

the east carolinian

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Serving the ECU community since 1925, The East Carolinian prints 11,000 copies every Tuesday and Thursday during the regular academic year. The lead editorial in each edition is the opinion of the majority of the Editorial Board and is written in turn by Editorial Board members. The East Carolinian welcomes letters to the editor, limited to 250 words (which may be edited for decency or brevity at the editor's discretion). The East Carolinian reserves the right to edit or reject letters for publication. All letters must be signed and include a telephone number. Letters may be sent by e-mail to editor@studentmedia.ecu.edu or to The East Carolinian, Student Publications Building, Greenville, NC 27858-4353. For additional information, call 252-328-6366.

OUR VIEW

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ments.

NCSU felt their arm had been twisted by making them play their old rival, ECU. The editorial below appeared in NCSU's student newspaper in June 1996. My, how times have changed. Five months after this appeared, the Pirates stomped the Wolfpack 50-29 in Charlotte.

NCSU knows they have their work cut out for them this time as well. They are very aware that it is going to be a tough task to stop this Pirate squad. With the Pirates at 8-2 and the 'Pack at 6-5, this time it will be the Wolfpack who come in as the underdog. It will be the Pirates who put their stellar record and national ranking on the line.

This particular game should be one of the more memorable tilts in a series that has provided many unforgettable moments.

After hurricane-addled fans tore down the goalposts in Raleigh's Carter-Finley Stadium in September following the Pirates' upset victory over Miami, NCSU fans took umbrage. Retaliation might come if the Wolfpack wins on Saturday.

If NCSU wins, could there be another riot like there was after 1987's match-up? The only precaution that can be taken is to beef up police, but even that might not be enough to control the 48,000-plus stadium fans.

Greenville has been waiting for this game since 1932, when the first Pirate team took the field. It is rare for any one of the "Big Four" to cross I-95 to play a football game. For all of the NCSU-ECU rivalry's history and tradition, the game has never been played in Greenville.

For staunch Pirate fans this game was a long time coming. Hopefully, the final game of the century in North Carolina's most intense football rivalry will be worth the wait.

OPINION COLUMN

Take a stand; reduce racism

Na'im Akbar
OPINION WRITER

I grew up in a time when racism and discrimination seemed to be the natural order. I remember traveling on the Trailway busses when I was a boy of 8 or 9 years old. If I wanted something to eat, I had to go to the back of the station and order my food from a small window. I had to eat the food as best I could.

You see, I could not eat inside the bus station which had chairs and tables and a counter where people ordered their food and ate in a relaxing atmosphere. I could not sit and eat because the tables, chairs and counter were on the Whites Only side of the station and coloreds were not allowed to venture into that domain. Racism was alive and well, and was the order of the day.

I write this today because those harsh memories of man's inhumanity to man are recycled when I observed a table in Wright Plaza seeking information from those who had witnessed or been a victim of dis-

crimination in some of the downtown clubs.

I had heard of discriminatory practices such as requiring a non-existent membership for African-Americans or a "pants too baggy" excuse for denying entrance to African-Americans. I had heard that African-American students visiting the clubs with their white "friends" were often turned away because of these discriminatory practices while their white friends were allowed to enter. I would first question why a "friend" would leave me on the outside of a club that had denied me entrance instead of making a statement against discrimination by not patronizing such an establishment.

There are many other issues that can be addressed in this regard but I choose to leave that with others. My purpose for writing on this subject is to bring an awareness to the situation that it might empower students to change a condition that should not exist in 1999. As we approach the new millennium, I would be remiss in my duty and responsibility to young students if I allowed this

situation to continue unchanged. I am not into the club partying scene. I would be quite satisfied if all young students would party less and study more. That, of course is an old guys opinion. Although, I feel this way, I will defend anyone's right to patronize any place that is opened to the public without suffering a public humiliation of discrimination.

As members of the ECU family, we can make a strong statement against this kind of discrimination and insensitivity. We need to come together, as students, to address this issue because injustice anywhere is a potential for injustice everywhere.

One of my oft-repeated statements is, "As students, we are the most important people here."

A message needs to be sent out that will let those who discriminate know that if one of the members of the ECU family is hurt, every member feels that pain. We are about healing, not hurting. Take a stand, you may be next.

This writer can be contacted at nakbar@studentmedia.ecu.edu.

TONIGHTS BIG STORY... NEWSCASTERS SUCH AS MYSELF NOT ONLY DON'T WEAR PANTS...WE DON'T HAVE LEGS!



