

Editorial: Change not negative

CHRISTINE LAUGHLIN
Staff Reporter

Webster is spinning in his grave over some people's definition of "change" around here. Change has a few meanings, but none of them are negative campaigning. Unfortunately, some members of the class of 2000 have failed to understand change in the same manner in which *The American Heritage Dictionary* and the better part of this campus do.

I admit, I was not extremely pleased with the latest campus elections. My displeasure had more to do with the facts that so many positions went unfilled and that so few people voted than with any ticket that ran. After all, the government that governs best is the one that vests its power "in the aggregate of the community; every citizen not only having a voice in the exercise of that ultimate sovereignty, but being at least occasionally called on to take an actual part in the government, by the personal discharge of some public function" (John Stuart Mill).

Maybe I have an advantage over the average student. As a political science major, I have studied politics, democracy, and the political process. The general idea behind "Democratic Participation and Political Education," by English philosopher John Stuart Mill, which is quoted above, is that democracy educates and improves its citizens by providing them with the experience of self-rule.

Granted, Meredith is no model of democracy (this calls to mind "O.O.C."s thoughts on the subject in her Oct. 8, 1997 "Point" that "the real authority at this school is the administration, namely the first floor of Johnson Hall"), but nonetheless there are solid democratic elements built into our student government system. Clearly, our democracy has failed to educate some citizens of the Meredith community.

Running on a ticket is the protocol for national elections, although in North Carolina statewide ballots are not on a ticket system. In Wake county, the city council and the mayoral candidates are elected individually rather than on a ticket system, much like our campus election system, but they are allowed to campaign together.

When Raleigh mayor Tom Fetzer ran for re-election in 1997, he and several city council candidates formed a ticket and ran together, as did several members of the class of 2000. This is not called a clique. It is called a ticket.

According to *American Heritage*, a ticket is "a list of candidates proposed or endorsed by a political party: a slate." The candidates who ran as a ticket were obviously endorsed by their constituency or they would not have won.

Like the Raleigh City Council, the SGA is not elected on a ticket system, which means voters are free to vote for any combination of the candidates, both on

and off any given ticket. I am not endorsing any candidate; I was not even eligible to vote in the class of 2000 elections. I am simply supporting our existing political system. Maybe this is one of the reasons our SGA has such little authority—the student body can not handle the responsibilities we already have.

Neither using the word "change" nor running on a ticket is listed as negative campaigning by the 1997-1998 Elections Board guidelines. I have searched the SGA constitution for a statement against either, but I have come up empty-handed. Yes, "Concerned Student," running for an SGA office "should be a challenge worth taking," only not too many people stepped up to the challenge.

And now those who did, both those who won and those who did not, are being criticized for doing so. As far as I can tell, Meredith has trained at least two women beautifully for the real world. Alison Flood handled her defeat with the grace and confidence that "A Concerned Student" could not.

And Erin Grant has handled her victory with the grace and confidence that "An Observant Outsider" could not. All those who ran for office deserve a round of applause. They had the courage to put their names out there, to fight the good fight, win or lose.

Letters to the Editor

Students respond to elections letters

Dear Editor,

I read with interest the letters to the editor in last week's Herald. I am always interested in those who write scathing letters and then leave their names off or request to have them not printed. I understand that there were those who were upset by the elections' outcomes, but they could have found a more mature way to present these objections. Mud slinging and back-biting should have gone out of a mature woman's life and way of communication with her diapers, pacifier, and thumb-sucking. I'm sorry to see that we have "women" on this campus who still use this tactic. I, by the way, was on campus during the campaigns and elections and saw none of the underhandedness and negative campaigning that these anonymous "women" are so concerned about, and, yes, I saw a lot.

We need to learn to work together on these things and accept the differences in the way we work, and, yes, campaign. The last I heard there were two parties in the USA—Democratic and Republican, and the last I heard (again) neither one of these parties are even close to giving up party politics.

Phyllis Mincey

Dear Editor,

Given recent concern which has been expressed regarding the class of 2000, we would like to take this opportunity to comment on the transition being made. We feel that during the past two years there has been tremendous support and unity in our class. We hope this will carry on through the remainder of our time here at Meredith.

Everyone in our class has played, and we hope will continue to play, an integral role in making the class of 2000 as great as it is. By working hard together, we see the transition into our junior year as being a positive one; however we can not do it without the entire support of the class. Our aspirations for the class of 2000 is to make it as great in the future as it has been in the past.

Respectfully submitted,
Alison Flood and Erin Grant

R.A. appreciates speedy action of campus police

Dear Editor,

I would like to commend campus police on their response to a call on Thursday at 10:00 p.m. Two suspicious males entered 1st Vann's parlor to place a sign on the hall bulletin board. I told them that they were only allowed to be in the parlor, not on the hall. They ignored me and continued posting their signs. I called campus police to report these men, and two officers responded within seconds. The males had gone to Stringfield and were exiting Faircloth when the officers found them. The officers escorted them off campus within five minutes of the call.

I want to personally thank campus police for all that they do. I know that they do not get all of the credit that they deserve for doing their job.

Commending a job well done,
Jennifer Redinger
3rd Vann R.A.

Meredith Herald

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Letters to the Editor Policy:

Everyone in the Meredith community is invited to write a letter to the editor. All published letters must be typewritten with contact name, address, and telephone number. All letters must be signed by the author; however, names will be withheld upon request.

The *Herald* reserves the right to place any other article submissions on file until needed or to choose not to print them. The *Herald* also has the right to edit stories for space requirements.

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