

NEWS & OPINION

Issue In-Focus: What's Your Reaction to Wesleyan Becoming a Dry Campus?

Jarad Brown

Wesleyan is really in a tough situation with alcohol and its policies for or against it on campus. While NCWC administrators aren't oblivious to the fact that drinking occurs on campus, they also must make rules that are in the best interest of all students. While students that are "of age" lose the ability to drink on campus, the need to protect students and try to limit underage drinking trumps the wants of upperclassmen. The needs of the many must always come before the wants of the few.

Nastasia Burnette

I was not even aware of the school's decision to switch the alcohol policy until now. During a recent class, Director of Residence Life Davon Davis said that we are now in the process of creating a "dry" campus and I couldn't help but think to myself: "as if!" The first step to getting the students involved in making Wesleyan a "dry" campus would be to make the entire student body aware. In my opinion the policy is not considering our entire student body. We have plenty of students on campus that are 21 years of age and even some well over the legal age to enjoy an alcoholic beverage. The policy should not apply to upperclassmen and the dorms they reside in. I thought the purpose of making dorms such as Centura and Boddie only available to those students that hold a certain amount of credit hours was to separate more mature students and their activities from those that are not of age. In the past years, Centura dorm residents were allowed to have alcoholic beverages. Staff members that were involved in making the change in the alcohol policy have said it was to protect our students, that they don't want them to get alcohol poisoning or get harmed on campus due to drinking. I feel that if we have not had any incidents or problems with the previous policy or did nothing to have the privilege revoked, then it should remain as is; the college shouldn't blame it on the a a a a alcohol (Have you heard this Jamie Foxx song? It's very popular—"blame it on the alcohol")

Georgettae Fields-Turrentine

Wesleyan's decision to tighten its alcohol policy by making it alcohol-free was not a good decision. Before the change, Boddie, an upperclassmen dorm, was the only dormitory that

permitted the use of alcohol as long as the person was of legal age. Now, even those who are legal cannot consume alcohol on campus and if they are caught, disciplinary actions will follow. I think this is an absurd change because those 21 years or older should be able to drink as long as they do so responsibly. Taking away one's right to drink on campus is very problematic because people will have to find other places such as bars and houses to do so. As a result, more parties are going to result because of such a decision, and students will be susceptible to driving while impaired. If they can longer do it on

Hall; therefore I see this new policy as something that should not affect anyone but maybe those students who live in Boddie. With that said, I do believe that this policy will make students take the dry campus idea more seriously because there are no loose ends to the policy. I also think that this is a good idea because, as everyone knows, the number of students attending the college each year is growing and space is limited in the dorms; therefore students of all different ages are being placed in various dorms across campus. Not having a dry campus could potentially

not play a sport. These students should not be forced to alter their freedom or follow other rules than the laws outside the serpentine wall. But it is a complex issue. And if the school would enforce the policy to the fullest, it would only push the problem outside the wall, which then leads to other problems like drunk driving and so forth.

Alyson Matarazzo

North Carolina Wesleyan College has made its campus a dry one. No alcohol. Some students, I understand, support this. For me, I understand partly, but do not support the policy. My experience, which comes down to my parents' and my friends' parents' rules, is that when you tell kids, and college students, that this is NOT allowed, they try to break that rule. It might be a game to some. Others might just want to give the rule, and the adults who made it, the figurative finger. I do not like this policy. For one, I have friends that are 21 years old. They are of age and are not allowed to have a beer or two after classes? My understanding of college is that it is to prepare us for the real world. How is making our small campus a dry one preparing me for that? I don't know if it is, or even if it could. Are we not supposed to be learning how to be responsible? Are we not supposed to be growing and maturing? I chose this school because it was small, the professors seemed to trust the students, and most of the people I met seemed more mature than where I come from. I needed that, and I still do. I do not see how making our campus a dry campus helps us, the students.

