

OPINION & NEWS

Opinion: On Christianity, Gay Marriage and FAITH/forward

By David Robinson
Senior Staff Writer

The lions are out and there are Christians. Let's see if we can get those two groups in the same arena for the entertainment of the masses.

That appears to be the mindset of some who bring us the news. There is a bullying ethos in the media that makes them want to find an unsuspecting Christian and ask a loaded question, the naïve answer to which is then used to stir up an attack on that Christian, and Christians in general. We recently observed this very thing when the Memories Pizza store owners in Walkerton, Indiana were asked if they would cater a gay wedding. They said no, they would not. Pizza at a wedding? It wasn't a pizza question, it was a gotcha question.

The lions were notified, the gates into the arena were opened, and the attack began. Memories Pizza closed and the owners went into hiding. There were death threats and picketing, marches and rallies, all because of an unguarded statement and the reporting that broadcast it to the world.

This is a question of freedom, especially freedom of expression, enshrined in our Constitution, and also it is the amazing ongoing effort to subvert the voice of traditional Christianity. If it can happen in Walkerton, Indiana, it can happen here in Rocky Mount and on our NCWC Campus.

A Gallup poll shows that as of December 2012 "The large majority of Americans—77 percent of the adult population—identify with a Christian religion, including 52 percent who are Protestants or some other non-Catholic Christian religion, 23 percent who are Catholic, and 2 percent who affiliate with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Another 18 percent of Americans do not have an explicit religious identity and 5 percent identify with a non-Christian religion." (Gallup.com/poll/159548/identify-christian.aspx)

I suppose that Christians could rise up in one bloc and vote in their preferred candidates, but that hasn't happened, and isn't likely to happen. They also could stand up for themselves, but they haven't done that either. They seem to have learned to turn the other cheek with a thoroughness that invites cheek smacking.

Right now (April 2015) we are engaged in a deeply divisive legal

battle at the United States Supreme Court over the definition of marriage. While Christian churches are not unified on this matter, it is not an even split. A coalition of Christian churches representing membership of over 50 million in the United States has submitted an amicus brief with the Supreme Court, urging caution in redefining an institution that has been basic to society for thousands of years. The Catholic Church, representing about 70 million members, has likewise petitioned the court to leave this debate to state legislatures. These Christian churches reason that this controversy would not stop with a court decision. Once the institution of marriage is redefined, it is only a small step to demanding that Christian churches change their doctrine in other ways that the courts might decide. Make no mistake, Christianity and its definition is the goal. Christianity is under attack, and appeasement will not put off the lions.

In all, some 139 amicus briefs have been filed with the court in this matter, a record number. They are about 50/50 for and against. (lawprofessors.typepad.com/conlaw/2015/04/guide-to-amicus-briefs-in-obergefell-v-hodges-the-same-sex-marriage-cases.html#more)

North Carolina Wesleyan College was founded under the aegis of the United Methodist Church, a conservative traditional Christian sect, and continues to have ties with that church. Truth be told, the actual buildings and land that make up NCWC are owned by the North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church. It would seem that our association with a religious organization would cause us to be considered and called a Christian College. Whether we are or not in my mind is still not clear.

For certain, NCWC does not discriminate in its student selection process, nor does it do so in hiring of staff and faculty. For that reason, we have a diverse and broad spectrum of students and staff, and the potential for a wide range of learning experiences is great. But could we have our own Memories Pizza experience? Do not doubt it.

I once heard it said that when someone intends to attack, they take an opponent's statement and restate it in such a way that it becomes something obvious they can oppose, and then they attack their own restatement. So as NCWC adopts the new slogan FAITH/forward, we will

watch for it to be turned into something else. Heaven help us if we should advocate teaching our students to prepare themselves for a future that includes creating strong and stable families with a mother and father raising loved and emotionally healthy children. We've already seen where that could lead. But

Opinion: Why is Exercise Science 100 Required?

By Michael Taylor
Senior Staff Writer

Three days a week I arrive at school at 8 a.m. wearing worn out, ill-fitting workout clothes and then exercising until I break into a sweat. This is not how I like to start my day. In fact, unless you're an athlete or a fitness junkie, most people wouldn't want to start their day like this either. But this is exactly how I start every Monday, Wednesday and Friday morning because of my Exercise Science 100: Fitness and Wellness class. Every student that attends Wesleyan is expected to endure this as EXS 100 is a general education requirement.

The NCWC catalog states that the EXS 100 course is "designed to develop the understanding in the conceptual knowledge of health and fitness in the development and maintenance of human wellness. It is expected and encouraged that the students apply information received in the classroom environment to a personal fitness and wellness program. The students will be required to participate in a weekly workout routine which will include aerobic and resistance exercises."

Honestly, the first sentence I don't understand but the other two are pretty self-explanatory. I am expected to continue a fitness regime after taking this course. I'm sorry but once the class is over, it's over. I took a class on Shakespeare but I wasn't expected to read Shakespeare for the rest of my life. I also took trigonometry but I wasn't expected to use a quadratic equation each day. So why does this class expect me to continue applying what I learned there in my daily life? But, admittedly, I'm just nit-picking. On to the last sentence.

