

Yates needs help, not prison

By all accounts Andrea Yates' children should've been safe in her care. Yet all five children ranging from six months to seven years old were allegedly murdered in June 2001 by her hands.



La Shainna K. Campbell

Many Americans, parents or otherwise view her crime as unforgivable and almost inconceivable, and believe there should be no mercy shown by the courts. Yates has a valid defense for pleading insanity. Severe postpartum depression psychosis diagnosis is a valid defense. Anything other than an insanity plea would be an injustice.

Yates definitely slipped through the cracks. Yates is a woman who has had two attempts at suicide. According to the News and Record on one occasion she "scratched" at her throat with a steak knife, and on another overdosed on pills.

After these attempts Yates "chastised" herself for failing to die. Since the birth of her two year old Yates has been on prescription medication to help with her diagnosis. Weeks before her children were murdered her prescription was changed by her doctors. Yates doctors reported that she was almost "mute" at the time her children were murdered. If we were to view Yates' folder we would have reservations about her ability to care for herself, let alone five children. Yates' mental condition should've been taken more seriously by her doctors and social welfare.

The courts should not treat Yates' diagnosis any less serious than other mental illnesses. Some criminals view the insanity plea as an easy way out, and their claims can be disputed, but not in this case. What would the court system gain by throwing Yates into prison?

The opinion expressed in this column is that of the author and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the entire Bennett Banner staff.

STUDENT OPINION POLL:

Bellespeak

Do you think post partum depression is a valid defense in the Andrea Yates case?

Photos by Takesha Briggins, Banner Photographer and Reporter



SANDRA WILLIAMS
First-year student
Psychology
Bridgeport, Conn.

No because she's using the depression as an excuse. She committed the crime and need to face her consequences.



SYREETA WICKLIFF
Sophomore
Psychology
Seattle, Wash.

It could be the reason why she killed her children, depression affects people in different ways.



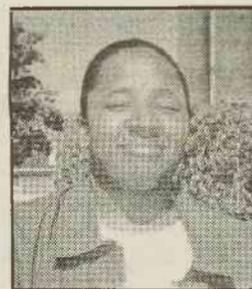
MELANIE FIELDS
Senior
English
Cincinnati, Ohio

Yates needs to undergo psychiatric counseling, however, she must be punished for killing her children.



YAASMYIN CUTTINO
First-year student
Undecided
Newark, N.J.

No. Black mothers deal with kids, jobs, and stress everyday and they are not killing their kids.



ROBIN HENDRIX
Sophomore
Computer Science
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Depression is never an excuse for premeditated murder. If she was hospitalized more than once then she should have been placed in a mental institution.



FAITH CHILONGO
Sophomore
Psychology
Raleigh

No because people always use mental illnesses as an excuse.



ASHLEY COBB
First-year student
Elementary Education
Yanceyville, NC

No. Mothers get depressed everyday, and they deal with it.



LEILANI YIZAR
Sophomore
Fashion Merchandising
Mamaroneck, NY

Yes. People get so depressed that they can't control their emotions.



LAUREN FOSTER
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I don't believe what she did was right, but depression is a valid defense.

THE BENNETT BANNER

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