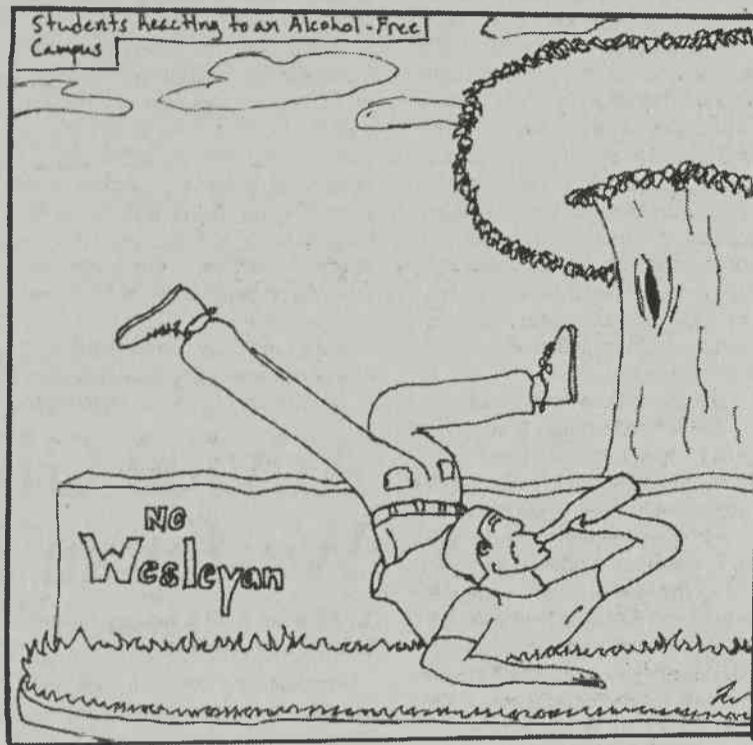
Makeda Rose

In light of the fact that Wesleyan is a Methodist college with certain values

and appearances to uphold, it is clear why they would want to toughen policies about alcohol use on the campus. However, it is absolutely ridiculous to expect no drinking to take place on a college campus. Quite a few students are of and beyond the age of drinking and it is unfair to restrict their legal rights in hopes that drinking on campus will stop, because it won't. These regulations may also push underage drinkers off campus which will be a more hazardous environment for them. I am not promoting underage drinking, but it does happen and will continue to happen despite any rule that is put into place. I believe that the governing body should allow those who are of age to indulge. They should restore Boddie—or whatever dorm they deem acceptable—to a wet hall.

Gregory Spence

I feel as though there is a lot of good with making the new policy. However, I don't think that the new rule will discourage future consumption of alcohol on campus. There is really no way to control what a student drinks in the privacy of his or her dorm room. I believe that instead of eliminating alcohol completely, maybe they should instead try to take preventive measures to inform students of the risks that come with drinking. It's not the alcohol that is the problem, but the students' inexperience and a lack of knowledge that opens the door for trouble. In recent years Wesleyan has been a dry campus except for in Boddie. If we have not been able to contain drinking to only that dorm in the past, how do we plan on eliminating drinking campus-wide?



campus, students will have no choice but to drive back to campus with alcohol in their system. This is a lose-lose situation. Wesleyan is indeed held liable to ensure students are safe, but we must also remember that they are adults as well. I think we should have kept the policy as it was and if someone underage tried to get past it, then disciplinary action could occur.

Meghan Herd

I believe that the new alcohol policy is a good thing for this community. Prior to this year, Wesleyan was basically a dry campus excluding Boddie

result in underage drinking and other alcohol issues.

Rodney Holley

The move is one that doesn't affect me. One reason for the policy not affecting me is the legal aspect (I'm only twenty). And secondly, I choose not to drink. However, I don't think this policy will stop the majority of alcohol consumers from drinking on campus. One reason is that no one gets caught. As I enter my junior year, I haven't heard, seen, or been warned about drinking on campus after someone else has been caught. Furthermore, during a recent weekend I saw alcohol bottles in the parking lots even after having mandatory dorm meetings where the drinking policy was discussed. In closing, the policy may prevent the few who are afraid of being sent home from drinking on campus, but the rest of the alcohol consumers will find a way around the policy and may even bring back bottles of alcohol to put around campus to laugh in the face of the policy.

