

# Role of security guards disputed, confused

by Debbie Doss

The topic of security on the Meredith campus has been much discussed recently as the outbreak of strange men on the halls, cut screens, and doors propped open after closing hours continues.

The fact that a naked man could roam the Meredith campus for hours, enter several rooms, and then vanish without being seen by a Meredith guard has continued to be bothersome.

In an interview this week, Dan Shattuck, chief of security, explained some of the factors that contributed to the difficulty of his job, and sought to answer criticisms that he and his ten-man force are ineffectual in keeping Meredith students safe.

As for the reason that guards have not been able to apprehend the reported strange men on campus, Shattuck explained simply, "Most of the times, the calls are too late. If girls would remain calm, and call as soon as possible, we might be able to catch these men." By the time security receives notice of the presence of unusual characters on campus, he said, the intruders have been able to leave the campus entirely.

The problems of security, according to Shattuck, do not involve the training of his men or their ability to keep the campus safe, but are directly tied to the expectations that both faculty and students have of the guards.

"A very small percentage of our time is spent really dealing with security," Shattuck asserted. He explained that members of the Meredith security force spend most of their time doing courtesies for students and faculty.

"We are expected to be plumbers, electricians, mechanics, janitors, and everything else," he said. "Sometimes people even call on us just to be a personal delivery service."

Shattuck does not see such things as making repairs in the boiler room and fishing contact lenses out of drains as part of the duties of his force.

"I'd like to see us separated from building and maintenance," he said. "Let them take care of the boiler, the plumbing and electricity. My men don't know anything about making these repairs, and I'd rather not have the responsibility."

Another problem that Shattuck sees is the way he and his force are expected to act as errand boys and taxi drivers. "We don't mind jumping off a car that won't start or picking up girls who are stranded off campus," he noted, "but we really do this as a favor. It's not a part of our job."

He thinks the way guards are sometimes treated by students who call for help in such situations and then complain because it takes the guard a while to arrive is unfair.

One recent incident, when a guard went to pick up girls stranded at a local shopping center in the cold weather, and then was cursed for not arriving right away, has been cited as an instance of this misunderstanding of a guard's role. The same girls reported that the guard had been drinking on the job.

"My men have denied all such reports as these," Shattuck said. "I feel that the truth was greatly exaggerated."

Much of the security force's time at night is spent ushering girls coming in on SDH or lates into the dorms. Shattuck suggested that perhaps this procedure is also part of someone else's job, not his.

"I think these housemothers should be here for something other than to complain," he stated. "They ought to handle things in the dorms."

Proposing a system in which a resident advisor in each dorm would be responsible for letting students in her dorm after closing hours, Shattuck said

that a buzzer system could be used to call the guards in case of a student being a problem.

Because no job description for security officers seems to exist and because the force takes directions from three major college offices - those of Dean White, Mr. Baker, and Dr. Mason - it is perhaps difficult for the guards at Meredith to know exactly what their duties are. However, Dan Shattuck has his own idea of what the job should entail.

First, Shattuck believes that in any emergency situation, the guards should be available to help. This would include almost any circumstances on campus in which immediate help was needed.

But the main duty of a security guard at Meredith, according to Shattuck, should be patrolling of grounds and looking for anything unusual and potentially harmful to residents.

"Standing around is fine," he said, "if you're alert."

Is it also the responsibility of the guards to censure students for conduct on

campus? Many girls have complained that guards have embarrassed them when they were with their boyfriends parked in front of Johnson Hall by tapping on the window and insisting that they come inside, or in Cate Center, by disapproving of physical contact.

In a certain sense, Shattuck does see this as a legitimate duty of a guard. "We're not here to discipline girls," he said, "but we have been asked by students to stop couples from rolling around on the floor in Cate Center."

"We ask them to act like ladies and gentlemen," he stated. "We're here to remind them of the rules."

One final aspect of the security problems Meredith seems to be experiencing, according to Shattuck, is that girls don't take enough responsibility for their own safety. The fact that girls are leaving doors open at night and are even propping outside entrances open after closing hours indicates that they "don't take much thought or responsibility when it comes to security," he said.

## Career Planning Notes

### Career Panel Discussion

Interested in hearing professional women discuss their careers? Attend the career panels held for Career Planning Seminar students. Many of the panelists are Meredith graduates. Notices of these panels will be posted in the TWIG. On Monday, February 14, students will hear from Governor Hunt's deputy press secretary, a learning lab coordinator, an accountant, and an attorney. The panel will be in the Faculty Lounge, Cate Center, from 3:00 to 3:50 p.m. and is open to all interested students.

### Education Careers With The Federal Government

the Raleigh Federal Job Information Center is now accepting applications for professional career positions in education at GS 5, 7, and 9 levels.

Seniors interested in the field may qualify for positions with such federal agencies as the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Bureau of Prisons, the Government of D.C., Job Corps, Department of Defense, U.S. Office of Education, and the National Institutes of Education.

No written examination is required although for some positions NTE scores may be used to satisfy certain

requirements. Filing Deadline is February 28, 1977. More information is available in the Office of Career Services.

### Summer Workshops On Publishing Careers

This summer, New York University will conduct an intensive four week workshop led by a faculty of outstanding publishers in New York for recent college graduates who want to explore career possibilities in book publishing. Check the Career bulletin board for information request cards.

### Dental Admission Test Preparation Materials

The Division of Educational Measurements provides renew materials free of charge to candidates who sign up to take the Dental Admission Test. This is the only method by which these materials will be distributed. The Division recommends that candidates sign up early for the test to ensure that they receive a copy before the supply is depleted.

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