



Office of the President

April 10, 2019

Dear Hollins community,

Last week, I shared with you that through an internal review, we found images of blackface and other racially insensitive materials in past editions of our yearbook, *The Spinster*. While all hard copies of *The Spinster* continued to be available for viewing in the Wyndham Robertson Library and Cromer Bergman Alumnae House, I temporarily put on hold digital access to the editions of the yearbook containing these offensive portrayals until we could develop and post educational materials explaining why these practices are insulting and degrading regardless of year or circumstance.

I want to let you know that [the preparation of the educational materials has progressed to the point where they have been posted](#), and there is now full access on Hollins Digital Commons to all editions of *The Spinster*. I am profoundly grateful to the Working Group on Slavery and Its Contemporary Legacies and the Wyndham Robertson Library staff for their collective efforts in crafting these educational materials. This is work in progress and additional information will be added in the future.

It is my deeply held belief that it is not enough to simply state that specific images or actions are racist. In an educational community particularly, we must go further and educate “why” in order to move us, and society, ahead. The decision to temporarily remove the digital yearbooks was not an attempt to hide the history of race or racism on our campus or to censor information, but to take full responsibility and ensure that the images that our internal research identified as objectionable were viewed with the essential educational context.

I would like to thank our students, faculty, staff, alumnae/i, and the academic community who took the time this week to share thoughtful and insightful viewpoints, including strong disagreement on this difficult but very important issue. More than ever, I believe all of us are genuinely committed to playing an active role in solving the challenges that we face and to building a better future for Hollins.

Pareena G. Lawrence
President