

Editing

I was pleased to see the publication of my article, "Justice for All," in the Meredith Herald a few weeks ago. However, I was disappointed to see that the very important conclusion was completely cut out. I was also dismayed to see that the article was changed to close in mid-sentence. I was not consulted on either of these choices. I would like to submit more articles to the Meredith Herald, but as a leader on campus do not feel comfortable doing so, knowing that my work may be changed without my consent. I hope that this problem is something the staff of the Herald will take steps to correct.

Heather Blanchard

Freedom of Speech

I am not sure what is worse – the students who defaced Meredith College's campus with hate speech, or the fact that The Herald is censoring students from voicing their thoughts and opinions in an appropriate and school-sponsored newspaper. The journalistic integrity of this newspaper is quite questionable; do

we support the voices of all students, or just the one or two that serve on the editorial staff? If The Herald and its editor were to practice good, ethical journalism, then maybe students would not have to go underground to produce a paper worthy to be read. I do not just want to hear about Cornhuskin' and field trips – I want to know about politics, social issues, or religion. We should not shy away from controversy, but embrace it through thoughtful, respectful dialogue. If our college newspaper isn't going to do that, then I would like to see that funding go elsewhere – perhaps by providing emergency contraception (the morning after pill) in the student health center? Oh wait, I probably shouldn't talk about reproductive and sexual health in the paper; wouldn't want to give Meredith Angels a bad reputation for being "promiscuous".
Tiffany Stokes

Alternate Publication

I was very sorry to learn that a group of students chose to distribute an alternate publication in newsletter format to some members of the Meredith community this week. It is troubling that these students have not looked into the possibility of working on the staff of the Herald. Having put together several issues completely on your own, you could have used the help. I looked briefly at this other publication and noticed an accusation of censorship. It would seem beneficial for the accuser to look into the distinction between censorship and editorial responsibility. This is one of many things that can be learned by showing up week after week and carrying out the many tasks involved in publishing a newspaper. Generally this has been a difficult year for the Herald, as Meredith students seem less interested in commitments of this kind. Still, I commend you for your efforts, and I hope that this controversy will foster new levels of involvement in the newspaper.
Rebecca Duncan
Associate Professor, English

Eating Disorders

I am writing to express my concern with the editorial you

wrote in the Meredith Herald on March 14, 2007. Your article contains many assertions that have little to no basis in reality and makes no attempt to analyze the issue in an objective manner. Although I understand an editorial's purpose is to convey the writer's opinion, I find it a bit disconcerting that a journalist could fail to provide concrete facts in support of that opinion and could so conveniently ignore an entire other side of the story. I'd like to start with your assertion that models are discriminated against due to their weight which has an obvious bias towards thinner women. You then go on to point out that the "Spanish Association of Designers decided to ban models with a body mass index (BMI) of less than 18 in September 2006." First, body mass index is not a measure of weight, but a measure of body fat based on weight in relation to height. The National Heart

Lung and Blood Institute have the following categories for BMI¹:

- Underweight = <18.5
- Normal weight = 18.5-24.9
- Overweight = 25-29.9
- Obesity = BMI of 30 or greater

As you can see, a BMI of 18.5 to 24.9 is categorized as normal weight and below 18.5 is categorized as underweight. Thus, the Spanish Association of Designers was requiring the use of models with a healthier BMI. The average BMI for top models is 16.3 according to data from the National Eating Disorders Association². If you truly want to address discrimination, you cannot ignore the fact that underweight (by the definition above) models represent a small portion of the population yet are predominant in the modeling industry. Most samples designed for models are well below (usually size 2 or under) the average size 12 that women wear. If anything, underweight models have a competitive advantage in the modeling industry. In seeking models much thinner than the average population the modeling industry has generated a false image of what is healthy and normal. You said that, "undoubtedly, clothes can be draped much more dra-

matically on an elongated thin figure than on a standard 5 ft 4 in woman." Your statement promotes the idea that thinner is better. You also ask, "Why should those of us with good metabolisms be criticized or prejudged for our blessing?" May I ask why you consider it a blessing? Does that mean that those of us who are normal weight are cursed? All joking aside, I don't see how your arguments promote a healthy self-image for any other size category than your own. I find your obvious bias towards being thinner at odds with your desire not to be prejudged. I must also disagree with your belief that, "government force to regulate healthiness [reinforces the] huge emphasis that we already put on appearance." You also argue that "Americans will continue to eat unhealthy fattening foods regardless of posted nutrition facts, just as we continue to smoke and ignore the printed

warning." What factual data is this based off of? A Washington post article³ from 2006 states that in the US, smoking is at an all time low. It goes on to state that, "The drop was a result, they said, of factors that include the sharply higher cost of cigarettes, restrictions on cigarette advertising and a shift in public perceptions as the dangers of smoking are more aggressively and widely publicized." Government can indeed impact public perception of what is healthy and normal and should do so when it will lead to a healthier population. Thankfully, there is at least one point we can agree on. You state that, "Talk is cheap. It is high time that we shift this exhausted focus to something that will actually produce a change." How about taking the money you were going to spend on those dresses and donating it to feed the starving kids in Africa. It would have a much more immediate and meaningful impact than anything you personally attempted to do about the war in Iraq.

Adriana Samaniego

SAVE DARFUR T-SHIRTS NOW IN CATE CENTER

If you have ordered a Darfur Awareness t-shirt, they have now come in and you may come pick yours up on the first floor of the Cate Center. They will be available for pickup until this Friday (Mar. 30).

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