

Do Models Have Eating Disorders or Does Our Country?

By Laurel Benedum
Staff Writer

I left a store last week feeling humiliated because the smallest size dress was too big. I had been perusing the mall for a simple cocktail dress when a myriad of perfect little black dresses on the other side of a display window caught my eye and I entered the store. After several minutes of searching, I found two elegant size-zero dresses and walked eagerly to the fitting rooms. As I zipped up the back and released my grip the strapless dress slipped right down to my waist.

Slightly disappointed at my failure in finding a dress, I reassured myself that it was indeed not a bad thing that the zero was too big. I exited the fitting room with the dresses draped over my arm and awaited the retail associate as she approached

me.

"Did those work out for you sweetie," the associate asked, slightly condescendingly.

"No, unfortunately they were too big," I replied.

"Yes, I figured that much. I could have told you everything in this store would be too big for your thin frame," she retorted as she snatched the dresses from my arms and walked away.

I was appalled.

I exercise when my schedule allows for it, but not for hours on end—and I certainly don't starve myself. I wondered what did she want me to do—binge on Taco Bell burritos and McDonald's Big Macs every day? With a stature barely exceeding 5 feet, a size zero seemed perfectly normal to me. Why should those of us who are naturally thin with good metabolisms be criticized or prejudged for our blessing?

Meanwhile, in the world a foot above me, runway models are being dis-

criminated against as well and fired on the basis of weight. The Spanish Association of Fashion Designers decided to ban models with a body mass index (BMI) of less than 18 in September 2006. Madrid is using BMI to measure models and has turned away 30 percent of women who took part in previous runway shows.

The British Fashion Council has sent out letters to various designers urging them to avoid using size-zero models or those below a minimum BMI. Countless models are being turned away for jobs, many of whom are just naturally thin.

And for those who do have eating disorders, I am perplexed as to how being sacked from a runway show could be beneficial to a clearly severe self-esteem issue or conducive to any type of recovery. It is ignorant to place all of the blame for anorexia among models on the fashion industry. Anorexia is a complex

psychological disorder whose roots go much deeper than the runway.

Outside the fashion world, various groups are advocating a healthier lifestyle for the general public as well. The Center for Science in the Public Interest, a strong campaigner for trans fat regulation and nutrition labeling, is calling for local and state governments to require restaurants to list nutrition information on their menus. So why is it that when we have such a huge emphasis on health and appearance, over one third of the nation is obese? Our country is fatter than we've ever been. Obviously something is not working.

Using government force to regulate healthiness is doing nothing but reinforcing the huge emphasis that we already put on appearance. It is not only distasteful and demeaning toward women, but also a wasted effort toward the general public.

Designers will continue

to pursue models whose figures parallel their outrageous designs because, undoubtedly, clothes can be draped much more dramatically on an elongated thin figure than on a standard 5 ft 4 in woman.

And Americans will continue to eat unhealthy fattening foods regardless of posted nutrition facts, just as we continue to smoke and ignore the printed warning.

The fashion industry is a staple of our consumer-driven country just as the fast food and restaurant industry is.

Talk is cheap. It is high time that we shift this exhausted focus on eating to something that will actually produce a change.

How about the war in Iraq?

Transfer Students Get the Shaft

By Lauren Philbeck
Contributing Writer

"Welcome Transfer Students to Meredith College." A sign saying such should have greeted me in true Meredith College fashion, but it did not. "We are so glad you chose to transfer to Meredith College," a professor or administrator should have said to me—but they did not. What classes do I take? Where are my classes? What are all these tradi-

tions? Simple questions with relatively simple answers, but yet I had to figure out everything on my own. I was a transfer student lost in her new world. Meredith College, and by Meredith College, I mean the administration and professors, does not go out of their way to help and/or welcome transfer students.

Transfer Student Orientation should have assisted me in adjusting to my new school, but instead it was a two day whirlwind of information

that went in one ear and out the other. There was a Dessert Social, a laptop information session, and of course the Honor Code Ceremony. Thanks a lot, Meredith, but I could have survived without the cookies, I already had a laptop which I knew how to use just fine, and I was not planning on cheating in my classes anyway. What I really needed was an in-depth tour of campus, an overview of Meredith College's tailored curriculum, and some advice about get-

ting around the big city of Raleigh. Knowing the difference between the inner and outer beltlines is a crucial thing to know. I recently tried to give a new student directions to a building on campus that had a drink machine. From Ledford, I told her to go to Cate or Harris, but that Cate would be the closer choice. She had no idea what I was talking about or where to go. Good job, Transfer Student Orientation. Students should know where the student center

is, right?

Next, I have to complain about Meredith College's seemingly top-notch curriculum. When deciding to come here, I understood that transferring from a public university to a private college meant that all my classes would not be accepted. What I did not expect was a fight to get those classes accepted and a whole new pile of classes to take. My first meet-

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