I am required to work out each week. I was never required to do anything in any other class I have ever taken. I was encouraged to attend class, read the recommended readings, and do any assigned homework and if I didn't, only my grade would suffer. I was never required to do it. No one looked over my shoulder to make sure I read all of chapter three or that I didn't sneak a peek at the answers in the back of the book when I did exercise 8.4. But in EXS 100, I have a "professor" standing over me making sure that I walk a mile, do push-ups or sit-ups, or exercise on one of those god-awful machines that are hard to operate and look like they could do more harm than good. This could be a product of my natural rebellious nature. If I am told I should be somewhere at a given time, I

CRANICK from pg 1

in business. Williams is also a youth minister at Cedar Hill Missionary Baptist Church located in Williamston and in his spare time likes to read poems and spend time with friends.

Cranick has teamed with Williams in the past. Both students were members of the SGA security committee that was created during the past year.

The two expressed excitement about continuing to serve together in SGA. "Kelly is very dependable and the students are lucky to have her as their SGA vice president," Williams said. "I'm positive that Kelly and I will work together in getting the job done for the students."

Cranick mirrored these sentiments. "We got to know each other through the security committee and work really well together," said the new vice president.

Cranick, a rising junior, is also a criminal justice major. She is on the soccer team and plays either mid-fielder or forward. She was secretary for the SGA board last year, serving as a liaison between SGA and the rest of the college. As vice president, she wants to improve residence life and security. She also wants students stating their opinions. "I want them screaming about their ideas," Cranick said.

The positions for treasurer and secretary were still open and the SGA was still accepting applications in late April.

that doesn't mean it shouldn't be taught.

It is my hope and expectation that we will maintain a balanced tolerance for all views. At the same time we must guard the proven foundation that created this North Carolina Wesleyan College. That is the new administration's task. President Dewey Clark wants to grow this school by an average of 100

students per year for the next 12 years, and at the same time safeguard and emphasize the Christian concepts that built not only this institution, but our nation as well.

I will watch Dr. Clark and his team as they meet this challenge, and with divine help, do it. But the lions are hungry, circling, and looking for Christians.

question its requirement. The requirement becomes more disagreeable given the fact that as a two-credit class, it messes up a lot of students' schedules. But it could be worse. Provost Michael Brown related that he was required to take a three-hour course in personal health and an additional three hours in physical activities while he was an undergraduate. That's a lot of fitness. Personally, I don't care about fitness and care less about a fitness class. But that could just be a bias. If it is, many students at Wesleyan share this bias. Junior Katie Beeman summed up the popularity of the EXS 100 class best. "No one's happy taking it," the English major said. Well ... Amen.

Editor's Note: Dr. Meir Magal, exercise science program coordinator, was interviewed, over email, about the Exercise Science 100 requirement.

Q. Why is EXS 100 a required course?

A. As a liberal arts institution, the general education curriculum plays a critical role in shaping the future of our students. We're educating our students, in part, to demonstrate critical thinking and analytical reasoning and to be contributing members of society. In other words, we should provide our students with the knowledge and skills that will allow them to make informed decisions that will affect their well-being and that of their communities now and in the future.

Q. Do you believe it should be a required course?

A. Definitely. This is the only course that all students need to take that is geared toward developing the understanding of why health and fitness are critical for the development and maintenance of human wellness. Sixty-eight percent of the U.S. population is overweight and/or obese, thus increasing the risk of chronic life-long diseases such as heart disease, most cancers, diabetes, and stroke. All these diseases take a toll on the health-care system and society as a whole. Moreover, these diseases negatively impact the quality of life of the individual, not just for a few years but for decades, and more often than not, are directly related to life choices. The benefits of developing healthy living through, in part, engaging in physical activity are well documented and may include, but are not limited to, a lower risk of cardiovascular disease (CVD), type 2 diabetes mellitus, some forms of cancer, and age-adjusted all-cause mortality. Unless you are an exercise science major at NCWC, no other class, except EXS 100, discusses the effects of lifestyle choices on morbidity (illness) and mortality (death) as well as ways in which to combat these diseases.

Q. What benefits do you hope students will gain from taking EXS 100?

A. My hope is that students will understand and follow the concepts of lifetime fitness and wellness and live long, disease-free lives as a result.

Q. What are the most common goals students set in the class?

A. To name a few, the students will better understand the concepts of health and wellness, leading causes of death in the U.S., benefits of good health, and the interaction between, healthy lifestyle, quality of life and life expectancy.

Q. What aspects of the class do you believe to be most beneficial to students?

A. I would say understanding the importance of physical activity and healthy behaviors including the importance of a proper diet and stress management. Other important aspects are the differences between chronic and infectious diseases.

that doesn't mean it shouldn't be taught.

