

# THE DECREE

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NORTH CAROLINA WESLEYAN COLLEGE, ROCKY MOUNT, NORTH CAROLINA 27804

## NCWC Professor: McCain Will Win NC, Obama the National Election

Following the final presidential debate on October 15, the Decree staff conducted an email interview with Dr. Cameron Matthews, assistant professor of political science at NC Wesleyan.

**Q.** What are your general impressions of the campaign so far?

**A.** It has been nasty. I think there is a certain amount of animosity between Senators McCain and Obama that has spilled into the campaign. There also might be some fatigue on the part of the public by this point in the campaign. It has been a long, long road to get here and voters, I think, are ready to move on.

**Q.** In what ways have the presidential and vice-presidential debates helped voters?

**A.** I think the debates have only marginally helped Obama. Post-debate polls have all had him "winning", which is, of course, better than losing. But to the extent to which the debates help people choose who to vote for, I don't think they help a great deal. A voter who is still undecided at this point in the campaign will probably remain so until Election Day. Also, the word "debate" implies, well, a debate. These are more like joint press conferences. In the famous Lincoln/Douglas debates, the first candidate to speak had an hour to talk, not a few minutes. The man rebutting had 90 minutes. That is a debate.

**Q.** McCain criticized Obama for declining federal campaign matching funds. Looking back, was that a prudent move by Obama? Why?

**A.** Money is the mother's milk of politics, so while it was a blatantly political move it was also a prudent move. Senator Obama can raise a great deal of money. He can out-raise Senator McCain and then outspend him, which he has done to great effect.

**Q.** Many were impressed with McCain's selection of Sarah Palin when it was first announced over the summer. What are your thoughts on it now?

**A.** I still think it was a good move. Her numbers have dropped since her announcement, but that was to be expected since she was such an unknown nationally. She remains a good choice because the conservatives are very excited about her and are more likely to vote on November 4 because she's on the ticket. Since Senator McCain needs the conservatives and because she can deliver them, she's a good pick. Also, unlike other favorite candidates of the conservatives, she can draw 50,000 to her public appearances. Anyone who can do that is not a drain on the ticket.

**Q.** McCain abandoned Michigan in early October. What does that suggest to you about his overall campaign?

**A.** It suggests he'll lose Michigan. It also suggests that Senator McCain is in a position where he has to use his resources as strategically as possible. He is not as privileged as Senator Obama in terms of campaign spending, so he has to spend what he has where it can do the most good. The polls must have indicated Michigan was not a good place to spend money.

**Q.** How much will Obama's associations with the Rev. Jeremiah Wright and William Ayers, the so-called "Domestic Terrorist," hurt him?

**A.** Voters are already aware of these since they came out in the primary (where I think they did some damage), so it won't be new, which reduces their impact. Some people will not vote for Senator Obama because of such associations, but I think they were unlikely to vote for him anyway.

**Q.** How successful has Obama been at tying McCain to the Bush presidency?

**A.** I won't know that until I see some exit polling, but it is certainly a major theme of his campaign. He keeps repeating it, which tells me that the Obama campaign thinks it's working.

**Q.** To what extent will being a Republican at a time of economic crisis hurt McCain?

**A.** A lot. With the exception of 1980, voters tend to vote Democratic when the economy is bad. I think that is a great part of FDR's legacy.

**Q.** In the final analysis, how much will race, gender, and age come into play as voters cast their ballots?

**A.** Some, I think. There is some part of Senator Obama's support that is only on paper. Minority and women candidates generally under-perform on Election Day. In other words, they receive less of the vote on the day of the election than polls predict they'll receive. This happens because some poll respondents will say they are going to vote for the female or non-white candidate because that's what they feel they should say. It's called "social desirability" and, I think, it is making Obama's numbers soft.

**Q.** Predict the winners in some of the battleground states.

**A.** It will be McCain in Indiana and Missouri, and Obama in Florida, Ohio, Colorado, Pennsylvania, Virginia and New Mexico. I reserve the right to change these before November 4.

