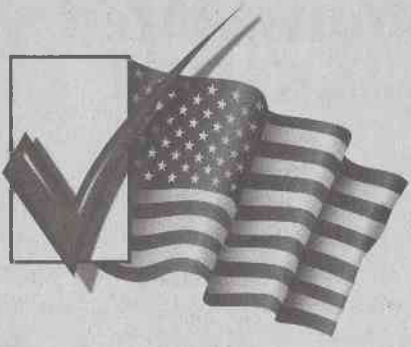


THE OPINION PAGE



Vote, but only if you know the facts

Kymer Lee Taylor
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Editor

A lot of negativity is directed toward our generation particularly by older generations who point out our political inactivity. They speculate we are a generation without a cause in which to fight. But is it that we have no cause, no battle, or is it that we have been so far removed from the fight that we don't know what it was all about. Our parents' experienced blatant inequality, so for them the 'fight' was tangible, was real. They not only fought hard for what they gained, but because of this fight, they realized what they won. Theirs was a time when women and ethnic minorities newly acquired the right to vote. So for them, these rights, these privileges, were fresh. They knew their importance because they were once denied them. So I understand our elder's frustration and disappointment and I understand their

desire to encourage the youth to vote.

But here's my problem: the media bombards us with infomercials telling us of our patriotic duty to vote yet they fail to inform us of what the issues are that they want us to vote for. Yes, I am one of the optimistic few that believes that our votes do count. Perhaps, that is why I am so upset when I see political leaders pushing campaigns that try to woo the student's vote. Voting without knowing the candidate's real platform is like driving without a license. In both cases, you've become a deadly threat. Vote, but only if you know for what you are voting. Students should scrutinize the platforms of presidential hopefuls because their stand on education, more precisely, the money they propose delegating to education, will have a direct impact on us. If they believe that exploring utmost importance, then money that could go to ensuring that no child is really left behind will be rerouted to Mars exploring.

So treat your vote as though it is a piece of yourself and don't give that piece away until you know that you have found a worthy representative.

The Compass welcomes inquiries and encourages letters to the editor

Contact Information:
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The Compass encourages all eligible students to register to vote and make their voices **HEARD!!!**

For information on how to register contact the local North Carolina Elections office at 252-335-1739

Top 10

Reasons to register and vote

information provided by
www.activoteamerica.com

- 1. It's your money.** The county commissioners, governor, state treasurer, legislators, president and members of Congress you vote for will decide how much of our wealth to invest in public services and how to fairly share the tax burden.
- 2. It's your children's education.** You elect local and state school board members who set public education policy and budgets that will affect how well prepared your children and grandchildren will be for the future. Decisions by our legislators, governor, members of Congress and president also affect the public schools— and the quality and cost of higher education as well.
- 3. It's your job.** Congress, the president, the governor and your legislators influence what job training is available, minimum wage, pay equity, fairness in hiring, health insurance through your employer, job and pension security, and workplace safety.
- 4. It's your health care.** Action by the governor, legislature and Congress has made health insurance accessible to thousands but many are still uninsured. Their decisions on Medicaid, Medicare and private insurance laws determine your access to health care.
- 5. They're your highways.** Utah's population and traffic are growing rapidly. Your county commissioners, legislators, governor and members of Congress decide what highways are needed, what alternatives to highways such as public transit to support, and how to pay the bill.
- 6. It's your Social Security.** The president and your members of Congress decide how much payroll tax you pay, cost of living increases and benefit schedules for your Social Security pension, and what Medicare services you receive and share payment for.
- 7. You breathe the air and drink the water.** Your county, state and national elected officials set pollution standards, enforcement strategies and budgets. They plan and zone where roads and industries will be built and how public lands will be used—decisions that can determine how safe your air and water are.
- 8. It's your neighborhood.** Your elected officials and judges you vote to retain make daily decisions about crime prevention, laws and law enforcement, safe and affordable homes, traffic patterns, where to put schools, parks and recreation.
- 9. They're our children.** We do our best to keep them healthy, fed, safe, educated and cared for when we are at work or unable to provide. The officials you elect can help or hinder Utah families trying to do their job.
- 10. It's your democracy. Make it work. Register and Vote.**



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Talk of ECSU

What do you think the case of Brown vs. Board of Education is about, or how do you feel about it?

Jennifer Blackwell, Junior
Willingboro, NJ



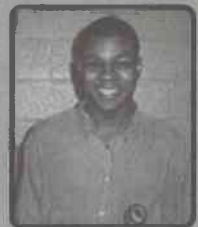
"I believe it was when Mr. Brown was fighting to have African Americans go to school with Caucasians."

