

letter to the editor

10/07

To the Editor:

On a campus where you must wait in line to use gym equipment in the afternoon and where the line at the Proctor salad bar stretches farther than the hot food line, the message and the implications of "Eluding the 'Freshman 15'" in last week's *The Middlebury Campus* disturbed many readers. The article in question reinforced many messages students already receive that emphasize physical attractiveness as integral to the ideal, well-rounded Middlebury student. Due in part to this pressure, eating disorders and unhealthy eating and exercise habits are a serious problem on this campus. We need articles that promote healthy eating and exercise to do what is best for our mental and physical health, not to avoid gaining weight. Gaining weight as a freshman often occurs naturally, since our bodies are still developing and filling out during the college years.

Therefore, students should not be made to feel self-conscious because of this weight gain, nor should feel they should take measures to prevent it. As they are acclimating to many competing pressures put on Midd-kids, first-year students should recognize the importance of staying healthy as a life skill, but should not be force-fed the need to stay skinny by a respected institution such as the school newspaper. *The Campus* must understand and take responsibility for its capacity to influence individual students and their conceptions of the social environment at Middlebury. We encourage all students, faculty and staff to respect and love their bodies without restraint.

Sincerely,
Feminist Action at Middlebury