**Q.** Where else might McCain and Obama pick up surprise wins?

**A.** I don't think McCain will pick up anything we can call a surprise. Obama might pick up West Virginia and North Dakota, which would be unusual.

**Q.** How will North Carolina vote?

**A.** North Carolina is a bit close to call, but I'll predict McCain if only because of the state's recent history in presidential voting. I'm as likely to be wrong as I am right on this, though.

**Q.** Who will win the election and why?

**A.** Obama. He has the pull of history behind him, which we should not underestimate. It is also a very, very Democratic year. The public is not happy and the president and his party usually get blamed. The financial mess was the final nail in the coffin for McCain. He just has too many factors working against him to win. Something can happen to change this, of course.

**Q.** Regardless of who wins, do you think this is a good time to be president?

**A.** Yes, I do and no, I don't. The next president will face many great challenges early. That provides opportunity. If he can take advantage of that, he'll go down as one of the best. If he can't, well, he won't.

## Lacrosse Team Returns After Suit Is Threatened

By Decree Sports Staff

Women's lacrosse is back at North Carolina Wesleyan, after a Title IX lawsuit was threatened against the college.

"I'm thrilled that the team has been reinstated," said junior Kathleen Penrod, a Texas native who was recruited to play lacrosse at Wesleyan. "I'm happy and relieved that the school has agreed to do the right thing."

Penrod was among a group of athletes who decided to fight Wesleyan's decision to drop the two-year-old lacrosse program last fall in what has been described as a budget-easing move. The group contended that Wesleyan was not provid-

ing sufficient opportunities for female athletes, putting it in violation of Title IX, a federal law.

The college has agreed that the team will compete as a club sport in the spring and as a varsity sport in 2010. Penrod said that the team intends to begin practices in November.

"After almost a year of working to get lacrosse reinstated, it was great to finally see it happen," said senior Mikey Case. "I'm disappointed that I'll only be able to play at the club level but I'm glad that some of the girls will be able to play again as a varsity team in 2010."

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## 'The Murder of Emmett Till' Exhibited at Wesleyan

By Jessica A. Smith  
Decree Senior Editor

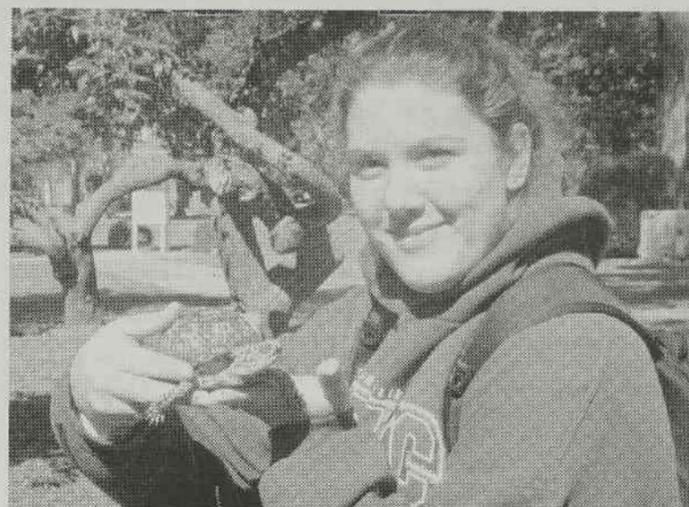
"The Murder of Emmett Till" Photo exhibit is currently on display in the Civic Gallery of the Dunn Center. The exhibit features photos, letters, newspaper articles, and other documents concerning the murder trial, the events that preceded it, its participants, and its aftermath. The majority of the exhibit, however, is dependent upon the newspaper articles and letters from 1955. They take a little time to wade through, but are worth the effort, for they tell a story that must be shared.

In 1955, Emmett Till was a 14-year-old African American boy from Chicago. He was visiting relatives that summer

in Mississippi, where he whistled at a white woman, and soon after was brutally murdered. The case was brought to trial, but after the all-male, all-white jury deliberated for a mere 67 minutes, the accused men were acquitted.

