

The Decree

OFFICIAL STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF
NORTH CAROLINA WESLEYAN COLLEGE

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Don't just gripe, be part of changes

Changes are coming, and students better be prepared. Our beloved North Carolina Wesleyan College is now going through a rebuilding period and you can either be a part of it or stand on the sidelines while progress passes you by.

Some here believe that their passiveness is somehow "cool" or that their lack of involvement makes some sort of deep silent protest that has a certain twisted nobility. Well, it doesn't!

Look, people, you are not in a police state. You can come and go as you please unless you are past visitation hours in the dorm. No one is forcing you to pay Wesleyan \$13,000 and some change to come here. There are plenty of other institutions of higher education very willing to take your money and still you stay!

So, if you are going to stay, why not take an interest in your surroundings? If you are going to complain, at least first try to tackle the issue you are complaining about. Complaining is often justified here, but apathy is not justified anywhere. No pity is felt for a burning person who complains about the flames but refuses the water that would put them out.

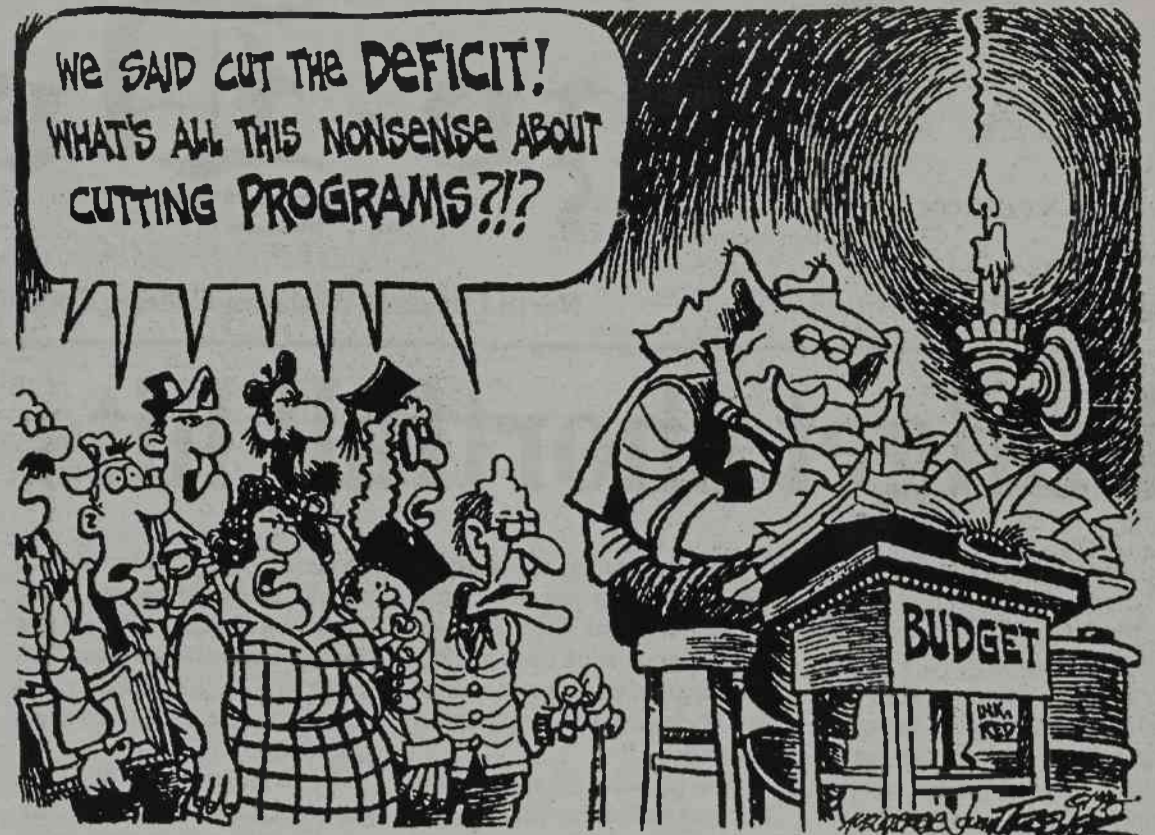
Many of you are angry about the new Dunn Fine Arts Center, and you are probably right about most of what you are saying, such as "Money could have been used elsewhere." However, reality

