

The Decree

OFFICIAL STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF
NORTH CAROLINA WESLEYAN COLLEGE

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Don't just 'drop out' without even trying

At the start of the school year, most clubs and organizations looked forward to the large freshman class taking an interest and becoming involved. However, with more than a month having gone by, very few freshmen seem interested in anything other than classwork and themselves.

With such a large number of people from different places, different cultures, different ideas, the class of 2000 could show a great deal of promise, but instead they stick together, staying out of most campus events and gatherings. That's too bad.

The only way to make a difference here at Wesleyan is to become involved. If you see a problem you are powerless to do anything about it unless you are involved enough to know what to do about it. Many freshmen have expressed the concern that Wesleyan is just not what they had expected it to be. Now these same students are considering transferring somewhere else. If only they

would make their concerns heard, the problems could then be addressed, possibly solved, therefore eliminating the need to transfer. Anyone who does nothing to solve their problems has no right to complain.

So what if you didn't make the baseball or soccer teams, is that really the end of the world? There are plenty of other things to do on campus, plenty of other groups who are looking forward to having new members. Make your mark somewhere else; maybe you will even enjoy it?

Wesleyan is what we students make of it. It is simple to become active. Most organizations accept new members at any time; all you need to do is express an interest.

In the end, it comes down to one conclusion: Wesleyan's campus can be a fun place to live, full of students who are informed, caring, and involved with the college, or it can be boring. The choice is up to us, so let's make the right one!

