

MEREDITH HERALD

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Educating Women to Excel

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Lecture recognizes changing work

□ **Dr. Ellen Goode
speaks on a Century
of Change.**

KRISTIN SCHNEIDER
Staff Writer

The Faculty Distinguished Lectures, which were first introduced in the 1963-1964 academic year, represent an accomplishment in an area of research by one of the faculty members here at Meredith College.

On the evening of Monday, Nov. 15, 1999, the Faculty Distinguished Lecture was held in Jones Auditorium. Past lecturers include Dr. Norma Rose, Evelyn P. Simmons, Dr. John Huber and Dr. Burgunde Winz. The lectures serve to not only shed light on an area of research, but also to offer insight into the outstanding faculty at Meredith.

Such was the case on Monday evening, as Dr. Ellen Goode, professor of interior design at Meredith College, presented a lecture entitled

"The Workplace: A Century of Change."

Because the majority of her career has been spent in the field of commercial interior design, Goode's professional background provides a framework for the progression of the workplace in America.

Though most Meredith students are still earning their degrees, the notion of a personal office or corporate position may only be a few years away.

The changing nature of the office building is an indicator and symbol of the century. However, the importance of this symbol generally goes unnoticed because, as Goode said, "the main product of the office, information, is invisible."

The lecture took the audience back into a few scenes of popular American films, such as *It's a Wonderful Life*, *All the President's Men*, *Nine to Five* and *Wall Street*, in order to provide a visual image of the ways in which the office set-

ting has changed. Layouts evolved, furniture was improved, color schemes changed and the secretary became the office heroine.

The current generation is so accustomed to using personal computers, laptops, modems, the internet, cell phones, fax machines and, of course, e-mail. It is difficult for us to imagine life without instant messaging, downloading, processing, and printing. However, a brief decade-by-decade overview of the office setting given by Goode shows that our everyday conveniences were not always so everyday.

Goode noted that the first production computer introduced by IBM in 1952 had to be kept in a separate and controlled environment, a far cry from the portable laptops of today.

E-mail was first introduced in 1973, and the first automated teller machine was in 1974. However, these technological advances have only recently

become popular and widely accessible.

Goode discussed trends in the 1990's, including merges and acquisitions, team work, faster delivery and off-site offices.

In a 1999 survey on the top factors when looking at job potential, physical workspace was in the top three. The space in which business is done has a major impact on life at the office. The increasing emphasis on information technology, said Goode, suggests that our society is determined to spread the word, whatever it may be, as fast as possible. Bill Gates even suggests that wallet-sized personal computers will soon become our next accessory.

The lecture given by Dr. Ellen Goode informed those present that the office space, a representative of society, is ever changing. Goode wanted attendees to consider this progression so that future job hunters must consider it as a symbol of changing times.

Graduate school must admit men

CHRISTINA HOLDER
News Editor

A part of the school that has been dedicated to "educating women to excel" will soon be educating men as well.

The Board of Trustees at Meredith College made a decision that will change history on the campus. For the first time, male students will be admitted to John E. Weems graduate school. However, the undergraduate school will continue to admit women only.

The decision was based on "legal issues," according to Dr. Mary Johnson, dean of the school. In 1983, a law was initiated nation wide requiring co-ed acceptance to graduate programs.

"All graduate programs in the country fall under this law," said Johnson. "We either had to close the graduate program to women or open it to men."

Many students were concerned about the changes to

presumably take place with the admitting of men to the program.

Johnson reassures students that the graduate program and its teaching techniques will continue to be consistent with those of previous years.

"We will not be changing the program," said Johnson.

If accepted to the program, male students will be aware when they enroll that the program is designed to accommodate the learning style of women.

No male applicants have currently been accepted to the program.

"As soon as we get a male applicant, we will process it. We have contact information on the internet, and we have not been getting a deluge of male inquiries or telephone calls," said Johnson.

When asked if she anticipated that the program's atmosphere would change signifi-

cantly, Johnson said no.

"I'm not sure it will change at all. The Board of Trustees had to do what they had to do."

Suzanne Cole, a student enrolled in the master's of education program at the school, doesn't anticipate a big change either, but she feels the atmosphere may be a little uncomfortable at first.

Cole comes to the graduate school from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, a 17,000 person, co-educational school, and she says that can make a difference depending on what environment students are familiar with.

"I think it will rock the comfort zone a little. Just in the classes I'm in, the graduate school students tend to stay in the same circle. To have a man in the classroom might make some people feel uncomfortable," said Cole.

Yet Cole feels that the change won't hinder the school

or her learning environment.

"I don't want to be discriminatory. The policy to admit men is a law now. I don't think Meredith will have a problem with the new policy."

Pointing out that as with any situation in dealing with other people, different personalities mesh better than others, Cole thinks the transition from the all female environment to the co-ed one will "depend on who you are and who the male student is."

The John E. Weems graduate school currently has over 200 students enrolled in its programs. Students are seeking degrees: Master of Business Administration (MBA), Master of Health Administration (MHA), Master of Music in Performance and Pedagogy, and Master of Education in Elementary Education with a licensure in ESL, reading, and elementary education.