

# CAMPUS LIFE

## More Than a Fundraiser

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As you all know, t-shirts are a tradition at Meredith. They are sold as fundraisers by many of our student organizations and, from what I've heard, eventually turned into a t-shirt quilt. I was inspired by Dr. Swab's article "How 'Green' is my Meredith T-shirt?" in the last edition of the Herald and wanted to provide a follow-up that can serve as a call to action.

As members of the Meredith community as well as members of both a local and global society, it is our duty to live in a socially and environmentally responsible manner. It helps to ensure the survival of our communities and our environment. Oftentimes, responsible consumer behaviors are only spoken of in terms of their environmental impact such as buying items like organic vegetables, organic cotton clothing, or energy efficient light bulbs. However, consumer behavior can also impact economic development locally and beyond through support of local businesses and purchasing fair trade products.

It is not my intent to discourage all fundraising or selling of items on campus. I just hope to help you think critically about

what you are selling and/or purchasing and about the impact of your consumer decisions. Recently, our student organizations have been very successful with selling less t-shirts and hosting fundraisers at local restaurants.

Dr. Swab has given you information about your cotton t-shirt and asked that you think about the item before you purchase it. I now ask you to go one step further and think about the fundraiser that has produced that t-shirt. Listed below are questions that I pose to you and hope that you will ask of yourself and of others when selling or purchasing items on campus.

### Fundamental Question:

- If you are selling items, why do you need to raise funds?
- Is money essential to what you are trying to accomplish?
- Can you raise money without selling goods?
- Are there other funding sources you can utilize (e.g. grants from other on-campus sources such as SAF or the Diversity Council, grants from outside entities, sponsorship or donations from local businesses, etc.)?

### Production and Distribution of Goods:

- Where was it made? Was it shipped a long distance?
  - Was child labor involved in its production?
  - Was the product produced under fair labor practices?
- Sustainable Material:
- Can you sell/purchase items that are made of more environmentally friendly material such as bamboo, hemp, or recycled material?
  - Can you sell/purchase items that individuals would use more often (e.g. umbrella, tote bag, water bottle, food, etc)?

### Supporting Others:

- Can you purchase fair trade items wholesale to sell on campus?

### Local Economy:

- Are there ways to raise money where you can support local businesses? Can you sell items that are locally made? Can you host an event at a local business like a restaurant, bowling alley, or recreation center?

To find out more about socially and environmentally responsible consumerism, please see the following websites:

Green America: <http://www.greenamerica.org/>

The Daily Green: <http://www.thedailygreen.com/>

Greendex: <http://environment.nationalgeographic.com/environment/greendex/>

Sierra Club: [http://www.sierraclub.org/sustainable\\_consumption/](http://www.sierraclub.org/sustainable_consumption/)

World Economic Forum: <http://www.weforum.org/issues/sustainable-consumption>

The Story of Stuff: <http://www.storyofstuff.com/>

Also, for more sustainable fundraising ideas and fair trade wholesalers please see the Green Fundraising Tips located in the tool box on the Student Leadership and Service website at [www.meredith.edu/students/leadership-service](http://www.meredith.edu/students/leadership-service).

## Ask Gigi

Dear Gigi,

I am a transgendered person who identifies as a male. In one of my classes when we were talking about gender identification, I was appalled by my professor's lack of sensitivity toward transgendered individuals. She repeatedly referenced only "male" and "female" during the discussion, and even when I made an open comment about the existence of transgender identity, she airily blew it off and said she preferred not to talk about the "theoretical" gray area surrounding the issue. Should I tell her how I feel, or just let it go?

Sincerely,  
Seemingly Nonexistent

Dear Seemingly Nonexistent,

First, realize that your professor probably spoke only from ignorance, not from personal malice against transgendered individuals. Tell her how you feel in a mature, tactful way. Pick a time when you know your professor will be free of other distractions; to be on the safe side, email to schedule an appointment. You could start off by saying something like, "I was really intrigued by the direction our class discussion on gender took the other day, but I had some further comments that I didn't feel comfortable voicing at the time." Connecting your impromptu office visit to the previous academic discussion will most likely put her at ease from the very start. Then respectfully express in clear, concise terms exactly why you felt offended during class. Perhaps you could offer to fully research the topic and present your empirical findings, along with your personal experience, in a presentation to the class. In that way, you could clear up the "theoretical" gray area and have your say, too. Remember that you are your own best advocate—if your professors and classmates are not aware of transgender issues, you are the best person to correctly and confidently inform them. Good luck!

Yours truly,  
Gigi

Do you read the  
Herald's campus  
calendar?

Submit events & ideas to  
[herald@email.meredith.edu](mailto:herald@email.meredith.edu)