



**THE**  
MEREDITH

**TWIG**  
COLLEGE

## Rechannel goals

The obtaining of the 5-year Advancement Program goal on Founders' Fay is to be commended, but we must now be assured that our sights will be turned inward toward the educational process itself. Granted, the 5 new buildings are essential to the student development here, but the emphasis on physical growth must now be placed into intellectual growth. Meredith now has the facilities to create a strong intellectual environment and to make plans for a wide variety of educational opportunities and goals. We can no longer afford to allow our financial success to be extended only to the building of structures; we must strive for the building of greater academic integrity. These statements are not to infer that Meredith does not have a strong sense of intellectual purpose now for the school is one of the strongest and most revered women's colleges in the South. I do infer a re-channeling of our financial resources into stronger academic programs, better salaries for professors, and increased library facilities. Dr. Weems has committed us to this new goal, but we must also commit ourselves to cooperate in the production and stimulation of a stronger intellectual environment.

JFS

## Unfair laws keep Communists out

This past Monday in chapel a representative from the Russian Embassy was supposed to speak. Last week Dean Burris received a call from the Embassy informing him that the speaker would not be able to come due to a law in Wake County that forbids any Communists from entering the county. Confirmed by Ike Andrews, this statement was accepted and the Russian was unable to appear. If this law is a carry-over from the 1950's or from the 1960 speaker ban laws, it desperately needs to be revoked, and we as students at Meredith could have a voice in the action.

One of the most important aspects of education is the introduction of ideas different from ones accepted as part of growing up. The questioning of these ideas or the challenging of their validity as life-styles enables people to grow to a better understanding of their own cultures as well as of others. Without the opportunities for encouraging these confrontations, stale environments develop in which opposing ideas are not accepted or challenged, and indeed in which accepted ideas are not even challenged.

If communists are not allowed in Wake County due to some past law which was made during the "Red Scare" or even during the speaker-ban controversy, then we must immediately work to clear up this past mistrust. We must question the origination of this law and work to get it changed if possible. We must, above all, remain open to the freedom of other cultures to live a philosophy and to believe in it. We do not have to accept the communist party goals in order to accept the people who believe in them. We merely need to be open so that a better mutual understanding between the U.S. and Russia can occur.

JFS

## Letters to the editor

Dear Editor:

In response to letters recently published in the TWIG concerning the construction of the President's Dining Room vs. the inadequacies of the Music Department facilities, I would like to mention another area at Meredith that needs improvement. Although the Music Department does have its inadequacies, the tendency is to be concerned with the area in which you are most interested. My interest, along with the interests of a great many other Meredith students, lies in the area of the equitation program. I am not ashamed to admit that the riding facilities there had a great deal to do with my choice of Meredith. I have participated in the program for four semesters, and each semester has seen the further deterioration of the program. The Meredith catalogue for the year 1972 states that instruction is offered in "saddle and forward seat and western."

Saddle seat is almost exclusively taught. The college jumps were stolen years ago, and replacement -- due mostly to lack of funds -- has been impossible. For the two years I have been here, a dressage ring has been promised but has never materialized. The present ring, like Crabtree Valley Mall, becomes flooded every time it rains, thus making it impossible to work

in the rings. A paddock -- built on a slope -- was torn down and has not yet been replaced. Repairs are notoriously slow at the stables. A stall was unused for at least a three-week period because the door was off and wasn't repaired. The water system has been recalcitrant the entire year, and water has to be carried by hand. Efforts to correct these faults and others too numerous to mention have been almost totally ignored. The stables seem to be the "dark horse" of the Physical Education Department. A comparison between the new Weatherspoon Gymnasium and the stables is all that is needed to point this out.

When the equitation program seems to attract so many students to Meredith, it seems ridiculous, and at the least unbusiness-like, to neglect it so totally. If given adequate facilities and promised additions, the stables could attract even more students. At the moment, only discouragement meets the excited equitation students.

