

THE
MEREDITH



TWIG
COLLEGE

When borrowing is stealing

In a state university in Virginia my sister was accosted on her way out of the dining hall by a woman posted at the door to prevent stealing. What was my sister smuggling out? A salt shaker? A plate of food? Her crime wasn't nearly that serious: she had attempted unsuccessfully to hide a grilled cheese sandwich under her coat.

My sister's plight with the authorities would almost be ludicrous if I didn't think that such policing might soon be in effect at the Meredith dining hall. In Miss Doss's story on page one of the issue, she recounted the large numbers of dishes, glasses, and flatware being spirited out of the cafeteria. Our "borrowing" is more accurately called "stealing." For every dish that is not returned to the cafeteria, the money that can be spent on our food is reduced.

Why has the problem been allowed to exist? One reason is that none of us realizes the effort and cost that goes into maintaining an effective cafeteria system. We get the idea that the cafeteria has an endless supply of dishes when we see stacks upon stacks of glasses and bowls and trays continually rolled out for our use. In reality, these dishes are washed after each meal and used three times a day. There is hardly a dish to spare.

A second reason is that we tend to think of our own needs before we ever try to understand institutional needs. When we take a glass out of the cafeteria, we think, "They won't miss just this one glass." We fail to see that in an institution, "just one glass" adds up to five or six hundred missing glasses. This kind of selfishness is related to the fact that we think of institutions, even small ones like Meredith, as faceless non-entities. When we take dishes out of the cafeteria, we are, in a way, rebelling against bureaucracy.

What should be noted, however, is that the Meredith bureaucracy is tied very closely to our own (or our parents') purse-strings. Meredith is doing well financially, but it cannot absorb the cost of selfishness. If dishes continue to disappear, we will be paying higher board fees later to cover the cost of replacing the dishes.

A third reason for the problem is that we refuse to call taking dishes out of the cafeteria what it is—stealing. Girls who throw dishes away have no respect for property. Girls who expect housekeepers or hall proctors to collect dirty dishes and take them back to the cafeteria have no respect for the time of others or any sense of obligation to the community. Girls who do not uphold the honor code by asking suitemates or hallmates to take care of the dishes they have accumulated only intensify the problem.

The solution, of course, is not benign neglect. And the solution is not establishing collection points for these stray dishes, either. Such a solution only bows to a custom of habitual stealing.

Instead, we must decide now that dishes are not to leave the cafeteria. We must learn that one eats her meals in the cafeteria and that she does not carry snacks out. We must see the economic, sanitary, and ethical problems involved in leaving dirty dishes outside our doors to be picked up by someone else. Some way or other, we must learn that, while the cafeteria services do indeed serve us, the people involved in those services are not to be subservient to our selfish desires.

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Dear Editor,

I am writing in regards to the article "Are We Racist." I am one of the two black freshmen.

I have nothing but high praises for those black girls who stuck it out four years at Meredith.

I am constantly being made aware of the fact that I am black. I don't want my teacher patting me on the head everytime I do something even half-good, or coming to me first when something is broken or mislaid.

I don't want the white girls bringing every black they know, no matter what shape or size, to meet me.

I don't want the girls to tell me that they sometimes think of me as one of them. I don't want them saying something like, "I know you can dance. All blacks can dance."

Since I've been here I think I have come as close as a person can come to thinking about committing suicide. Don't worry, when I think of all my black friends and relatives who are rooting for me, then it just gives me an extra boost.

Pray for me. If I can get through a year, then I can do almost anything.

Sincerely,
Debbie Raycrow

Dear Editor,

I for one was upset at the implication that Meredith practices tokenism. I am referring to the remarks in the "Letters" column of the November 17 edition of The TWIG.

It seemed that the author of the letter was enraged over the black-white ratio at Meredith. She chose the administration as her scapegoat. Here she places the blame, implying that Meredith turns away prospective students on the basis of their race.

The decision to come to Meredith, as is true of entering any college or university, lies only partly with the admissions office. Here, eligibility is studied. Any candidate must have completed the stated requirements. Meredith operates on a non-discriminatory policy, "does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies," and the like.

After a person's application to Meredith has been approved, the choice lies with the individual. Meredith cannot force any individual to enroll. Indeed, acceptance does not obligate a person to become a student.

