

Student discontent has long tradition

Dear Editors:

I hope the current NCWC student body will not be disappointed to discover that the controversies raging in recent issue of *The Decree* did not originate with the Classes of 1992-1996.

As a member of the NCWC Class of 1972, I could tell you who rerouted traffic from the southbound lane of 301 through campus during Commencement, who put Jello in the fountain in February, which girls owned men's parkas to be worn while leaving the boys' dorm at 3 a.m., and who baked the brownies with the extra vegetable-matter ingredient that were eaten by the fraternity advisor/Dean of Students during a pledge party.

I remember quite clearly how, as students, my classmates and I considered ourselves fully capable of directing the courses of our lives, without supervision and especially without interference. We reacted with outrage when two of us were badly injured in an automobile accident after an off-campus party, blaming the school's alcohol policy for the near-tragedy. We, too, considered the consumption of alcohol "a mark of maturity," without considering that true maturity requires accepting the responsibility for one's actions.

It never occurred to us that the administration and staff of this school, entrusted by our parents with our well-being, were acting out of genuine concern and with a strong sense of responsibility when they established alcohol and visitation policies. Nor did we allow ourselves to realize that if we were indeed prepared to be fully franchised members of society, we would not have chosen instead to spend four additional years being education for that purpose.

As a member of the staff of this College, I am impressed by the dedicated efforts of the administration, faculty, and staff to improve the quality of the students' lives — socially, technologically, and academically. Unlike many of my colleagues, however, I am not surprised that these efforts are, for the most part, unacknowledged and underappreciated. In my experience, it has always been the nature of man to protest those things that are lacking rather than to be grateful for those things he has; it may even be essential to progress.

As a student, I applauded the daring of the perpetrators of the

escapades recounted here; during the intervening 15 years I have admired their ingenuity. However, from neither perspective did I expect their behavior to be sanctioned by the school's administration. For while it may be the inclination of a student body to test the limits of authority, it is the province of a school's administration to uphold it. These respective roles in the college experience are not unique to this generation or this institution, and the recent barrage of virulent epithets and condemnations, both anonymous and attributed, is not going to alter either responsibility.

Pam Watson

The Insider's religious 'knowledge' amusing

Dear Editors:

The Insider's insert in the third issue of *The Decree* contained some amusing ideas regarding Christianity. He/she/it even went so far as to attack Michele Carpenter for pointing out that we are all sinners.

She did not judge anybody, as the Insider so foolishly asserts. To judge in Biblical terms is to condemn to hell. We, the Christians, are bound to point out when people are doing what is wrong. If you disagree, check the following verses: John 20:23, Romans 3:21-31, and 1 John 1:8-10. If it is wrong to point out sin, then Jesus and the Apostle Paul were pretty horrible people.

While I'm on the subject of Scriptural quotation, the Insider's quote out of Ecclesiastes is very amusing. Insider's verse said that there is nothing better under the sun than to eat, drink, and be merry. In the same book, Ecclesiastes 2:11, we find, "...there was no profit under the sun." Think about it.

Insider seems to think that to say a Christian is on the "outside" while shut him or her up. Well, Mr./Ms./Whatever Insider, we have known we'd be on the outside for the past 2,000 years. I can't speak for Michele, of course, but I usually take "outsider" status as an indication that I'm doing something right.

To make personal attacks behind the shield of anonymity is a mark of true cowardice. I know of no credible newspaper that would even permit a direct, personal attack in an anonymous letter. To criticize policies or organizations is one thing, but per-

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sonal attacks are different, because anyone under personal attack should be allowed to confront the attacker by some means other than an anonymous name.

I suggest that both you and *The Decree* reconsider your tolerances for anonymity.

W. Kenneth Leonard

Harsh epithets don't lead to any solutions

Dear Editors:

When I was in high school I witnessed an incident which seems pertinent today, in which he of the lower locker stood up and dented his dome on the open door of his of the upper locker. He of the lower locker uttered a manly oath (oaths were considered manly when I was in high school) and closed the open door with alacrity and a mighty roundhouse right, almost amputating the fingers of him of the upper locker.