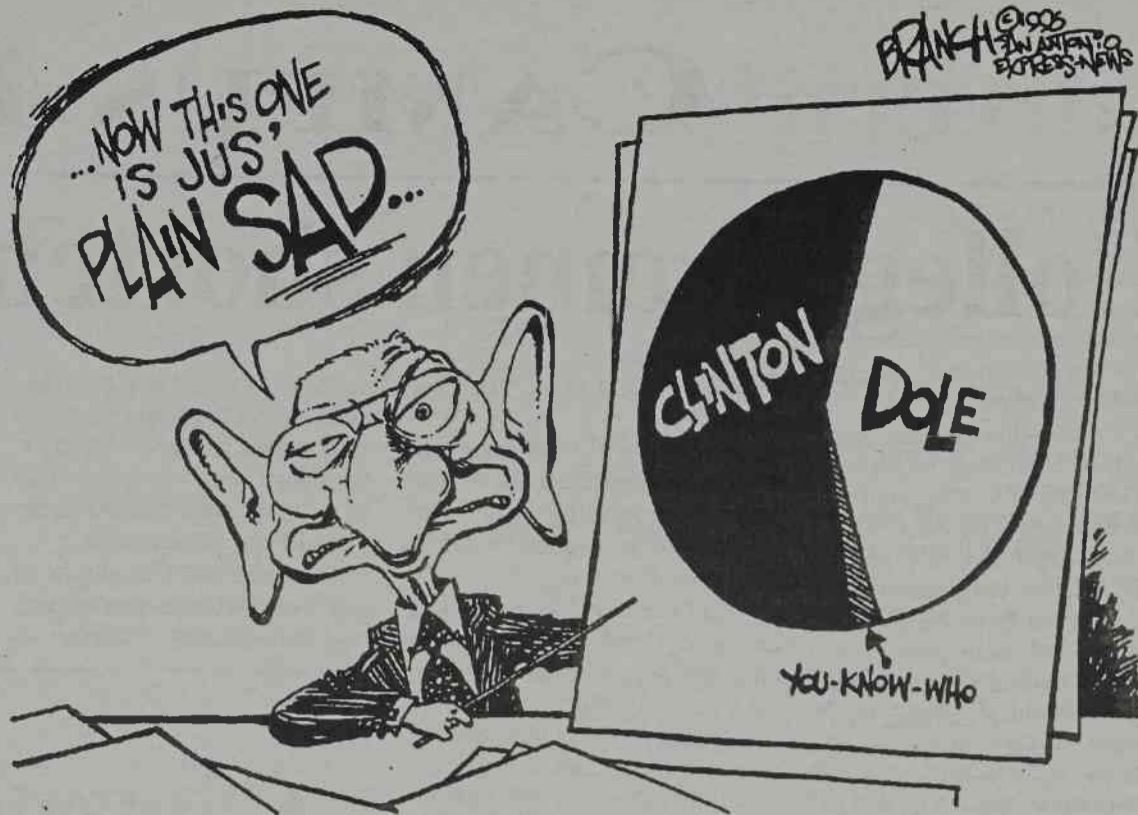
Give us a hand

If you want to help make a difference on campus, consider writing and reporting for *The Decree*.

The student newspaper needs people who have curiosity, like to write, and who

care about issues on campus and in the community enough to inform others about them. Just contact Editor Jessica Brown at 5328.

We want to do a good job, but we need help. Sign up.



Little boy learns wrong lessons

Too much ado over nothing

By DR. STEVE FEREBEE

Sometimes I don't know whether to laugh or yell obscenities. A fanning of the flames in Jerusalem; Yeltsin's upcoming heart surgery; a presidential election campaign. These stories are bumped off media screens by illuminating stories about two Johns.

John Kennedy, Jr. marries his on-again/off-again sweetheart. First, give credit where it's due: they managed to marry without televising their prenuptial agreement debates and without details of the bachelor party.

Why is this guy news? Why do reporters still hound him? Why does the public want to know? What has he done except start a magazine, inherit both the Bouvier and the Kennedy beauty, and exemplify his mother's class reticence to blab to the press?

Don't misunderstand me; I choked up with the rest of the country when "John-John" stepped forward in that little coat and saluted his father as the presidential hearse passed. It will remain one of the enduring images of the twentieth century.

But enough already. The networks acted as if Bob Dole has pulled ahead or an AIDS vaccine had been found. Even the major-domo of misanthropes, John McLaughlin, gushed that People once declared Kennedy "The Sexiest Man Alive." And so hundreds, thousands, millions of women (and not a few men) are supposed to go into mourning or what?

Dr. Steve Muses

I wish the happily beautiful couple many good years together. But, frankly, even if one of them wants to be a public official, I don't want a blow-by-blow account of their marriage.

The other John in the news was John Prevette, a six-year-old who (allegedly) kissed a fellow first grader on the cheek. I accept John's explanation that he just wants to be friends.

The reason this buss made the news (besides the shameful media exploitation) is that John was accused of sexual harassment and forbidden to attend an ice cream party. Now his mother is granting interviews, John squirming and giggling beside her, and she is speaking in ominously lawyer-like sentences.

Don't get me wrong again — a six-year-old boy is capable of hurting and/or humiliating a six-year-old girl; and school officials have a duty to discourage improper behavior. The seeds of

abuse take root early.

But come on. Why didn't some adult just watch John to see whether or not this was an isolated incident? If he raced around the playground grabbing other girls or kept trying to touch that same girl, then take him aside and talk with him. You could even use an innocent peck to encourage a few minutes of conversation in the classroom about respecting other people's privacy.

What has John learned? Boys shouldn't touch. Boys shouldn't feel or express affection. And, though of course he doesn't understand it like this: Sex is bad; all boy/girl relationships are sexual; we can't be friends.

I heard some students dismiss all accusations of sexual harassment because of this incident. That's the danger that makes me want to yell: when we allow the absurd to overshadow the reality, we allow genuine harassment to go unnoticed and/or unpunished.

Both John and his friend do need to recognize the borders for behavior and language. But pushing the borders to prohibit a six-year-old from showing affection? I don't think so... And I hope they're still friends.

Letters to the editor policy

The Decree accepts only signed letters to the editors. Unsigned letters will not be printed. Letters should not exceed 400 words. Letters need to be placed in the campus post office and marked "Decree" or placed in the *Decree* office in the Hardees building. Letters must be received by Friday of the week prior to the next issue in order to be printed in that issue. *The Decree* reserves the right to edit or reject letters for grammar, libel, or good taste.