of Sandra Bland and Tamir Rice” - among others - were executed by the “allegedly racist violence by police.”
- As with several of the other points above, he goes on to make a statement about a rally held at Ithaca College where the people of color there were given priority speaking over white people. He found this appalling “because ‘people of color’ will be given preference in speaking over whites.” At an anti-racism rally. Seriously.” and proceeded to claim that “fighting racial discrimination justifies [Ithaca College protester’s] own racial discrimination” against white people.

<https://legalinsurrection.com/2008/10/obama-is-door-no-2/>

- He writes, in a response to Former President Barack Obama’s 1st presidential campaign, “As in Let’s Make a Deal, choosing Door No. 2 carries great risks. So does choosing Obama. Obama may be a post-racial healer, or he may be someone who carefully uses race and *false accusations of racism* to advance his political career.” Italics added for emphasis.

<https://legalinsurrection.com/2017/09/survey-nfl-brand-severely-damaged-by-take-a-knee-protests/>

In a point to delegitimize the Colin Kaepernick-led NFL protests, he writes:

- To me, at least, the “locking of arms” by the Packers and Bears last night only exacerbated the problem.”
- “I don’t want politics on the field, so whether it’s taking a knee during the National Anthem, taking a knee before the National Anthem (the Cowboys option), or locking arms as a form of protest, it’s just variations on a brand damaging theme.”

<http://www.nationalreview.com/article/421077/trumps-lesson-voters-are-furious-about-illegal-immigration-william-jacobson>

He writes about Donald Trump's push a border wall and the eliminating of "illegal immigrants" in the United States:

- "One would expect legal immigrants to have low crime rates, since they are, by definition, the type of people who follow the law."
- "Any murder or crime by an illegal immigrant is one too many, because *that person should not be in our country in the first place.*" Italics for emphasis

<https://legalinsurrection.com/2017/09/the-nfl-is-like-a-loveless-marriage-now/>

He writes in response to the NFL protests:

"And what we know, of course, the NFL doesn't allow all political statements. When the Dallas Cowboys wanted to wear stickers on their helmets honoring the Dallas policemen who were killed ... they wouldn't allow that.... *Not all political messages are acceptable in the NFL. The only one that seems to be acceptable in the NFL now is one that is Black Lives Matter, left-wing, to some extent anti-American, not completely. The whole thing has just sickened me....*

As if most people on their job are allowed to hold a protest. Can you imagine if you're working in a restaurant, and the waitresses and waiters get together and say, "We're going to hold a protest in the restaurant." Or if you're working in a supermarket or a department store. *That doesn't happen to real Americans*, it only happens in the NFL and other major league sports with multi-millionaire spoiled athletes who are pushing a left-wing agenda. *And that's what's so disgusting.*" Italics added for emphasis

On his website, he is seen pictured with Bill Quick, from the Daily Pundit. On Bill's website, there is a post where he writes - in response to an article titled "Underwear Bomber Says Prison Rules 'Severely Restrict' His Practice of Islam" - "Kill yourself. Then Then you can practice Islam all you want." in a thread titled "Annnd...It's Muslims."

We strongly urge you, on account of students undergoing serious and real pain, to take our words and ideas seriously, and work towards breaching the contract, ultimately preventing him from coming to campus on Wednesday. On account of the timeframe under which we are operating, we urge the College to undertake speedy and urgent action, as outlined in the beginning of this

communication, for the wellbeing of our community. We also urge you to denounce the sentiments and ideologies underlying these types of events, instrumentalizing the language of “free speech” to allow a platform for **hate**. We urge you to think critically about these things. Rather than just engaging the abstract, we urge you to understand how these ideas have *physical implications for the safety and well-being of real students on this campus*. Ideas are not merely esoteric concepts; they have historically (and presently) been used to silence and justify extreme violence. William Jacobson’s rhetoric and worldview is an illustrative example of where we locate this violence; this is not “free speech.” This is sanctioned violence hiding behind the veneer of liberalism.

The VSA Executive Board