

**LETTERS**

# Black History Month a time to reflect on young voters' apathy

To The Editor:

During this month of February, which is Black History Month, I feel compelled to discuss an issue that we all, especially students, desperately need to examine. This month has been set aside as a time of reflecting on the history, contributions and current status of African-American people. I am terribly troubled by the attitudes that many young African-Americans have today, especially concerning voting.

African-Americans make up only 12 percent of the American population. Of that 12 percent, only 6.6 percent are registered voters and among that 6.6 percent, African-Americans ages 18-24 who are registered to vote comprise .5 percent of the population of voters. Voting is more than just a privilege or a right: it is our obligation as people of color to vote.

Over the years many of our foreparents gave their lives so that we would be allowed to have the same rights as our fellow Americans. I have had conversations with family, friends and students as to why it is that they do not vote. Reasons young people give for not voting include, "not having the time," "apathy towards candidates," and being uninformed or unaware of the issues of concern to Americans.

While college-age voters are not concerning themselves with voting, believing that politics does not concern them, they need to become cognizant of propositions that could possibly cut off federal student aid in limited loans. Quite a few young people feel that all

politicians are corrupt and have their own personal agendas. Politics/voting is a game of sorts: similar to choosing sides for a pick-up game of basketball. You may not like who you have to choose from, but you choose the players that know how to play the game, the people you feel you will win with.

When politicians know they have a group with certain numbers, or voting power that can put them over the top, they do whatever they have to do to win the vote of the group. As African-Americans, we do not understand that fact and we are sadly under represented when it comes to voting. Every voice/vote counts and is needed.

Ethnic groups such as Asian-Americans, Jewish-Americans and African-Americans have all expressed the desire for a formal apology for the injustices committed against their people at various times in history. Perhaps everyone who is not a registered voter owes an apology to the descendants of those that gave their lives so that we would be able to participate in this "God given right." When we do not exercise our right to vote, we are committing unequivocal disregard to those that were subjected to water canons, attacked by dogs, beaten, murdered and bodies never recovered--or if they were they were so badly mangled that they were unidentifiable--for attempting to stand up and be counted just like the next human being.

B. Angela Holley  
University Counselor

# ECSU should allow co-ed visits in dorms

To The Editor:

Most of my life I have lived as a child and acted as a child. Now that I am an adult there are certain privileges I should be entitled to while I am in college.

This includes being able to have a visitor of the opposite sex spend the night in my room.

As young adults at ECSU we should not be denied our right to independence. If we are responsible enough to leave home and come to a strange environment, that says a lot about our level of maturity. If we are able to drive a car, which allows us to take our own lives and the lives of others in our hands, we should also be able to make decisions that affect our personal lives.

At the age of 18 we are able to vote and express our views about the world we live in. Moreover, we are old enough to fight and lay down our lives for our country. Given these facts, is it fair to deny us the right of overnight visitation?

How are we supposed to experience the full essence of being our own person and live the college life if we can not have some independence to prove we are responsible and can be trusted?

Independence is not the only issue at hand. We, the students of ECSU, should be able to enjoy the luxuries of college life. This dormitory will be what a lot of us call home for the next four years. If we have to stay here, we should be happy and content. We have paid all of this money for our room, and as long as we are not breaking the law in any way, we should be able to do whatever we want in our rooms.

There is no reason why we should be treated like babies when it comes down to what we can and cannot do.

If a person is renting a home, they should be able to live as they want. Denying us the right of overnight visitation is not fair to us, because we are

the ones who keep the university in operation. We are helping to pay the administrators' salaries, so they should try to accommodate us in some respects.

Many universities already allow coed visitation, with no resulting problems. For example, in N.C., Duke University has 88 percent of its students living on campus, and 55 percent of them live in co-ed dorms. At East Carolina University, 27 percent of the students live on campus, and 13 percent of these live in coed dorms. At UNC-Charlotte, 90 percent of students live in coed dorms. And at Wake Forest University, 83 percent of students live on campus, and 73 percent of these live in coed dorms.

If all of these North Carolina institutions of higher learning can allow coed dorms, why can't ECSU do the same?

We pay just as much tuition as those colleges; shouldn't we enjoy the same privileges?

In order to experience the full essence of being young adults in college, we should not always have someone looking over our shoulders making decisions that we should be able to make as young adults.

Another reason ECSU should allow coed visitation is that it would prevent a lot of people from sneaking around and getting into trouble. How many students get caught in the wrong room and are suspended for breaking the rules? This wastes precious time and money.

We should not have to sneak because we are adults, not criminals. We have not done anything wrong. Everyone by now should know about sexual relationships. If we are mature enough to take responsibility and make wise decisions about our sex lives or any other aspect of our lives, we should be able to handle something as minor as overnight visitation.

Sheree Jones

## THE COMPASS

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## POETRY

### Warrior

Heart of a lion hunting  
 the negative destroying  
 of society  
 capacitate me with your strength  
 where were you when I needed  
 you  
 in my life

lion of Judah rasta  
 men from the east  
 cure the nation with your ganja  
 I need the aroma of  
 awakens

Atiba Wiggins