He of the upper locker said, "Look (anal sphincter), keep your (condemned to perdition) hands off my (ludicrously inappropriate sexual adjective) locker." Whereupon the discussion progressed through a variety of variations on the theme, "Oh, yeah?" and ended with the protagonists pummeling and clutching at each other until the Principal intervened on principle and evicted them both for an indeterminate period, which they felt was dreadfully unjust.

(To this day it seems to me that if he of the lower locker had contented himself for a moment with rolling about the floor and going, "Ow! Ow! Ow! Ow!" it would have allowed him of the upper locker to make some inane but solicitous inquiry as, "Are you hurt?" and may have opened the door to a negotiation to avoid a recurrence of the situation, if not a bonding experience.)

This incident was brought to mind by a number of notes in the Library's suggestion box, an article or two, and a few letters to the editor in *The Decree* which appear to me to be fairly regularly couched in terms reminiscent of "Look (anal sphincter)!" and "Oh, yeah?"

My dears, this is not the language of moderation. Having

been at both the long and short end of the shtick, I can assure all and sundry that the accusatory finger in the eyeball is not a useful opening gambit if one's intent is to achieve understanding or a change in behavior. Remember that the soft word turneth away the slings and misfortunes of outrageous errors, or something like that.

Al LaRose

Insider not really fair but deserves support

Dear Editors:

I was pleased to read the editorial in the latest edition of *The Decree*. I, too, agree that Wesleyan provides many opportunities to its students. Among those opportunities is the freedom of free speech.

I must say I have enjoyed the recent articles from the Insider. His/her articles provide an additional humor to the paper. However, I would encourage the Insider to concentrate on accurate facts. By stating only one's opinion or what you perceive to be facts, other students do not receive both sides of an issue. Perhaps you could begin your articles by stating that the material is based solely on opinion or hearsay information and contains little to no factual information.

I would also like to say to the Insider that if you are going to criticize someone, you should be able to take criticism, too. Do not get me wrong. I enjoy reading the Insider's column; it is the first article I read when I pick up *The Decree*. To the Insider, I say keep writing your articles so that I can continue to read them. You have my full support!

Finally, to the editors, I feel that if you are going to accept an unsigned article, whether it be at your fault or the fault of the author, no materials should be accepted late. *The Decree* is a reflection on the Wesleyan community. The latest issue reflected careless planning by allowing an insert with typographical errors to be distributed to the Wesleyan community.

I hope in the future you will continue to present both sides of an issue as reflected in the latest issue of *The Decree*.

Tommy Shaw

Real freedom rests in accepting Jesus

Dear Editors:

In this democratic, free coun-

try in which we live, most citizens do not understand liberty. The definition of freedom is not the absence of rules. Even the founding fathers of our country knew that as they drafted the Declaration of Independence.

But even more powerful than America's founding fathers, God has given us plenty of insight into what freedom means. He shares with those who will really hear the description of freedom. To begin the journey of true freedom, you have to be a *disciple* of Jesus Christ. Following him as the ultimate model, he said his disciples will know the truth and the truth will make those disciples *free*. When Jesus said that to his followers when he was on earth, they answered, "Wait a minute! We've never been slaves or servants of anyone. What in the world do you mean we will be free?"

And then Jesus gave them the meaning of true freedom and true bondage. Whoever sins is the servant of sin. Whoever sins does whatever the sinful nature commands. But, Jesus continued, if you know me, you will be truly free.

Knowing God, following Christ's footsteps, we are free from the power of sin, free from the legalism of religious sects, free from the rule of our sinful nature or flesh, free from the burden of constant guilt, and free from the bondage that comes from the fear of death.

To have this ultimate freedom is simple. Freedom is knowing the triune God. This freedom is not unrestrained immorality, not a world where rules do not exist. This freedom is the liberty to be what God wants us to be, free to serve him, free to honor and glorify our creator. After all, that is the reason he created us in the first place (1 Cor. 6). You either serve him or you serve the devil. You are mastered by one or the other (Mat. 6).

God expands on freedom through the pen of Paul in his letter to the Romans. "But God be thanked, that you were the servants of sin, but you have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, you became the servants of righteousness... Now being made free from sin, and become servants of God, you have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin

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