

## Forever XXI: Helmet, Kneepads, and Map Required



Sarah Servie  
Staff Writer

Forever XXI, the trendy retail store for the fashion-forward, opened recently at the Crabtree Valley Mall. Rumors of the store's arrival in Raleigh began circulating early in December of last year. The hype surrounding the opening of Forever XXI at this new and convenient location seems almost unreal. The store is jam-packed with colorful, stylish clothes at affordable prices for both women and men. Mannequins dressed in chic ensembles congregate in the huge storefront windows and seem to wave customers inside. Once inside, however, customers should brace themselves for about an hour or more of intense shopping. Forever XXI is not a store for the casual afternoon shopper, as I quickly discovered.

This is no boutique—the store is absolutely expansive. There is room after room and rack upon rack of clothes. I almost got lost in wall-to-wall rayon blends in a back corner. There is enough room in the enormous store for plenty of walk space around the displays, yet the racks are crammed together in a way that makes the space feel like a maze.

On top of the labyrinthine nature of the

shop, horrible Top 40 remixes blast from the sound system accompanied by the sing-alongs of shoulder-to-shoulder shoppers. The music and the crowds are enough to make an easy pass through the store nearly impossible. The shopping experience at Forever XXI is like attending a raging nightclub, only sober and with fluorescent lighting.

If a customer is lucky enough to find a few things to try on, he or she will be unfortunate enough to have to wait in the line for the dressing room. While waiting in line, expect to be bumped into by other customers, stepped on and yelled at by gum-smacking, teenaged clerks to “stay behind the white line.” There is a frenzy to get into the dressing room, followed by extreme disorganization on the part of the salespeople. They are unhelpful, bored, and at times downright rude. Go ahead and plan on taking all sizes that you might need into the dressing room with you because there won't be any helpful assistance from a Forever XXI employee.

The checkout line is another disaster. Regardless of the fact that there are six to seven registers available in the store, I have seen only three or four actually in use. The lines are a jumble of ragged customers who weave through the store and sometimes out the door. If you make it

to the front of the line, prepare to do battle with the cashier. There are no refunds, no discounts for damaged merchandise, exchanges only within the month, and only store credit if a customer wants to return something. If these terms are actually agreed upon, a customer may make it out of the store, bag in hand, alive.

So why do people actually shop at Forever XXI? Selection and value. Sadly, there is no other store at the Crabtree Valley Mall that I have found to have the array of choices in trendy clothing like the selection of Forever XXI. Also, this store is the only one that has prices that are affordable on a college student budget. Forever XXI has monopolized the market on clothing for high school and college-aged kids.

The bottom line is that if you have downed a two-liter of Mountain Dew and are ready for a marathon, Forever XXI has some potential gems in the way of cute clothes. Don't expect to get in and out quickly or even enjoy yourself, but do expect to pay less for a stylish outfit.

Love to draw cartoons?

We need you!

The newspaper staff is currently looking for a campus cartoonist.

Contact [herald@meredith.edu](mailto:herald@meredith.edu) for more information.

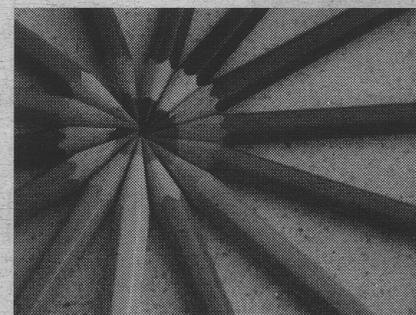


Photo courtesy [http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/0/08/Colored\\_pencils\\_chevre.jpg/800px-Colored\\_pencils\\_chevre.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/0/08/Colored_pencils_chevre.jpg/800px-Colored_pencils_chevre.jpg)

## The MEREDITH HERALD Staff

[herald@meredith.edu](mailto:herald@meredith.edu)

Editor.....*Meredith Beeman*  
*beemanme@meredith.edu*

Copy Editor Joy Strickland

Staff Writers

*Kailin Briggs Anna Britt*  
*Chelsea McGlaughlin Sarah Servie*  
*Whitney Wilson*

The *Meredith Herald* is published by the College throughout the academic year. The paper is funded by the college and through independent advertising. All advertisements should be sent to [herald@meredith.edu](mailto:herald@meredith.edu)

The opinions expressed in the editorial columns do not necessarily reflect those of the college administration, faculty, or student body.

Published by Hinton Press

The policy of this paper requires that submissions be made forty-eight hours before publication, allowing time for consultation between staff and contributors; that articles not exceed 1050-1100 words; that letters to the editor not exceed 200 words; and that contributors sign all submissions and provide necessary contact information. The editor and staff welcome submissions meeting the above guidelines.