

Opinion: Traffic court a hassle

BY ALISON VALENTI
Staff Writer

There is nothing worse than looking in the rearview mirror and seeing blue lights flashing. By some benevolent grace of gigantic proportions, I have eluded the radar detector for the past seven years, but now I have been caught. Sixty in a 45, and, trust me, I was guilty.

I tried my best to cry in front of the state trooper in order to gain some sympathetic reprieve: no such luck. Since it was my first offense he advised me to go to traffic court to prevent my insurance rates from increasing.

Court? Me? Every episode of Judge Judy I have ever seen raced through my head in a blur of sarcasm, rudeness and lace collars. I just wanted to pay the fine; unfortunately, the insurance industry forced me to defend my good name.

With more trepidation than I care to admit, I entered the Wake County Courthouse through a metal detector. I made my way through the labyrinth of courtrooms to ask directions from a kind pair of sheriffs who assured me my crime was the most heinous one they had seen that day, and I would surely leave there in a jumpsuit and cuffs. They were very friendly and

even offered a little advice after seeing my nervous state.

When I got to the courtroom the judge was on a break. Probably adjusting her pearls, I thought. I talked to the district attorney who asked me if I wanted my ticket reduced, and then I took a seat.

The funny thing about sitting in a courtroom like that is everyone around you has done something wrong. It is, in fact, a roomful of wrong-doers with a sense of camaraderie. Whispers fly through, everyone trying to latch on to someone who has done something worse than they have.

The judge returned and, to my relief, not a lace collar in sight. I stood before him, pled guilty, and he let me go for waiting so long. All I'm saying is that I have waited longer at Harris Teeter and never got a discount. I thanked him and left with a sigh of relief.

Though I have no plans to return to court, I am so glad Judge Judy lives in California.

I want to thank the Wake County Courthouse employees who spend all day straightening out those of us who bend the law and are nice about it at the same time. I promise I'll slow down.

MEREDITH BY TORY HOKE



POINT

COUNTERPOINT

Can male guests stay late?

Normal interaction with males on Meredith campus seems a far away dream.

Flashback freshman year: My boyfriend and I were sitting in his car after a Friday night date, engaging in the customary "goodnight kiss," when we heard a knock on the passenger side window. Peering back at us through the window was a campus security officer, flashlight in hand, who motioned to my boyfriend that it was time to leave campus even though his 15 minutes to get off campus had not expired.

Flashback last week: Same situation, different boyfriend. This time we don't get a knock on the window, just the watchful eye of a security officer parked behind my boyfriend's car.

Combine embarrassing moments like that with the fact that after-hours male guests must leave picture ID at the gate house, and it doesn't take much to figure out this is not a male-friendly environment. All of this sends the message that we somehow need protection from all of those XY's out there—that we couldn't possibly be trusted to make responsible decisions when it comes to men.

I honestly appreciate that security is looking out for us, but I never had the kind of parents that stayed up until every male visitor left our house; I don't need that now.

In the real world, there is no one checking the ID of any man who brings me home. And in the real world, he doesn't disappear after 15 minutes.

I thought college was supposed to teach us about the real world, not hide us from it.

By MLG

It takes a special kind of person to commit herself to four (or five) years in a same sex environment. Meredith College is a community committed to respecting the decision of its students.

As the freshmen get settled and flock to the campus poster sale to cover the burlap on the wall, they wonder who, besides mom, dad and suitemates will ever get to see how truly Martha Stewart-like they are. Well, it won't be the boy of the moment unless he can wait for every other weekend. That's because campus security is looking out for us. Boys are allowed in the dorms on certain weekends and for special events. But after 2 a.m., boys returning their angels need not try and steal a goodnight kiss to avoid being caught by Meredith's finest.

While some students grumble about these interrupted romantic moments, it is certainly for the safety of the Meredith community. Boys are a part of everyone's life. At Meredith they just aren't the part you bring home with you at night.

Interaction with males is a normal part of life. However, a Meredith life comes with some special benefits. In this day and time, it wouldn't hurt to run an ID check on everyone wearing khakis, a button-down shirt and a dirty white NCSU hat.

There are far better ways to get to know someone than sitting in a Ford Escort late at night surrounded by asphalt. For instance, the Waffle House across the street is open day and night. We should say thank you to the security patrol who stay up nights policing the raging hormones of Raleigh's Romeos.

Our visitation policy helps keep us focused on why we are here. College is supposed to teach us more about ourselves and prepare us for the future, not how to maneuver around the parking brake.

By AGG

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