

The Decree

OFFICIAL STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF
NORTH CAROLINA WESLEYAN COLLEGE

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Foreign language courses important

The recent decision to drop the foreign language program temporarily seems to have left a large percentage of Wesleyan's student body out to dry.

Because of financial reasons, the foreign language classes have been stopped until next year when the program may be reviewed. The announcement was made the week after registration, leaving those who had registered for such classes a few credit hours short.

Of course the money to fund the courses has to be there, but why did the decision wait until after registration? Now many students are left picking through whatever classes may be available next year.

To some students, the foreign language requirement meant simply more classes to get through, but for others the classes were a fun experience,

teaching them about other cultures.

Most importantly, however, what kind of college graduates its students without any foreign language experience? In today's world, everyone should know at least one language other than English. Such a move to cut the program sets back many students from the rest of the college world. Many graduate schools require foreign language on the college level. In the end, Wesleyan many lose more than it bargained for when its graduates lose out to more bilingual people in the work place.

Foreign language is an experience that everyone should have. No matter how weak the program was, it still existed, and students still learned. Bring it back as soon as possible, or we may all drown in this great American melting pot.



Summer luxury

Time now for some reading

By DR. STEVE FEREBEE

"Summer" has different meanings for each of us. I can remember (vaguely) when it meant days and days of freedom. When you're a kid, the shoes come off, the bathing suits come on, and time is endless. Later it means jobs, seemingly mundane at the time, but important for the people you meet and the experiences you confront.

Now my summer is a time to pound and scrape and clean around the house; the garden grows lush, then needs help to withstand the mugged-out, bug-infested waves of heat.

But summer also means reading. I sometimes think my students think I do little else but read, but during the school year, I am yoked to my classes and other duties. So when graduation is over, I always have a stack of books to read.

Dr. Steve Muses

This summer I have a Horror Literature class to prepare for, so I will spend a lot of mornings in the company of ghouls and clanking chains. I also have a bunch of contemporary British fiction to read because I didn't finish it last summer. And the literacy criticisms, histories, and biographies are ever-present. But I also try to consider contemporary American fiction as well, because, after all, this is we. Let me presume to suggest a few you might try.

Russell Banks writes face-paced entertaining stories of misfits like Chappie Dorset, aka "the Bone" in *Rule of the Bone*. Chappie is a 14-year-old homeless Holden Caulfield type. He begins, "You'll probably think I'm

making a lot of this up just to make me sound better than I really am or smarter or even luckier but I'm not." Kicked out of his home, the Bone, accompanied by a wise, organic gardening Rasta named I-man, seeks his father who deserted him years ago. No one in the crazy cast of characters is predictable, the plot swoops and plunges, and the Bone faces his demons and wins. Banks succeeds at creating a believable and original voice.

One of the oddest books I have read is Susanna Moore's *In the Cut*, and you have to be in the mood for some very perverse goings-on. How could I pass up a novel that begins: "I don't usually go to a bar with one of my students. It is almost always a mistake"? Plus the narrator is a writing teacher whose students often call her at home with questions about their writings; and she

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'Music Man' shines in new Dunn Center

By KEN RIPLEY

Meredith Wilson's "The Music Man" was brought to full life at N.C. Wesleyan College by student and community actors in the first major performance in the college's immense Dunn Center for the Performing Arts.

The largest production ever attempted by the college's drama department fit comfortably within the 1,200-seat auditorium, and the result was an evening area resi-

dents thoroughly enjoyed.

The Broadway musical play, made famous by the movie starring Robert Preston and Shirley Jones, is the story of a con salesman, "Professor" Harold Hill, who convinces an Iowa town to form a boys band (changed in this production to a children's band) — and then gets caught up in his own spellbinding magic through the emerging faith and love of the town's initially skeptical librarian, Marian Paroo.

Review

Nobody can outperform Preston and Jones in their defining roles, but Wesleyan's Clay Jackson and Melinda Harden put their own stamp on the characters through a solid display of local talent in a cast of more than 60 residents and students.

The two leads were more than

capably backed by Kevin Corbett's limber dancing and hamming as Hill's local sidekick, Marcellus; Charlotte Pettitt's broad Irish accent as Marian's mother, Mrs. Paroo; Jim Singleton as the fumble-tongued mayor; and the luscious harmonies of the feuding school board, played by the Rocky Mount barbershop quartet of Charles Rose, Stephen Krall, Jim Wiggs, and Joe Williams.

The younger performers did

particularly well in a cast that is full of children of all ages. Max Miller was a beguiling Winthrop Paroo, lisp and all.

The town's proper ladies — the mayor's wife, Sara Schutz, joined by Gail McWithey, Patsy Carter, and Jennifer Morse — were likewise hilarious, whether gossiping or forming a rather bizarre Grecian urn.

Directed by Vaughn Schutz

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