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Discrimination downtown unacceptable

Dear Editor,

Have you ever wondered why so many black students walk the streets downtown? Ever thought it odd that you could see very few black students in the clubs downtown? Let me guess—you want to know why. I'll tell you why: discrimination. That's right folks! Right here on our doorstep, this ugly beast has dared show its face again in our midst.

ECU students are being discriminated against downtown simply because their skin tones happen to be a bit darker. Of course, they will tell you it's because "No baggy jeans are allowed." Well, a lot of people where baggy jeans—black, white, Asian, American-Indian, Hispanic or whatever. But you can best believe that white students are not being turned away.

How about this one: "members only." Hmm, this is an interesting one. How many nightclubs do you know that refuse to allow someone in just because they don't have memberships? How many of us had memberships or were even legal when we were invited for orientation? "But it's a members-only club," you say. No dice there. I have personally been invited to several "members-only" clubs. When you didn't have a membership, they would go in, pull a member at random to sponsor non-members and charge you double the cover charge. If you don't believe this kind of discrimination goes

on downtown, ask a couple of black students. Quite a few of the establishments downtown participate in this disgusting practice. It happens most often at Pantana Bob's, Sports Pad and the Cellar. So if you go downtown and only see blacks at BW-3's, Underwater and Boli's, it's not because all we do is eat, but because those are virtually the only places that realize the only color in business is green. I personally salute these three establishments, although BW-3's could put a couple of more hip-hop/r & b options in the jukebox.

In conclusion, our colleagues, associates and friends are being treated unfairly downtown. If you frequent the establishments practicing this type of behavior, you have the civic duty and responsibility to do something, whether you choose to stop going or complain to management. To do nothing is to accept this kind of behavior in our community. If you do nothing you might as well be the bouncer at the door telling me my pants are too baggy, I don't have a membership, my skin is too dark or my hair is not quite the right grade. Better yet just tell me that you are better than I am and that I have no rights or privileges. If you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem.

Marcus Frederick
Governor, ECU Black Students' Union;
SGA Judicial Board member

OPINION COLUMN

Curse of '87 can finally be lifted

Patrick McMahon
OPINION WRITER

Well, here we are, just two days from one of the biggest events in the school's history, and the administration looks like they are trying to spoil the fun for everyone involved.

I mean, what in the world were they thinking when they set kickoff for the NCSU game at 12:08 p.m.? It is completely dumbfounding that they could pull a stunt like this. This is to the students: When was the last time you went to a college football game that kicked off this early? And to the alumni: When was the last time you even REMEMBER a game being this early? Come on guys. You can think of a later time than this.

The word around campus seems to be that the 'Powers That Be' are trying to minimize the tailgating and pregame drinking as much as

possible. Who are they trying to fool?

The tailgating fields open four hours before kickoff, so that means that the individuals who partake in this activity must arrive at 8 a.m. to get their spots and get ready for the game. Instead of cooking chicken, steaks, and various luncheon feasts, these people must now bring skillets to cook eggs and bacon for breakfast. Do you think these people won't still drink at eight in the morning? Come on. You have drastically underestimated the drinking capabilities of the student body and alumni community. Hell, I know dozens of Pirate Club members who can outdrink any student we have.

With that little message out of the way to the PTB (Powers That Be), this goes out to all the students out there. While we are at the game, can we at least try to show some school pride without repeating the riot of 1987? We fought long and hard for the chance to play these suckers on

our home field, so let's not be the drunken, crazed idiots that the state seems to think we are, OK? I mean, we can be the drunken, crazed idiots they think we are, but let's at least do it in a respectful manner.

Being respectful means no bottle throwing in the stands, no fights and no drunks passing out in the stands, requiring the EMT's to come get them. This is our chance people. This is our chance to show the world that we ARE capable of throwing one kick-ass game and party at the same time without having anyone get hurt or arrested. The cops are only there to do their job. We respect them, they respect us. The curse of '87 is about to be lifted. Let's make sure it never returns.

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OPINION COLUMN

Remembering beginnings of NCSU-ECU rivalry

Editors note: The following is an excerpt from an editorial that appeared in a 1996 edition of The Technician, N.C. State's student newspaper. We include this opinion, taken from the era when ECU and NCSU were first scheduled to begin playing each other again, to give Pirate fans a perspective on the nature of the on-going rivalry between the schools.

