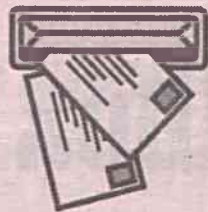


# Mailbox



## Especially in a time of war, women's rights need to be evaluated and practiced

### Obesity needs new strategy

In the past few decades one word has come to describe our nation: fat.

The obesity in Americans has skyrocketed and has become a serious health concern. Often we blame our recently developed plumpness on factors such as fast food; we are all familiar with the golden arches.

However, are Big Macs and French fries really the cause of obesity? Is it really fair to place the blame on these fast food chains?

Every year Americans spend millions of dollars trying to lose weight. Personal trainers, fitness clubs, and dietary supplements are all included in this nationwide frenzy to become fit.

Yet there is a slight glitch in this perfect plan; it isn't working. These methods of weight loss have been around for years, yet as a society we remain obese.

Obviously we need to develop a new strategy. Fast food chains will not be shutting down anytime soon. We need to stop focusing on them and start focusing on forming a new plan.

The United States has many different departments, including one that concentrates on Health and Human Services.

However, this department has enough to deal with already and so the physical health of citizens is not a top priority. Has anyone ever considered developing a US Department of Exercise?

There are at least 100 other countries that provide and fund various physical activities for its citizens. This country could use the direction of such a high-level federal agency.

Right now people are recommended by the government to remain active but they are not required. Yes the ideas of the government regulating our physical activities seem a bit foreign but think of how beneficial this could be to our health.

We need a new strategy; it's as simple as that. We are already spending millions on weight loss and it is getting us nowhere.

Trying something new would be advantageous to our society. Honestly, besides a few pounds, what do we have to lose?

- Alison Fiske

### Latino citizens are creating diversity and growth

The record number of Latino immigrants in the Triad area is not a burden as some might believe, but rather a source of economic growth and resources. The influx of Latino immigrants not only creates jobs, but helps spawn new businesses and communities that add to the diversity of the region.

According to the National Census, during the time from 1990-2000 the Latino population has increased by 394%, while they have brought in multiple millions of dollars to revitalize the economy. Please consider doing a story about all of the Latin immigrants that are doing their part keep Alamance County a center for diversity and growth.

- Zack Kevit

Most Americans are familiar with the name Charles Rangel, a veteran Democratic Congressman from New York, whose recent proposition for a military draft has stirred up great controversy within the nation.

The reality of the situation is that a draft is more than just a possibility in the steadily approaching war with Iraq.

In the case that it becomes necessary to be reinstated, there is no doubt that women should be included in the proposal.

Contrary to drafts and wars of the past, women are currently a strong and able element of America's defense.

Between 1948 and 1967, women's presence in the military was a mere 2 percent, but presently, females represent nearly 15 percent of all active-duty military personnel and cover more than 90 percent of military career fields.

In 1994, when the dispute over whether women should be required to register was resur-

gled, political fallout was a major concern.

However, due to America's demanding state of urgency, expanding registration beyond just men is no longer a likely political threat.

Also, it is time for America to stop prohibiting women for having unsatisfactory upper-body strength.

With all of the advances in technology, the matter of physical body strength is no longer a contestant for significant concern.

Co-ed crews have even been shown to perform better than all-male units while the number of females pursuing the service as a legitimate career option continues to grow.

Furthermore, Americans live by the value that women be treated equal to men.

So why should they be denied the right to conduct their national duty and sense of patriotism in the same ways that men are permitted?

The addition of women to the

draft would make a strong statement about America's shared national responsibilities, symbolizing a united front.

Although the American public is almost evenly divided on the question of whether women should be drafted, adding women would certainly improve the country's preparedness in the chance of war.

Women have proven themselves to be just as beneficial and capable to the military service as men.

We are living in a time where institutional discrimination is not to be tolerated.

Adding females to the reinstatement of a draft would be in America's best interests socially, politically, and defensively.

Especially in times like these where unity is crucial, women should not only be considered equal, they need to start being treated as equals.

- Jaime Moulton

### Before talking behind someone's back, think about the repercussions and be compassionate

Between classes one day a conversation deeply disturbed me. A handful of students were spitefully discussing a fellow student and how he never talks to anyone, saying because of his pessimism he is probably the next psycho serial killer.

I shuddered at their malicious snickers and judgmental remarks. Did they ever consider he isn't like that by choice? The world is a dark place for some.

I wish I could have made those girls recognize that they just don't understand.

But you may understand all too well.

Maybe you know what it's like to disregard what you used to care about, to struggle to find even a little happiness through the day.

Unfortunately these are all normal feelings—they are a signs of depression. Fortunately there is help.

However, there are many reasons the people who need help tend to be reluctant to get it.

There are 18 million Americans suffering from depression, but a third to half never receive treatment. 80-90 percent of symptoms are relieved by medication and/or therapy. There is help. So why don't people get it? Ignorance plays a large part, a misperception that depression is a personal weakness rather than what it actually is—a disease. 31,000 Americans a year commit suicide, twice the number of gun murders.

So why doesn't the government do something instead of cutting the budget \$800 million?

Why is there so much focus on gun control suicide is on the rise?

Americans need to open their eyes.

Perhaps we should stop demanding understanding from others when we can't even understand each other.

-Lynne Wedul  
Sophomore