It is my hope and expectation that we will maintain a balanced tolerance for all views. At the same time we must guard the proven foundation that created this North Carolina Wesleyan College. That is the new administration's task. President Dewey Clark wants to grow this school by an average of 100

students per year for the next 12 years, and at the same time safeguard and emphasize the Christian concepts that built not only this institution, but our nation as well.

Exercise Science 100 Explained

Editor's Note: Dr. Meir Magal, exercise science program coordinator, was interviewed, over email, about the Exercise Science 100 requirement.

Q. Why is EXS 100 a required course?

A. As a liberal arts institution, the general education curriculum plays a critical role in shaping the future of our students. We're educating our students, in part, to demonstrate critical thinking and analytical reasoning and to be contributing members of society. In other words, we should provide our students with the knowledge and skills that will allow them to make informed decisions that will affect their well-being and that of their communities now and in the future.

Q. Do you believe it should be a required course?

A. Definitely. This is the only course that all students need to take that is geared toward developing the understanding of why health and fitness are critical for the development and maintenance of human wellness. Sixty-eight percent of the U.S. population is overweight and/or obese, thus increasing the risk of chronic life-long diseases such as heart disease, most cancers, diabetes, and stroke. All these diseases take a toll on the health-care system and society as a whole. Moreover, these diseases negatively impact the quality of life of the individual, not just for a few years but for decades, and more often than not, are directly related to life choices. The benefits of developing healthy living through, in part, engaging in physical activity are well documented and may include, but are not limited to, a lower risk of cardiovascular disease (CVD), type 2 diabetes mellitus, some forms of cancer, and age-adjusted all-cause mortality. Unless you are an exercise science major at NCWC, no other class, except EXS 100, discusses the effects of lifestyle choices on morbidity (illness) and mortality (death) as well as ways in which to combat these diseases.

Q. What benefits do you hope students will gain from taking EXS 100?

A. My hope is that students will understand and follow the concepts of lifetime fitness and wellness and live long, disease-free lives as a result.

Q. What are the most common goals students set in the class?

A. To name a few, the students will better understand the concepts of health and wellness, leading causes of death in the U.S., benefits of good health, and the interaction between, healthy lifestyle, quality of life and life expectancy.

Q. What aspects of the class do you believe to be most beneficial to students?

A. I would say understanding the importance of physical activity and healthy behaviors including the importance of a proper diet and stress management. Other important aspects are the differences between chronic and infectious diseases.

High Number Still Text While Driving

More than 53 percent of NCWC students admit to texting while driving. The Decree found in a recent unscientific survey.

Of the 131 survey responses, 70 students (53.4 percent) said that they text while driving "on a regular basis."

Students were polled during April, which was national "Distracted Driving Awareness Month." Other survey questions asked students about their habits when it comes to driving while: eating, listening to music with headphones, talking on a cell phone,

and engaging in other distracting behavior, such as applying makeup.

Jessica Brys-Wilson, director of Wesleyan's Health Services, expressed alarm on learning the number of students who text while driving.

"I'm not really surprised, but I am scared by the numbers," she said. "We see how distracted students are by their phones. It's terrifying to think of them being that distracted while they're driving. How many times have you narrowly avoided an accident because you weren't paying attention? It's scary, scary stuff."

Calling it an "incredibly dangerous practice," Brys-Wilson noted that a recent study by Virginia Tech showed that a teen is 23 times more likely to die in a car accident if he's texting while driving. "I really urge students to avoid it at all costs," she said. "Let others know that you're going to be driving and won't be able to text for a little while. Anything can happen on the road and it's imperative that you be alert and aware at all times."

In their written comments, many Wesleyan students acknowledged the dangers of texting, calling it "the most distracting habit" because it requires them to take their eyes off the road. Asked to explain her reason for texting while driving, a 19-year-old female said, "I feel the need to respond to a text that I get."

A 19-year-old male student said that it's even more distracting for him, because "I drive a stick shift." A 22-year-old male explained that he sends and receives texts "because I feel like it's important," while a 42-year-old male said: "I don't know (why I text while driving). Foolishness, I guess."

Other survey findings revealed that, on a regular basis:

- 69.5% eat while driving (91 respondents)
- 68.7% talk on the phone while driving (90)
- 14.5% wear headphones and listen to music while driving (19)

The survey was administered in the library, as well as in the following courses: anatomy and physiology, English composition, fitness and wellness, psychology and religious studies.

THE DECREE
since 1960
"of, by, and for the Wesleyan community."

STAFF

Senior Staff Writers

Katie Beeman, Katherine Crickmore, David Robinson, Rebecca Staylor, Michael Taylor, KeCharna White

Staff Writers

Diamond Allen, Tiffany Brown, Trinity Carter, Amanda Gauthier, Shenika Harper, Kris Harris, Ella Monroe

Special Contributors

Grace Wallace (Photos)

Faculty Advisor

Dr. William Grattan
(ext 5336)

179 Braswell • Phone: 985-5336
Email: WJGrattan@ncwc.edu