Recently, the Justice Department reopened the case to be sure that anyone involved was prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. According to Dean John Thornell, no one that could be charged could be found. By the time the case reopened, the killers were deceased. The Justice Department closed the case for good in 2004.

Lynchings of African Americans, such as Emmett's murder, had been occurring for decades. What made Till's



Christine Finein displays a turtle used in a Biology 314 (Vertebrate Zoology) project. The professor, Dr. John Temple, explained the student research: "We placed radio-transmitters on two eastern box turtles, which we had released in a field near Leggett. Two weeks later we went and located them. The transmitters sent temperature data, while providing a means of locating the turtles. The goal was to study the thermoregulatory patterns of the turtles in the wild." Photo by C. Thomas

## Wesleyan International Students Adjust to New Life

By Joyce Collins  
Decree News Editor

Choosing the right college is a grueling and stressful process. There are several factors that go into finding the school that is best for you. You have to consider the cost of attendance, the majors offered, the athletic programs, campus and Greek life and, most importantly, the location. While for most students the obvious choice is to stay close to home, for others it may be more complicated.

What if you find that perfect school but it's in an entirely different country? What if you chose a school that has an ocean between you and the only home that you have ever known? This is the reality for some of NC Wesleyan's ever-growing international student population. Students coming from countries like Sweden, Germany, and Sierra Leone have to not only deal with the academic pressure of college life but also the ever-changing American culture.

With enrollment being up this year, there has been a significant growth in numbers for international students. This year there are 31

new internationals, compared to 9 last year.

Because of this recent increase, I became curious as to how some of the internationals heard about Wesleyan. What made some of these internationals choose Wesleyan out of any other college in the world? What have been some of their toughest challenges? And how have they adapted to life in America?

Sophomore Kingsley Okyereh from Ghana, West Africa said that he learned about Wesleyan through a friend. "A friend of mine went here," said Okyereh. "I came here because of sports." Like Okyereh, senior Ali Kargbo a native of Sierra Leone, West Africa, also came to NCWC for athletics. "I came here for education, of course, but I really wanted to play soccer," he said.

Taiwanese student Joy Chen said she learned about Wesleyan through a relative. "My aunt introduced me to (the college). Before I came here I knew nothing about Wesleyan," said Chen. "I came because I wanted to improve my English and Wesleyan is better than other private colleges."

When asked about their biggest hurdles, some internationals pointed to the different teaching styles here in America. Freshman Hlynur Hauksson, of Iceland, said, "The most difficult thing since I came here was the course material. I didn't understand it but now it is getting better."

Kargbo agreed that his biggest transition from Africa to the U.S. was adapting to the new educational system. "In Africa, we have only one final exam in school each year. Fifty percent is a passing mark, but to get 50 is very hard," said Kargbo. "The final exam is comprehensive; it covers from the first day of class to the last. In the U.S., they give a lot of quizzes and tests throughout the school year."

Owen White, of England, said that he has had to adjust to the drinking age. "In England you can drink at the age of 18," he said, "but here you've got to be 21."

Okyereh said that he has had to struggle with becoming independent. "You have to work and live on your own here, but in Africa your parents give you everything until you're like 24 because people are usually done with school by then," he said.

For some international students, the language barrier has been a problem. Okyereh, whose native language is Twi, said that he learned English in Africa, but that writing has been a challenge. "It's hard when you are taking an English class because you have to write it, and it's easier to speak than to write," he said.

Chen found English difficult to comprehend. "There are some words I do not know how to spell and it's hard to understand when (Americans) talk fast," said Chen.

With international students being so far from their countries, it is easy to believe they long for home. But Hauksson does not feel that way. "No, I can't say I'm homesick," he said, "because I like it here and every one has been quite nice. I'll just visit around Christmas and in the summer."

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Cainaen Hannah takes in the Emmett Till exhibit in the Civic Gallery of the Dunn Center. Photo by C. Thomas

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