Some N.C. State fans remember a football rivalry between the Wolfpack and the Pirates of East Carolina University. This wildly popular clash came to an end in 1987 after the euphoria of victory overwhelmed some ECU fans and led them to incite a post-game brawl with the friendly neighborhood police.

Some thought that after the violently destructive display of jubilation, the boorish hordes from Greenville would never return to West Raleigh to pillage Carter-Finley Stadium. But thanks to some concerned souls downtown on Jones Street, the 'Pack and 'Bucs' will soon flip for possession. ...

ECU, long seen as the stepchild to the flagship schools of the best education bargain in the nation, wants to schedule tougher opponents like NCSU and UNC-CH—who ceased its series with the Pirates in 1981—so they may create a noteworthy football program.

Now NCSU has had its arm twisted into accepting a dud of an old rival, and there are those who are less than pleased with the imminent reappearance of the Pirates. Sure, ECU fans are as giddy as little schoolgirls gossiping on who likes who on the playground during recess, but we all know that it will soon switch over to tired old veterans bragging

about who was present at the worst drubbings ever imparted upon the beloved Pirates.

Jeff Blake, the only speck of talent to grace ECU's football team since Cro-Magnon man died off, and Bill Lewis, the only ECU coach who could plot strategy above the little-league level, moved on to greener pastures after ECU reached the pinnacle of its less than blinding brilliance in its 37-34 victory over the Wolfpack in the 1992 Peach Bowl. As wonderful as they were, these figures are in ECU's past.

But what is ECU's present? To be blunt, ECU sucks swamp water. They're so bad, it took the threat of legislative action for them to get real teams to even consider taking them on.

ECU used to be just a big waste of perfectly good tax money for some down East politicians and a cheap institution for higher "learning" where dullards are toting Cannabis instead of taking classes. Now it'll be a waste of a perfectly good Saturday afternoon. The whole concept of East Carolina is a joke—a ship of fools could make short work of this peanut gallery.

But there is a bright spot to all of this—mashing the purple and gold till they're black and blue will be most amusing. True, beating Appalachian State would be more of a challenge, but the sense of accomplishment from ruining the day for thousands of rowdy 'bueheads'—especially after they went to all the trouble of bathing before the game and putting on their Sunday-best ECU T-shirts (sans tobacco juice stains of course)—would more than make up for anything lost in such a lopsided match.

OPINION COLUMN

Pokemon inhibits children's learning

R.W. Hobbs, Jr.
OPINION WRITER

A new foreign movie began hitting theaters last week—not from France or Italy, but from Japan.

Pokemon is probably the largest Japanese phenomenon since those horrible black and white claymation monster flicks from eons past (which can still be seen on the Sci-Fi network). But it's not just an American craze—Pokemon is popular worldwide. The concept was created by Nintendo and arrived here in America as a television show and a video game. "Pokemon" is the number one kids show on television. And beyond video games, the concept has also been successful with toys and playing cards. The motion picture is breaking all sorts of box office records.

Whatever happened to educational children's programming like Big Bird and Mr. Rogers? Children are being overloaded with strange and flashy cartoon figures and

mountains of toys. The big problem lies with the parents, who are constantly buying these expensive toys for the kids. Children are even stealing Pokemon toys from each other at school, and trading, and gambling with them. These cartoons have no educational features or message for kids. I am convinced that programs such as "Pokemon" do nothing for kids except to instill addiction in toys at an early age. Some schools are even banning it because parents are worried about the likelihood that children will become addicted.

The toys, especially the rare and overpriced ones, become a competition among children. This is a trend that has been going on for a few years now. Around Christmas a couple of years ago the "Tickle Me Elmo" was causing parents to knock each other over in the aisles of stores just to get it. The same thing happened last year with the infamous "Furbie." This year, there will probably be a \$200 Pokemon, which will probably be nothing more than a

ball of cotton with two eyes and a mouth.

Some say that the Pokemon cards help kids with math and decision skills at an early age. That's like saying it's OK for kids to jump on their beds because it encourages exercise, or it's good to allow kids to slap their friends across the face because it teaches self-defense. The education argument does not wash when you account for the sensory overload of the toys, the gambling and fighting over the cards, and the addictive nature of the whole phenomenon.

Children need to be discouraged from viewing programs that do nothing to educate them yet do a lot to hinder their morals and increase their brattiness. Shows like this and their spinoffs only desensitize children. We should steer kids away from the plotless, mindless and unpronounceable and encourage the more educational, American programming.

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