

# The Decree

OFFICIAL STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF  
NORTH CAROLINA WESLEYAN COLLEGE

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## Editors explain policy on articles

Due to recent criticism from a number of individuals in the Wesleyan community, the editors of *The Decree* would like to state their policy of submittance and acceptance of editorials, feature writing, and other articles.

Articles are requested to be submitted to the editors on the Friday before publication. These dates for the fall semester are Oct. 18, Nov. 1, Nov. 15, and Dec. 6.

*The Decree's* policy on anonymity is as follows: we strongly suggest that authors allow their names to be printed; however, we reserve the right to withhold an author's name if it is concluded that the author may be jeopardized.

For example, the Insider and the editors have agreed that if the Insider's name was printed with his/her articles it would affect the ability to write in an outspoken manner.

The editors find it ridiculous that individuals have argued that signatures should be a requirement for editorials. Since when has there been any requirement for a journal

to reveal the identity of an anonymous letter? Why not then criticize James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay for their Federalist papers?

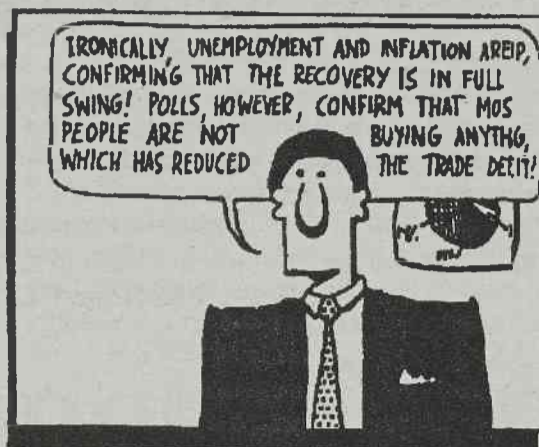
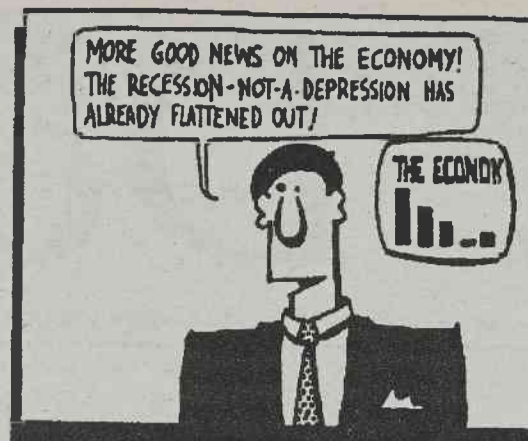
How dare they use a pseudonym of Publius for their writings?

These writers have never been questioned for their integrity because they felt that they needed the protection of anonymity.

Why now are individuals who write for *The Decree* being questioned? Haven't they the same rights as the founders of the American government? We, the editors, think so.

The editors do require that individuals submit their names to the editor, but names can be withheld on request. We urge the entire Wesleyan community to feel free to submit any opinion on any topic to the editors.

Please place all articles, letters, opinions, and news items in the mailboxes of the editors, John Fentress (Box 3522) and James Oakley (Box 3410).



### Still hope for cynic

## New films show good in people

By STEVE FEREBEE

The other day I was, in my usual subtle way, making fun of Vice President Quayle. One of my students said I was too cynical. I defended myself as someone who had reason to be cynical of politicians but who is not blind to the good that exists even in many people who lead lives I deplore.

Nevertheless, as I thought about this conversation later, I was nagged by the suspicion that perhaps a loss of my youthful idealism accompanies the inevitable deterioration of my body.

As I worked in the garden, I considered three movies I've seen lately and decided I still believe intensely in people, even though I find many of them less than ideal. These are not artistically perfect movies, but each one concerns a group of misfits searching for a center to their lives — a home. Some find it, some don't; but I am happy that the directors, writers, and actors tried to reveal courage and dignity amidst the cowardice and greed of contemporary society. I'm not so cynical that I can't be moved by their stories.

Alan Parker's *The Commitments* is the gritty, realistic story of a group of poor Northern Irish youths who form a band in Dublin. They coalesce around the idea that music can provide strength to and a bond between

### Dr. Steve Muses

the musicians and the audience. They see themselves as an oppressed minority and the American soul songs the sing offer them a way out, if only momentarily.

*The Commitments* is a movie about the possibility of community, of hope for a future without hate and separation. Call him realistic or call him cynical, but Parker presents possibility, not certainty. The words of popular music ("Try a Little Tenderness;" "Respect") in smoky Detroit bars and Dublin pubs cannot by themselves change us. But at least we're offered the chance to listen.

Gus Van Sant's *My Private Idaho*, an off-the-wall movie based on a B52's song and Shakespeare's *Henry IV* plays, makes Parker's gritty realism look like Norman Rockwell. The complicated plot concerns a melancholy unrequited love story about two male prostitutes, one a gentle narcoleptic searching for his mother and the other a gruff rich kid rebelling against his father.

But this is really the story of people trying to find family. Even if you think you don't like movies about people bar outside the mainstream, give this movie a

chance. Not only have the actors (River Phoenix and Kenau Reeves) taken a chance but also they have given interesting and heart-wrenching performances. They make us believe in the people they portray, and they confirm our faith in people's ability, and need, to care for each other.

We may not believe in some of what happens in Terry Gilliam's contemporary knight-in-shining-armor tale *The Fisher King*, but Gilliam and the actors pull us into another story about people's need for each other in a world where cynicism often seems the only sane alternative. When media star Jack (Jeff Bridges) realizes that other people (including Robin Williams' mad Sir Gallahad-on-the-street and Michael Jeter's outrageous transvestite-on-the-street) mean more to him than personal success, the moment is believable and touching. By scaling the walls of his own self-hatred, he rejects cynicism and accepts love.

So, by the time I had finished in the garden for the day I felt better. At least I could accept Hollywood's version of the pain we cause ourselves by failing to see that commitment, happiness, and love exist in the most unfertile places if we will take the time to nurture them. For us cynics, pointing out the failure is at least a first step.