

Honors forum examines morality and the media

by Garry Walton

"For me God is the answer to the decline of morality in the media," declared Art Professor Eugene O'Neal, during the Honors Forum held April 2 in Johnson Hall. "Take away God and his principles and you take away a basic foundation. Everything collapses.

O'Neal was one of several guest panelists for the forum, which examined the relationship between the mass media and the decline of American values.

"The media industry only reflects what's going on in society," he said. "They will embellish some areas to sell their products, whatever means necessary through sex, violent and profanity—you name it."

The forum focused on radio, television, rap music, heavy metal, rock and pornography on The Internet.

Albert Walker, freshman class president, read blatantly sexual lyrics from Lil Kim's album as examples of offensive lyrics in rap music.

"This music is demoting our moral values," he said, "and something should be done about it."

Another honors student, Chuck Craddock, spoke about pop music, including rock, heavy metal and rap.

"This music is integrated with profanity and explicit sexuality, and in many cases it glorifies violence and substance abuse," said Craddock. "This type of music has been blamed for sui-

cide, acts of violence, and drug abuse. It's inevitable that these trends will continue as long as this type of behavior is accepted by us and glorified in the media."

Jonathan Williams gave a presentation on pornography and on the Internet, and how accessible it is to children and adolescents.

"This pornography exploits women and men," he said. "It's so easily accessible to anyone. They can type in POR or XXX and have access to over one million pornographic sites on the Internet.

"People are willing to pay \$200 a month to have access to pornography in their homes. The (pornographic) sites offer free previews, and people can pay by credit card."

Williams urged listeners not to access the sites, adding "that is one solution to the problem. The destination is in your control."

Deanne Moring spoke on the way radio and films influence behavior.

"The American Pediatrics Association in 1990 stated that by the time a child graduates in 1996 he or she will have spent more time watching television than any other single activity," said Moring. Furthermore, according to a study by the American Psychological Association, "the average child watches eight thousand murders and 100,000 other associated acts of violence."

Violence on television also leads to

more aggression, less self control and a decrease in school progress, said Moring.

"A poll taken by a 1996 survey of students revealed that 66 percent of the respondents said television influenced their behavior. Sixty-two percent said that seeing sexual activity displayed on television and other forms of media influences children to have sex "when they are too young."

According to O'Neal people have come "so sensitized to these areas that it does not affect us anymore. We think that it is normal, and with this view it's hard to say what is right and what is wrong."

O'Neal urged the audience to look at their own lives and then ask themselves a question:

"Are you living to please yourself or are you living to please God? God created the foundation or morals when he created the Ten Commandments. God's law tells us what to do, it gives us no power to do it. Man needs a savior, and that's why so many people are looking for things to fulfill them. They are looking everywhere.

"They think it's in money, careers, cars, houses, girlfriends, boyfriends, but only through Christ by faith will society have the power to convey the law. Sin is the issue and that needs to be addressed in one's life."

O'Neal said people have let the media "transform us into little gods our-

selves. We want the freedom to do whatever I want. Unless we change our ways to God's ways and understand him, life and our moral values will cause the media to decline."

At the forum Tyrell Carr and Waquita Lane pointed out that the First Amendment protects "free speech" in society.

Honors Program Director Dr. Carol Jones said that when the Founding Fathers drafted the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, they could not have envisioned free speech as exploiting women and children on the Internet and on television.

A student in the audience suggested that the best way to handle the problem is to "turn the television off and don't click on it on the Internet if you don't want to see it."

Ms. Edith Thorpe, manager of WRVS, discussed how radio has changed since she began her career in media.

"This year marks 20 years I have been in the industry," said Thorpe, who started out as a DJ in college. "To hear some of the things I hear on the radio as well as my CB is disturbing.

"When I first started rap music was not as prevalent, and it has caused a moral decline in our society," Thorpe said. "Now that we know that, where do we go from here? I know in my heart of hearts that it starts with us, and God is the answer."

The program was moderated by Kizzy Crawford.

Students upset over library's cancellation of E-mail access

by Angela Burrus

Jacqueline Casey, an ECSU junior, was upset recently when she tried to access her E-mail in the G.R. Little Library and learned she could no longer check her E-mail on the library's computers.

Casey, one of 24 students to sign a petition protesting the library's cancellation of student access to their E-mail, said she does not understand the problem of checking E-mail in the library.

"It takes only a second to check your E-mail," Casey said. "The Academic Computer Lab sometimes gets crowded."

Casey said the student who approached her with the petition said the librarian did not explain why she could not check her account.

Several students who did not sign the petition had strong views on the issue.

"I feel we should have access to check our E-mail accounts anyplace on the campus," said Attiba Wiggins, a sophomore. "Our tuition money should be

able to give us unlimited access to these facilities."

Sophomore Damon Freshwater agreed with Wiggins.

"The Internet is not only used to look for information," Freshwater said. "E-mail helps us to quickly send and receive mail, especially from employers who may be sending job information."

A statement on the petition stated that students' tuition was assumed to cover use of "the library's computers." However, library director Claude Green said all fees from checking E-mail accounts are billed to the library.

"This is nothing personal," said Green. "It is a financial matter. When students check their E-mail, we receive the bill, and we have no way of charging it back to the students."

Green said he first realized E-mail accounts were being checked in the library during spring break when he saw a student checking his address.

"I clearly explained to the student how crucial the library's budget is in providing the basic necessities needed

for the students," he said. "The use of Infotrac and printing paper alone costs us \$35,000 annually. I then asked him what would he prefer to have—all free information on the Internet and printing paper that we are currently offering or asset to E-mail without the free usage of the Internet. At the end, the student agreed with me that our current situation is better. I have not heard anymore about E-mail accounts in the library ever since."

Green, who was unaware of the petition, said better communication was needed between the library and students. "My staff in the library does bad public relations in stressing this factor," he said.

Green said he has reported this problem to the Academic Computing Center, where most students register their E-mail accounts, in an effort to resolve the issue.

"I'm not against checking E-mail in the library," said Green. "At this time, I just prefer students to check it where they are registered at, in order to save the library money."

POETRY

Inspired by Loneliness

He begged and pleaded of me
Not longing to pound against
But yearning for permission
Just to explore my naked body
Utilizing the main tool of sense of touch
His journey resulted in yearning of my own
I rolled over, spread and revealed
The overflowing moisture lying between
His entrance seemed to be slow motion
Ever so gently he thrust my walls
A slight grin spilled upon his face
He knew I'd fulfill his true initial purpose
His profound penetration was his victory
And served merely as my exuberance
The tiny essence of a thought triggered
A small rupture throughout my pit
Embracing about the arms and legs
My hand grasped and buried his head
My whimpers & his moans formed a collage
Then one after another but at the same time
We experienced a release of such joyous tension.

I. Sadie Rhodes