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Dear Editor:

Recently, when several of us were discussing the pass-

age by the student body of the SDH proposal for sophomores, one girl commented that though she was against the legislation she had not bothered to go to SGA because "it was going to pass anyway, so there was no use in going". To me this struck the nerve of what should be an issue of burning importance on the Meredith campus -- student apathy. With the type of self-government, student government, which we have here at Meredith it is every student's duty, as well as their right, to express their views. Through the hall proctor system and monthly SGA meetings we have tried to make our student government as campus-wide as possible, and yet this year attendance at SGA meetings has been, to put it plainly, pitiful. Many changes could, and should, be made at Meredith, but it will take an alert, interested, and actively involved student body to make them. Though I personally did not agree with them, I had to admire the few girls last Friday who had the courage of their convictions to vote "nay" against a vast majority of "yeas." Let us hear your voice. We do not elect our officers so we can sit back and let them run things for us. Student participation is an essential goal, and is desperately needed.

Leza Wainwright

## Violence as a life-style questioned in STRAW DOGS

No one knows how far he can go in defending himself until the time comes; those who scorn murder may be the first to shoot, and, likewise, those who confidently boast of their ability to act under pressure may find their fingers frozen on the trigger. Such is the question explored in Sam Peckinpah's "Straw Dogs," wherein Dustin Hoffman is initiated into the tribe of humanity as he answers the question for himself. Forced to defend himself, his home, a somewhat elusive character portrayed by Susan George, Hoffman must fight violence with violence.

After all, violence is a way of life for mankind, as the film points out. An American returning with his wife to the English village where she grew up, Hoffman encounters a series of people and events designed to wear him down or open his eyes, depending on one's point of view -- a brawl in the local pub, the presence of his wife's ex-lover and her casual encouragement of not only the lover's attentions but also those of all other available men, the discovery of his wife's cat hanged in the wardrobe, an accident where he hits a retarded man with his car, and the increasingly threatening demands that he turn the retarded man over to a group of angry villagers who accuse the man of seducing and murdering a young girl. At this point, a note of irony is injected, for the same men who cry for blood earlier raped Hoffman's wife. Oddly enough, Ms. George fails, for one reason or another, to report the event to her husband, so that Hoffman's only quarrel with the men is their insistence upon beating the innocent victim to death.

In the role of his brother's keeper, Hoffman begins with polite requests that a doctor and the police be called. He must resort, however, to boiling oil, a steel trap, a club, and a really amazing variety of weapons as the men force their way inside, hav-

ing murdered the local magistrate. Here, then, is the turning point of the hero's life. Called a coward by his wife, a fool by the men, and an "unknown quantity" by his own mathematician's mind, he must search within himself for the solution. The film goes into no detail of his inner struggle, it is obvious to the viewer, however, as Hoffman changes from the ten-his-shed mathematician at his blackboard to a quick-thinking killer with sweat beaded on his brow. In a period of a few hours, a man is brilliantly portrayed as one forced to realize his fullest capabilities, as one discovering what it is to be a member of the human race, as one recognizing the need for violence, if one is to survive.

So much for the hero; as for Ms. George, she is soon recognized as a member of that long line of traditionally portrayed women who can only be interpreted as feather-headed, teasing, disloyal sex objects. She plays the part well; there is no doubt in the viewer's mind that this is the true female. She is joined in her presentation of woman-kind by a younger version of herself who, in fact, tries to seduce the retarded man and

suffers for her sins when the poor man, frightened by the shouts of the approaching villagers, pulls her into a hiding place, unfortunately by the neck.

One cannot deny that the movie is well-done, the characters convincing, and the question hard-hitting. But one does well to look twice at the answer the film offers. Is violence a necessary and unavoidable part of life? Does one mature only when he accepts such a premise? Is peace of mind, survival itself, dependent upon the ability to inflict pain upon others for one's own gain? Does the very nature of the human being require such capabilities? That is, are men, by birth, creatures of violence? Thus, it seems that the viewer of "Straw Dogs" finds, in reality, not the answer to the original question (for it is hoped that no one will ever be pushed to the point of discovering it) but, in fact, more questions. And is this not, after all, the test of a "good" movie: one that not only touches the surface with entertainment but also probes the depths with thought?

By DEANA DUNCAN

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Member Associated Collegiate Press. Entered as second-class matter at post office at Raleigh, N.C. 27611. Published weekly....except during holidays and exams.

THE TWIG is served by National Educational Advertising Service, 18 East 50th Street, New York. Subscription Rates: \$3.70 per year.