

THE
MEREDITH



TWIG
COLLEGE

Abbott lecture good

I thought the turnout and the quality of questions at the Sidney Abbott lecture was excellent. The audience reacted to a controversial and sensitive subject with maturity and some thought-provoking queries. Anyone who had reservations about Ms. Abbott's appearance on campus should be placated by the event itself, which proceeded smoothly. (Except that it was almost unbearably warm in Jones auditorium that night; it would be nice if someday we could have an event in Jones when all the facilities therein function properly.) Thanks go to the SGA for making the Monday night event possible, after much effort and as Shakespeare has it "much ado about nothing."

Staff Editorial

New system needs chance

The TWIG wants the Registrar's Office to know that its efforts to find a new way of registration are much appreciated. We don't know if the new, non-Saturday registration is going to work or how many snafus the registrar's office will encounter but it is definitely encouraging to see that someone was listening to all the clamor for a new system. One hopes that neither faculty nor students will complain until the new method has been given a chance; we complained so long about Saturday registration that it is only fair to give this new method time to work.

E.E.H.

Questionnaire counted

In response to a letter to the editor in this issue, I want to explain what became of the convocation questionnaire which was run in the TWIG. After receiving approximately 135 responses from the student body, I tallied the results and reported them to the ad hoc convocation committee. This committee finished its work several Mondays ago when it passed a resolution which was sent to President Weems for consideration and approval. I refer those who missed the story to the article on the committee's resolution in last week's TWIG. It was interesting to read the letter to the editor in which the student's suggestions for improvement of convocation very nearly paralleled many of the proposals in the committee's resolution. Thanks for writing.

E.E.H.

Josey letter corrected

In last week's issue of the TWIG, there was an omission in the letter to the editor from Mary Bland Josey. Her letter contained an enclosed copy of a news article from a March 1972 News and Observer which reported that grade averages have risen at colleges across the country. Miss Josey noted that the newspaper carried the story with a large banner headline which indicated the surprise the news media apparently expected from the public. Since the TWIG could not reprint the News and Observer article due to lack of space, we omitted the reference to the enclosed article. Unfortunately, the omission deleted the only reference in the letter to the fact that grades have indeed risen at colleges across the country, a fact which Miss Josey quite rightly felt was of major importance. I hope that this somewhat clarifies her excellent letter and the TWIG apologizes to Miss Josey for the omission. Also, I would like to take this opportunity to note that if all members of the Meredith community could execute their duties and communicate as well as Miss Josey, this school could boast of the best in organization and efficiency.

E.E.H.

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Letters to the editor

Dear Editor:

In two recent editorials you made some observations about data on applications for admission and their implications for the academic life of the College. I think you and your readers would want to have these observations placed into the context of national trends, the current Meredith scene, and the purpose of the institution.

In regard to the effect that increased selectivity in admissions would have on the academic life of the campus, such selectivity would assuredly add a new dimension to our intellectual life. As for the prospect of stiffer competition in college admissions, however, we must be realistic. Nationwide we are in an era of a diminishing percentage of high school graduates entering college. Furthermore, both the percentage and the number of college-bound students who choose private colleges are declining. Around 1980 - a short six years from now - the actual number of high school graduates across the country will begin to diminish. Within this context, the admissions staff sees no great hope of Meredith's freshman applicant pool significantly increasing; and we shall likely be fortunate each year to be at "591 applications and holding."

Even though we see no real prospect of increasing our freshman applicant pool and therefore decreasing significantly the percentage of applicants who are accepted, we want to point out that the quality of entrance credentials of an entering class cannot automatically be deduced from the percentage of acceptance. It is instructive, for example, to compare the application, acceptance, and enrollment data of the freshman class that entered in 1963 - a year in which dormitory spaces at Meredith and nearly all colleges were at a premium - with comparable figures for the 1973 freshman class.

Type Data	1963	1973
Freshman Applications		
Applications	526	591
Acceptances	323	497
Percent of Acceptances	61	84
Enrolled	238	330

Fall Enrollment

Dormitory	737	1117
Total	833	1274

Freshman Class Credentials

1st Qtr. of high school class	83	81
'63 Average Total SAT vs. '73 Avg. SAT	+19	-19
(i.e., 19 points less in 1973)		
Avg. Total SAT in comparison with national average	+31	+66

(i.e., 34 point increase in 1973 over national average)

As the above data indicates, there is no material difference in the quality of the entrance credentials of today's entering freshmen, despite our current acceptance rate of 84 percent, and that of ten years ago when the acceptance rate was 61 percent. We attribute this fact to the belief that today there is considerably more pre-selection among our applicants. School counselors are more aware of the usual credentials expected of students enrolling and so advise college-bound students. Our own staff likewise does not encourage applications from students likely to be rejected. To do so would alien to our understanding of Meredith's concern for and our own personal interest in the student and her feelings.

Quite apart from the demographic information already cited, in thinking of the degree of selectivity in admissions appropriate for Meredith College, we must all remember the purpose and history of Meredith. It seems to me that our founding fathers did not envision Meredith as serving just the intellectual "cream of the crop." An institution of "higher order," yes! But as I read Dr. Mary Lynch Johnson's A History of Meredith College, I get the vivid impression that we were intended to be an institution of excellence for good-to-above-average students as well as for superior students. The 1969 Self Study and Planning Report contains a section on "The Desired Characteristics of the Student Body" as interpreted within the context of the College's history and purpose. I commend the reading of that section of the report, copies of which are in

the Carlyle Campbell Library, to all students and to all persons who have joined the faculty within the last six years.

In offering this broader perspective for 'The Twig's observations about selectivity in admissions, I in no way disagree with its basic concern that Meredith always enroll well-qualified students. It is indeed important that the College continue to enroll only those students adequately prepared for her academic program. To do otherwise is not in the best interests of any student or the college.

Mary Bland Josey
Director of Admissions

Dear Editor,

Required convocation, in my opinion, is the most ridiculous aspect of life at Meredith. As the handbook states on page 17: "As an integral part of community life, convocation seeks to offer a forum of ideas, presented in and through lectures, concerts, addresses, films and dramatic productions, to stimulate and add to the community's spiritual, intellectual, cultural, and social dialogue."

The only thing convocation has meant to me has been an extra hour of sleep on Monday morning. Very few of the programs are enlightening enough to keep me awake. Maybe the programs are interesting to some, but why should those who have other things to do with their time be forced to sit through a program of little value to them?

The manner in which the situation is handled has much to be desired. Having "guards" at the doors taking numbers makes a student feel as if she were in prison.

I have been told that the requirement is the only way that Jones Auditorium will be filled. This alone should be enough to make it clear that the majority of Meredith students are not interested enough in convocation for it to be continued in the same manner as now.

I realize that the convocation situation has not been completely ignored. On February 7, 1974, The Twig printed a survey which asked

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"We've got to do something about this image of yours..."