check. It's here and the money has been spent. There is nothing you or anyone else can do about it now, so why not put up the white flag and try to make the best of it. Students, the official opening should prove to be a spectacular event for our campus and the school wants you there. In fact, they need you there.

Disregard the rumor about students not having access to the building. President John White said this is a building for the students and not just for the outside community, although they will be using it often.

Students, do not believe that your involvement in all the changes on campus is nonessential. You are the life of the campus. You are the reason Wesleyan, or any other college, for that matter, exists. Every one of you is important and is needed for this school to function. Your involvement is valued, even though no one may say it. Students, who are also adults, ought to be able to function without constantly receiving proverbial pats on the back.

However, students, you have to exercise your freedom to get involved even if that involvement means you mobilize against an issue the administration is backing. Here, there are endless opportunities to get involved and exercise your personal freedom — as long as you are out of the dorm by midnight.



Where were solutions?

Daggett talk was weak, divisive

By DR. STEVE FEREBEE

Recently I was reminded that experience and titles and degrees don't guarantee effective communication.

Last week, during the North Carolina Honors Association's annual meeting at Mt. Olive College, I listened to an energetic, unfocused, and apocalyptic talk by Willard Daggett, the Director for the International Center for Leadership in Education.

Members of the center predict the future of education by contrasting the bureaucracy's goal with the actual needs of future workers.

Dr. Daggett is arrogant and overly fond of the sweeping generalization; nevertheless he has an impressively researched theory about college education's increasing irrelevance which is worth listening to and arguing against. But his style sabotages his message.

After predicting that the country would go crazy when the O.J. verdict was announced and complaining that teachers are afraid to teach "values," Dr. Daggett said that those points didn't pertain to his talk.

Then began two hours of graphs, predictions, comparisons, and asides. He made fun of people who might disagree with him; then he said he didn't mean to.

Using a portable microphone, he waded into the audience. He cajoled individuals into "sharing" personal information. He tossed his overhead-projected graphs onto the floor as soon as he was finished with them. For a while

*Dr. Steve
Muses*

we liked watching him.

After he argued the state of North Carolina is doing a wonderful job with its institutions of higher education — if we are still living in the 1950's — he mentioned his main point. According to him, United States education is elitist and old fashioned because a "club" of powerful men think that reading Shakespeare and abstract physics are more important than learning "technical reading" and applied physics.

Unfortunately, the necessary job skills for an "information-based society" are increasingly unrelated to "theoretical" Shakespeare and physics classes. He flashed some more graphs showing that educators from other countries teach more application than theory. He accused us of being jealous of car mechanics' salaries.

He reached a moment when I was sure he was going to offer us

some solutions to the problems in education. But he made the same mistake he was trying to convince us we were making: He drowned us in theory and didn't tell us how to apply it.

Here's a guy, I found myself thinking, who has been able to travel all over the world and learn about education systems, who has been a public school teacher, a college teacher, a university dean, and the member of countless committees. But he doesn't see two feet beyond his nose. He forgets his audience.

As soon as he paused for a long breath, the students streamed out of the auditorium. He had lost an important opportunity to help them think about the kinds of jobs they will be ready for when they graduate.

I disagreed wholeheartedly with much of what Dr. Daggett said, but I was willing to respect his opinion because of who he is and the experiences he has had. But when he was finally finished and we had respectfully applauded, what he communicated was not his message but a critical lesson in weak rhetoric, unfocused material, and divisive tactics.

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.