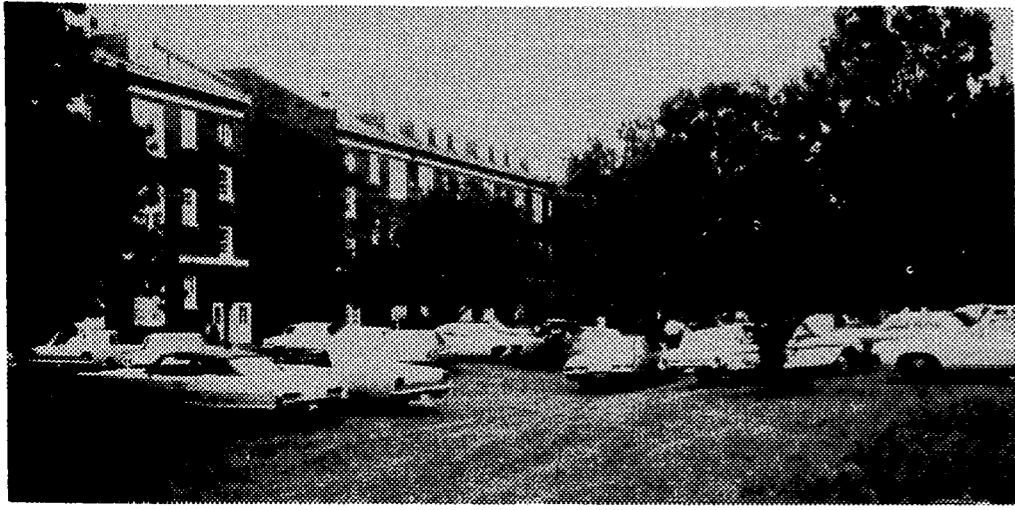


# Orientation Is...



... a jumble of cars, daddies carrying teddy bears, shoes, pocketbooks, and dresses, and mass confusion!

(Editor's note: Here, for those freshmen who don't remember and would probably like to forget, and for upper-classmen who need to be reminded what it's like "that first week," is a word-and-picture essay on the trials and tribulations of Orientation, suitable for framing.)

Orientation is a scary sort of thing. Suddenly, there you are, faced with the awful prospect of "leaving home" or leaving boyfriend, to venture into an unknown world where a, probably, unknown roommate awaits you.

It's confusing, trying to unpack, make up your bed, at the same time getting acquainted with your roommate, suitemates, counselor, hall proctor — not to mention parents. It's confusing, too, trying to remember the names of all the buildings, the times for all the meetings and your box number.

It's tiring — it's definitely tiring! Up every morning by 7:15, off to a meeting by 8:30, taking what seems like reams of tests, standing in line — the lunch line, the BeeHive line, the post office box line, the registration line, the formal reception line, the buying books line — for hours on end.

It's having fun, at picnics, at parties. It's laughing at "Meredith Handstands," emceed by "Click Dark," or "Slick Bark" or whoever. It's singing "Pass It On" at the MCA's folk worship, and suddenly feeling a little more secure, a little closer to . . . well, Someone. It's cheering on your favorite minister at a "Meet-the-Ministers" picnic. It's eating TONS of potato salad and fried chicken and baked beans and potato chips.

It's seeing a lot of people you didn't and don't know — people who smile and say "Hello!" as you pass. A lot of those people you will never know personally, but at least you will always say "Hello!" It's feeling "known" — a part of the people you meet.

And most of all—Orientation is learning new things — about yourself, about others and about life. It's gaining a whole new list of friends you might never have known otherwise — friends who will be the closest to you of any you've ever had, probably. It's having bridge parties and coke parties and just plain talk parties in the dorm — and thus finding your friends.

And when orientation is over, and you have registered and been partied



... standing in line, as at registration, where these freshmen demonstrate perfect "line-forms-to-the rear" technique, following four day's uninterrupted practice.

and picnicked and talked with and at — then is the time to sit down (because it will probably be your first opportunity to do so) and look back on Orientation. When you do, then you will find — like thousands of freshmen before you at Meredith — that Orientation is "the most awful, exhausting, boring, time-wasting, horrible . . . WONDERFUL time of your whole life!"

