

OPINION

On the art of walking and chewing gum

I used to think in black and white. I had strong opinions, a clear sense of what is right and the belief that my side was correct. Now, as I graduate, I am less sure of what I think. I am more reluctant to play the arbiter of good and bad. I take pride in my ability to understand many perspectives of an issue. This growth — or devolution — is, in part, due to my time with The Cavalier Daily.

I started at The Cavalier Daily in the spring of my first year. I was accepted to the opinion section after writing a sample op-ed about roommate selection in first-year dorms. My take was that the University should prohibit first-years from selecting their own roommates.

I remember writing this next to my roommate and best friend, Simon Anderson. There I was, a beneficiary of the freedom to pick my own roommate, writing about how future students should be stripped of the same opportunity. Simon was quick to point out the tension between our successful pairing and the stance I was taking — but that tension didn't bother me.

I loved living with Simon. It was also true that I thought the University could build bridges between

diverse students by seizing control of the roommate selection process. Those two truths could be reconciled. And, though I did not know it at the time, that op-ed inaugurated the project of reconciling conflicting truths that defined my career at The Cavalier Daily.

In my first role at the newspaper, I wrote a biweekly opinion column on student self-governance. In practice, I wrote about the need to reform the University's single sanction

newspaper to reconcile our love for the University with our belief that administrators must continue to find ways to serve the students this school was designed to exclude.

This progress-oriented ethos defined my tenure as executive editor, and later as editor-in-chief. During my leadership, we platformed marginalized perspectives, held our leaders accountable and defended the ideals of free expression — the bedrock of any academic institu-

made this journey possible. Thank you, Simon for putting up with my contradictions. Thank you to Eva Surovell for seeing something in me that I did not see. Thank you Ava MacBlane, Ava Proehl, Lexi Baker and Evan Crowne for being the friends who inspire me to dream big, and the kind of leaders who showed me what big dreams look like.

To my managing board — Charlie, Grace, Honor and Naima — thank you for keeping me sane

Kevin, James, Emma and Tommy — thank you for reminding me how to live life once I was done with The Cavalier Daily. You all are the best reminder that it is never too late to make life-long friends.

I want to offer unsolicited advice to the 136th Managing Board, current staffers and any future students who will call the Newcomb basement home. Each of you must learn to walk and chew gum at the same time — to recognize our community's shortcomings without losing sight of its promise. Student journalism, and life more generally, is about holding space for multiple conflicting truths. The University is a deeply flawed place, but it is also worthy of admiration. Fight for our school — defend its ideals, challenge it, ask for what you need and make room for those who have so far been excluded. Use this newspaper as your weapon of choice, and, in the end, the words you write will light the path towards a better University.

Nathan Onibudo was the Editor-in-Chief for The Cavalier Daily's 135th term, the Executive Editor for its 134th term and an opinion columnist during its 133rd term.

“Doing journalism was my way of loving and pushing this University to be the best it can be.”

honor system. I am a firm believer in being honorable, but I also believe in restorative justice. These were the two truths which anchored my journalism about the Honor Committee. I attempted to demonstrate that these truths could be reconciled.

This process deepened my appreciation for the University. It also heightened my awareness of the ways in which the University falls short. My peers and I used this

tion. Working as a journalist and leading The Cavalier Daily was my way of understanding the complexities of this space — inspiring deep affection in many of us, even as it frustrates, alienates and fails others. Doing journalism was my way of loving and pushing this place to be the best it can be.

Given the impact The Cavalier Daily has had on me, I'd be remiss if I didn't thank some of the people who

during an insane year. I may not be the best at showing it, but my love for each of you runs deeper than you know. I am proud of what we accomplished together, but I am more proud to have found friends as amazing as you. Jake Adler, thank you for being a thought partner in nearly all my intellectual endeavors — the only person with crazier takes than me is you. And, lastly, to Modern Friendship — Stepheney,

THE CAVALIER DAILY

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