John Kostet

I understand the tightened policy to some degree. I'm not saying that I agree with it completely. I understand our school's purpose to try reducing the risk of creating unhealthy relations to alcohol among the underage students. But at the same time I think it is unfair to the students who were allowed to consume alcohol in the past—the ones who lived in the upperclassmen dorms, were older than twenty one and did

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Leila Heinonen, a junior and a member of the tennis team, said that she, too, became angry on learning about the new charges. "I couldn't understand how the school can force people to eat at the cafeteria," she said. "It felt like the school was trying to get easy money from the students, even though they explained it as a way to better the community."

Heinonen added that she finds the food in the cafeteria unappealing. Even if she wanted to eat meals there, she said, her class and practice schedule would prevent her from doing so.

In his email message, Dean Williams said that some students would see their financial aid cut by a small amount if they elected not to keep the meal plan.

THE DECREE

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Student Government Explained

Welcome back to school, everybody. We know you all probably wish that the summer had lasted a little bit longer, but we're back at school now, which means it's time to get back to work. As you get back to work in your classes and at practice, we're getting ready to fire the Student Government Association back up for the school year. Before we do, though, we'd like to take some time to clarify some points on what exactly the NC Wesleyan SGA is and what it does.

First, SGA is not just another student organization. It's a governing body that oversees student organizations and student events, investigates student concerns about the campus, and works to make life better for students over all. When students want to plan an event, they come to SGA to both plan and fund it. If a student, or group of students, has a concern about an aspect of the campus—whether it's in the academic sector, financial services, student affairs, or residence life—they can bring that issue to us and we will do our best to resolve it. Also, we are constantly working on plans to make life better for students, both residents and commuters.

We have several committees, each managed by students, that work through SGA. The committees include:

- Residence Life, which looks into issues in the dorms
- Food Services, which works with the cafeteria staff to ensure that students will be satisfied with the food
- Community Service, which helps students and groups who want to do community service activities
- Publicity, which ensures that information about student activities reaches the student body
- Elections, which runs elections for various SGA positions
- Finance, which makes sure that all SGA funds are being spent properly
- Fundraising, which raises money for the different campus organizations
- Environmental, which has been developing ideas to make the campus more environmentally friendly, with a focus on recycling and solar-energy.

The SGA board is made up of students from every aspect of the student community: twenty-three members represent the student organizations on campus, six represent each of the dorms, and four represent the four academic classes (freshmen, sophomore, junior, senior). Finally, the

four executive board members—secretary, treasurer, vice president, and president—work to make sure that all the SGA business gets done. This includes funding of events, distributing information, and taking student concerns to the Wesleyan administration and the Board of Trustees.

For the 2009-2010 academic year, the SGA executive board consists of Jacob Strickland, president; Juliana Richardson, vice-president; Taylor Huffman, treasurer; and Kayla West, secretary. They are listed on page 144 in your student handbook. Members of the executive board followed the elections process in submitting their applications by the deadline near the end of last semester. Each person ran uncontested, and in accordance with parliamentary procedures, formal elections were not held. Any questions or comments should be directed towards the executive board members, either by office phone or by email. Both will be given out at the first SGA meeting, and will be posted outside the SGA office.

While the SGA board is made up of representatives from certain areas of the student body, all students are invited to attend our meetings. Last year some of our most important issues were called to our attention because student visitors came by to tell us about their ideas and concerns. Meetings are held every other Thursday at 8:00 (the first one was September 17). We are working to find a new meeting location so that more people can attend. As we just stated, meetings are open for everyone to attend, so please make time to come to at least one meeting this year.

This is your college campus, and you do have a say in how things operate here. So, if you have an issue about something happening in the dorms, something you or someone you know has experienced through any of the departments on campus, or just have an idea for an event or activity, please drop by and give us your opinions. Remember, if you want there to be more things to do on this campus, or you think that something needs to be changed to make things better, it's not going to get done by you sitting on your butt in your dorm room. You have to put some effort into it, and coming to an SGA meeting is often the first step towards a positive change. Have a great year, everybody. Hope to see you soon.

—This column was prepared by SGA's Executive Board: Jacob Strickland, Juliana Richardson, Taylor Huffman and Kayla West.