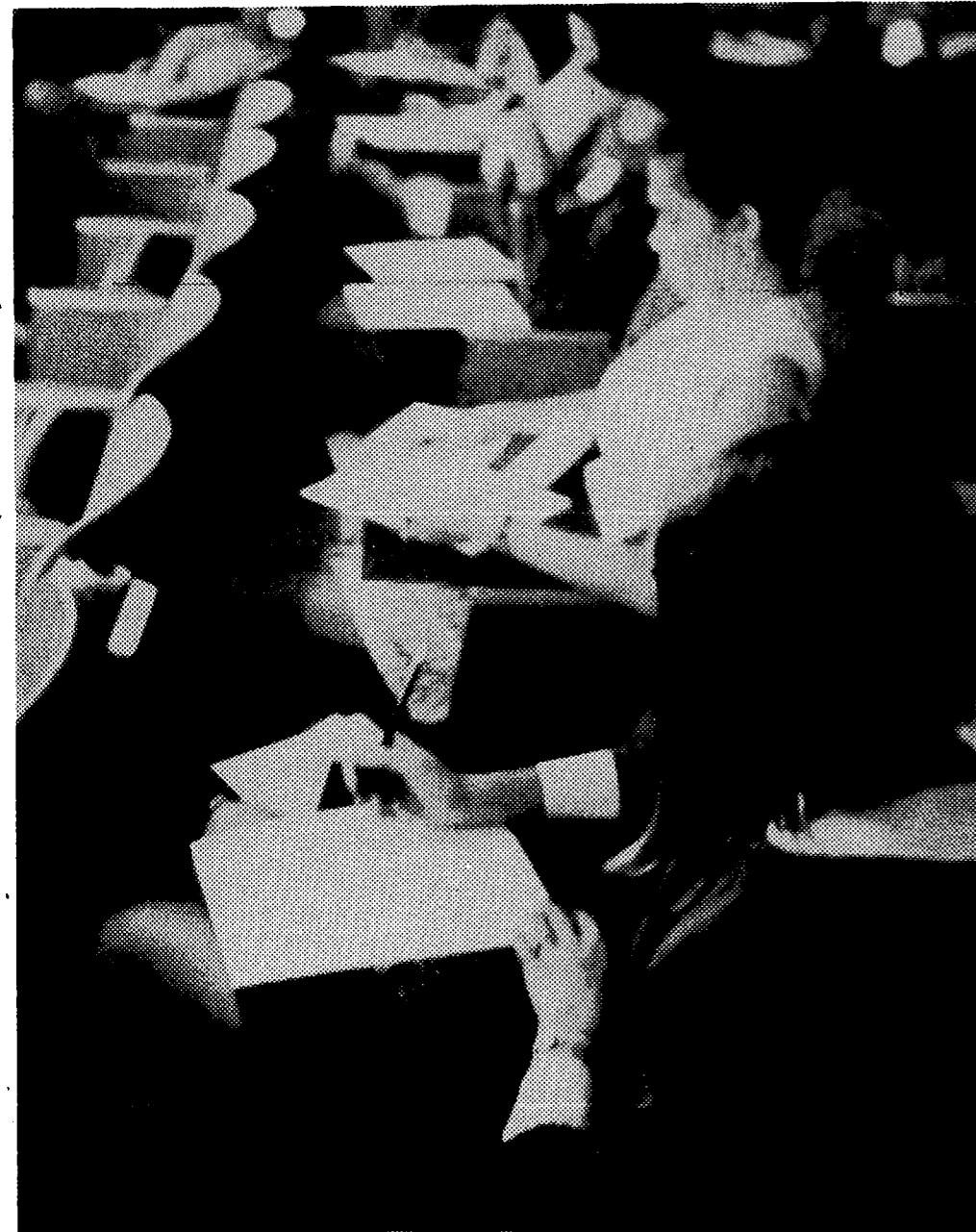
And that, despite, all the meetings and early hours, is just what Orientation is — a horrible, happy time.

There will be other times at Meredith which will seem more happy, of course—at least on the surface. There will be that "good" blind date, special days like Cornhuskin' or Stunt, or even an "A" on that particularly hairy quiz.

But face it — there will never be another time quite like Orientation — a time when you were a "green" Freshman and came to be — really — a part of the girls and the school — a part of Meredith herself.



... and making new friends, learning about others—the most important part of the Orientation whirl.



... taking tests, tests and more tests—personality, culture, language—and your legs growing into the shape of a lapboard.

Story and Photos  
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Brooks McGirt

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