"People are people and a color shouldn't separate us. You shouldn't think you are better because of your color, it shouldn't matter if I was purple."

Chris Godfrey, Sophomore
Jerome Mitchell, Freshman
Elizabeth City, NC
Chesapeake, VA



"I thought it was beneficial because now we can integrate and learn from different cultures, instead of a homogeneous population."



Compiled by DeTra Stith

Hip-Hop

by
Venom

So much slavery so much oppression and depression, we needed a break
The tables turned and booties started to shake.
It was political party, not democratic or republican,
On subways, trains and walls, we wrote foul language to the government.
Burners shootin' out paint, bombers who didn't claim lives
DJs took command and left crowds satisfied.
They had lots of wax but their ears could still hear,
People on blocks they rocked responded with cheers.
These DJs talked until their words wrapped around your consciousness
Made you palm a pen and build up your confidence.
And say what's on your mind, or do what you felt
When they played the beat you dance to it.
So wild and free, you popped locks from a body held captive
Movements swift and rapid.
Windmills, headspins creative twirlin' and flippin'
And kickin what a wonderful tradition.
Stemmin from feelin and intuition,
Way too organic to ever fall victim to capitalism.
Attackin' the system with laughter and vision,
Strength in numbers 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,
And soon a culture filled with wonder.
Testin' 1,2, mic check, a check for the mic,
Raps to recite on the mic can get you a check from the Nikes.
Adidas, Fila's Kangols, our style of dress is so fresh like the fest,
The beauty's in the music though the 'hood's a mess.
So many either die or go to the pen
This is why we cry out with krylons or we're holdin' a pen.
You think it's ink but we're pourin' out our souls
Needin' new shoes cause there's holes in our soles.
Runnin' to escape poverty, chasin liquor we're not out of control,
Until we take control the movement is so bold.
A collective voice sort of like a choir
We made our own flavor,
That you either just had or wouldn't acquire.
We made somethin' from nothin'
Or should I say nothin' from somethin'
We added to it, to us those old soul r&b records were everything.
We used everything to make somethin' exclusive,
All different genres of music.
Everything was fly from handshakes to slang
Nothing was plain.
At the drop of a dime it can all change,
They never stay the same too long
To make it hard for our opponents to catch on.
It's so powerful and so strong,
we gotta stop the wrong folks from sellin' hip-hop or it'll be gone.

VUKU VUKING

The importance of voting

I can't remember a time in my life when the voting polls were open that I wasn't there. On the first Tuesday, every November, my parents loaded my brother and me into the car as though we were going somewhere special. When we arrived at the rescue squad building, our designated place to vote, there would be hundreds of signs out front put up by those who wanted to be on the school board, on the town council, or elected sheriff or mayor. Every four years it was a madhouse. People were everywhere and there wasn't a patch of grass without a sign; these years were the biggies. These were the years that the citizens of our country were voting for a president.

Many people think that their vote does not matter. If everyone felt that way, we would never elect a president! One student, who wishes to remain anonymous, stated, "I don't vote because all the candidates are the same." If this is how you feel about your right to vote, just remember that the elected president not only has a profound effect on this country for four years; it could be 50 or 60 years. How? There is a chance that during the president's term a Supreme Court justice could retire. Then the president has the power to nominate a new Supreme Court justice to fill the vacant position. These justices are appointed for life, and of course, the president will nominate the people who are sympathetic to his agenda. While Congress and the president may pass laws and veto bills, ultimately it is the

Supreme Court that interprets the Constitution and consequently determines how each American will live his or her life. If you don't vote, it could mean that your life or that of your children would be negatively affected sixty years down the road.

Robert McPherson, a student at ECSU, said that he isn't registered to vote because he "hasn't gotten around to it yet." McPherson stated that he plans to register soon. For those of you who are in the same "boat", the consequences of the future previously mentioned are for you too.

"If you aren't [a registered voter] you have absolutely no say in what goes on in this country," Rachel Boyce, a junior at ECSU, said.

The issue is not only about exercising your right to vote. It's also about communicating with your elected officials, especially on the local level of government. If you are not happy with the condition of the roads in your community or the amount of state taxes being levied, communicating with your elected officials gives you the chance to voice these concerns. These people are hired by you and work for you. Tiffany Bryce, a senior majoring in Criminal Justice, said that she is a registered voter because every voice counts.

This November, I will be going back to the rescue squad building and voting for who I think will be the best president. My four-year-old will accompany me so that I may teach him the important lesson that one day, he will have a say in who runs this country.