The statement that Meredith "is not letting enough Blacks in" was unfair. As has been pointed out, the choice is not entirely Meredith's. Furthermore, "letting" more blacks in would only compound the problem of tokenism which the author claims exists here. For "letting" them in would mean that the students who come in under the provision were not eligible for admission to Meredith, but were allowed to enroll in Meredith because they are black.

The implication that one of Meredith's chief obligations

is "satisfying the parents which support the school (majority white)" was not only a slur to the college and the administration, but also to every student of Meredith—present and past. The chief obligation of any college, especially a "prestigious school" like Meredith, is quality education. Why should we not focus our attention there?

It is unfortunate that Meredith cannot be a paradise which pleases all. Such a situation would make everyone happy. But alas, that in itself is impossible. Countless girls have left Meredith because they were disappointed—regardless of their race. But is the administration to blame because Meredith did not hold a pot of gold at the end of the drive for each one? I don't think so.

In closing, I would like to commend the administration for their efforts. For as is evidenced by the progress and success of Meredith College since 1891, the administration has obviously been able to "have an open mind and work together." And we can only hope to have the good fortune of seeing that be a continual truth.

Jacque Lawrence

Dear Editor,

We are former Meredith College students.

We violated the drinking rule.

We were extreme - not in consumption, but in precaution.

We locked our door.

Why did we violate the drinking rule? (1) We were of legal age. (2) Due to the Meredith College parking policy, we were unable to have a car on campus. Therefore, our mobility to the designated "drinking areas" of Raleigh was limited to the bus system, hitch-hiking, blind dates, and other such inconveniences. (3) Had transportation been no problem, the choice of bars in Raleigh made drinking in our room that much more attractive.

Obviously, the rule is known.

But, face it...a lot of girls at Meredith College drink in their rooms, and will continue to do so.

Obviously the rule is not upheld.

The liquor check displayed the frequency of the violation (the percentage of violations would have been higher had the word not gotten out!). The time and effort in the prosecution of the violators would perhaps be more productive if directed to the re-examination of the drinking code.

Becky Minick
Kelley Blake
University of North Carolina
Chapel Hill

Dear Editor,

On Tuesday, November 9, 1976, the Executive Committee of SGA met and discussed the recent violations of the campus alcohol policy. We would like to share our views with the campus.

In deciding to conduct an alcohol search, we acted to

uphold college policies and to affirm the trust that the student body placed in us when they elected us to positions on the Executive Committee.

First, the College alcohol policy is set by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the philosophy of the SBC, and is a policy of which all students were aware when they matriculated at Meredith. We merely enforced this rule as we pledged to do when we took the oath of office.

Second, we felt we had a student mandate to carry out the search. Not only did the previous violators request the search, showing concern about the equity of the policy, but students not directly involved, those living with violators, feeling pressured and inconvenienced, also approached officials about a dorm check.

Our purpose was to let the student body know of our serious intent to enforce the stated alcohol policy (as we enforce all other college regulations). Despite the fact that some people escaped the search by receiving word-of-mouth warning through unofficial channels and were able to dispose of their liquor, we feel our basic goal was achieved—to clear the campus of alcohol and to make students think twice about having it on campus.

There was legitimate concern over the officers' right to enter a student's room to conduct a search. Before considering a search, we noted the fact that Meredith is a private institution and that the college, therefore, has the right to authorize official entry to students' rooms at any time for any reason. The Executive Committee consulted college officials before conducting the search and were assured of complete support.

By having a blanket check, we did not single out rooms presumed to contain alcohol. It was a real attempt to equalize every member of the student body and to assume each one innocent until liquor was found in her possession.

Sadly, it is true that weaknesses in the Honor Code were revealed by our search—that in order to maintain a climate of serious respect for college policy, we had to stoop to looking for violations. However, to have ignored these infractions of college policy, we felt, would have itself been a violation of the Honor System.

Finally, we must say that the actual manner in which the dorm check was carried out was less than efficient and not as uniform as would have been desirable. Should we see the need to use the recent search as a precedent for future checks, we hope to have these problems remedied.

We have received much comment about our actions, both positive and negative, and we appreciate your willingness to show your concern for your self-government.

The SGA
Executive Committee