

Appendix D

Statement from UNC Black Faculty on Silent Sam

As UNC Black faculty, we occupy a unique position relative to the Confederate monument known as “Silent Sam.” When the Daughters of the Confederacy commissioned the monument for the University, when University donors offered resources to support its completion, when the University paid the remaining balance, and UNC Board of Trustees member Julian Carr delivered his racist remarks at its dedication, we doubt any envisioned Black faculty as vibrant and necessary members of the University’s intellectual, cultural, and social community. In 1913, the Confederate monument did not stand in opposition to the stated values and mission of the University. In 2018, it most certainly does. It has done so since the University chose to admit the first Black student or offer the first Black faculty member a contract for employment. We have witnessed a monument that represents white supremacy in both the past and present be venerated and protected at the same time that we have been asked to serve as examples of diversity and inclusion. That is a demoralizing burden.

A monument to white supremacy, steeped in a history of violence against Black people, and that continues to attract white supremacists, creates a racially hostile work environment and diminishes the University’s reputation worldwide. For us, arguments of moral equivalency are extremely problematic; there are not two morally valid sides to the history the monument represents nor to its current significance. Without brave acts of civil disobedience that changed the moral character of the nation and advanced the cause of justice, Black faculty, staff, and students would not be here. To reinstall the Confederate monument to any location on UNC’s campus is to herald for the nation and for the world that UNC is not a welcoming place for Black people.

We, the undersigned faculty, urge the Chancellor, Provost, Board of Trustees, and Board of Governors to permanently remove the Confederate statue and its pedestal from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. There is no way to re-erect the statue without valorizing an incomplete version of history. A symbol of racism, violence, and white supremacy has no place on our 21st century campus often called the “University of the People.”