

Point/Counterpoint

Are Chalk/Water-Soluble Shoe Polish Messages *Vandalism*?

Foles' Point

Student Printz reader Shawn Foles [provides](#) the USM community with a definition of *vandalism* by stating that the chalking represents vandalism “because of where it was put.” Foles cites the student organizations handbook, which apparently states that the only acceptable location for campus chalking at USM is “The Hub.” Chalking anywhere else is, according to Foles, *vandalism*, regardless of whether it’s done by Greek organizations or independents.

Foles adds to his shaky definition by pointing out that “Ms. Melissa” registers campus chalkers (i.e., gives permission, or not), and when there are cases of chalking outside The Hub, she contacts the chalkers and asks them to remove the chalking. Of course, this addendum admits that chalking outside The Hub area is not vandalism, which is what Foles wants to call the “Impeach Saunders!” messages, because Ms. Melissa does not contact USM police chief Bob Hopkins to ask him to pursue felony arrests of the chalkers. *No damage done* – she simply asks they remove it.

Northrup's Counterpoint

Student Printz reader Jackie Northrup [counters](#) Foles by pointing out that a proper definition of vandalism is not location-specific. Northrup cogently turns Foles’ argument around, pointing out that student groups that chalk outside of The Hub area are simply asked to remove it, while *understandably disgruntled* student who chalk without permission, and perhaps anywhere,, including The Hub, are threatened with felony charges.

Northrup also notes the outrageousness of offering a \$1,000 reward for the alleged vandals who didn’t caused any damage, as reported originally, particularly when the university is in a financial crisis: “Where [is the USMPD] getting the money for that [reward] when the ENTIRE school is apparently broke?” Sensing the ridiculousness of the “it’s a crime argument,” Northrup closes with the witty retort that the thought of having a friend turn one in on the chalking charge, only to split the \$1,000 reward with them later on, might be a fitting conclusion to what many see as the most farcical episode of USM’s year-long 100th birthday celebration.
