

Walker advocates traditional view

by Dee Evans

"The black woman today is better equipped to fight for freedom and human rights," says the acclaimed author of *Jubilee*, Margaret Walker Alexander.

This scholar impressed her audience with words of wisdom during her presentation, "Black Women: A Historical and Sociological Overview," Oct. 17 as part of the "Socio-Cultural History of Black Women in America" Conference. She created a vision that her listeners could relate to. The audience shared her feelings of what the black woman stands for.

Alexander used her scholarly knowledge and personal experience in comparing the woman of the past to the woman of the future.

"The black woman is the strong survivor," said Alexander. "She is the mother, the worker, the churchgoer, the homemaker, the cook, the field worker, who was exploited for her sex and race, beaten, seduced and raped."

The question at hand was how did the black woman survive all this torment. The answer was evident. The black woman survived the middle passage on the ship and the harsh system of slavery; therefore, she could survive all that was in store for her in the coming years such as the fight for freedom and the struggle for human rights. "Black women want a life without fear . . . a chance of simple human dignity . . . and a right to die in dignity," stressed Alexander.

She supported her statement by citing the struggle of Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth who were the first freedom fighters. These women fought for education and the right to vote. They also fought for the "right to be human and not machines." Ida B. Wells and Mary Bethune Cookman were also among the list of survivors.

Alexander said that the black woman has entered a new age with new challenges, so now how can she survive the struggles that she may encounter in this "post-industrial society."

Career day

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on campus because the Belles get a chance to see other successful black people," she said.

A senior business administration major observed the practical value of the day. "I think it was very beneficial because I talked with several people that were in the business field or working in the field, which was very inspiring and encouraging to me," stated Rita Swinson.

Angela Warren also stressed the practical. "As far as learning more about my

"No matter how strong our people are, we cannot survive a nuclear holocaust," the novelist said. Therefore the black woman, as well as her counterpart, has come to a problem that has no easy solution.

"We certainly cannot survive neo-facist judges appointed by a neo-facist government," said Alexander, giving an example of a program demanding a unified response. As a result, black women in America must join the "democratic decision-making process and take advantage of the strong power that they have as being part of a 51 percent electorate which is female."

Alexander concentrated on the black woman of today, saying "she along with other individuals is weak and strong . . . but through networking, she is powerful; she is to lead and achieve, to work for the liberation of her people." The black woman has goals and dreams she wishes to accomplish for the betterment of her kind: "She looks on the moving of the 20th century for hope and for goodness of the future . . . We [blacks] strive for realms of destiny in our hands."

The organization in the black homes is weak because the family unit is disintegrating according to Walker. Blacks are still poor and very much underemployed. Schools, in a sense, still are segregated because the communities where the neighborhood children attend school are divided by race. This is where the Rainbow Coalition plays a part—to unite all segregated areas, says Alexander.

But the black woman is progressing, Walker feels. She is better educated and makes more money than her mother and grandmother. She is part of a growing middle class with better opportunities. "She has always been and will be, an artist—creative, innovative and courageous—creating beauty wherever she goes," said Alexander.

"The traditional black woman is strong on tradition," emphasized Alexander, and that tradition is the ability to survive "and fight for the right to be human."

career and my financial status, the speakers as well as Mrs. Vincent made me more aware of a black woman's career in psychology," the sophomore psychology major said.

Getting the double reward of fulfilling employment and a decent salary is on every student's mind. Career Awareness Day answers students' questions on both subjects. Vincent said the event "is very beneficial because students learn really whether or not they want to pursue a career in a particular field of study."



History in the making: (left to right) Angela Davis, Paula Giddings and Margaret Walker Alexander starred at the October conference. They were joined by President Miller and Dr. Marshena Baird, director of the Bennett Scholars, sponsors of the landmark event. (photo by Keith Miller)

Giddings' purpose is to strengthen blacks' identity

by Avanti Allen

She gives credit to all great women of the past and commends all great women of the present, but she doesn't include her own name.

Paula Giddings, author of *When and Where I Enter . . .*, presents herself as a soft-spoken yet forceful woman. Her height adds to her strength and her majestic attitude.

Giddings is a graduate of Howard University, where she involved herself in many academic and extra-curricular activities. She strongly supported the civil rights protests during her college days. "Whenever there was a march or a protest I was there supporting it wholeheartedly," she says. She was also editor of many of the college publications as well as a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

After graduation Giddings established herself as an important writer and editor. She was an editor for Random House. In 1984 she was appointed editor for the book review section of *Essence* magazine. Giddings also served as editor-at-large for "Para Politics" of *Essence*.

Along with the publication of *When and Where I Enter . . .*, a leading seller on the book market, Giddings has published six poems and 73 articles in such places as *Encore Magazine*, *The Washington Post* and *The Black World*.

"My works have one main purpose," she states. "The purpose is to put us [black people] in the center of our own experience."

Giddings stressed how black women played a great part in the formation of American history from slavery to the present. She gives

many examples of famous black women who paved the way for the women of today.

"Black women had a great influence on the suffrage movement, Martin Luther King, Jr. and politics of the 19th century," she states. "These facts are never revealed in the textbooks."

Giddings viewed the theme of the October conference as an excellent idea. She states, "Today we can't find time to share ideas of our history which determines our future."

"The three perspectives of the conference: traditional, feminist and ethnographic are all inter-related," she adds.

Giddings states, "Young black college students should become active in politics because you can make a difference and a change in the system." She believes in taking a stand for issues that she believes in.

Angela Davis: image changes, but commitment stays

by Evelyn Sims

Time may have changed Angela Davis' appearance, but it hasn't altered her politics.

Gone are the trademark Afro, goggle-like glasses, whip-thin figure and strident voice—a familiar image during the turbulent late '60s and early '70s.

Now Davis resembles the career woman, and she speaks in tones befitting her position as professor of women's and ethnic studies at San Francisco State University.

Her presentation may have softened, but her ideas haven't. Veteran of many battles against the establishment, Davis is still attacking the injustices of the capitalistic system, which she holds responsible for racism, sexism

and class exploitation.

Ronald Reagan has become the devil incarnate for Davis, who is running as the vice-presidential candidate for the American Communist Party.

"If we can't get rid of Reagan," she warned during the October conference, "the clock will be turned back many, many years."

She equates the Republican administration with fascism—a one-party dictatorship devoted to racism, militarism and the enrichment of its members.

"The most racist, sexist, most bellicose forces in America are now in control of our society," she insisted.

She has placed herself in the ironic position of running on one ticket but urging audiences to vote for another.

She knows the American Communist Party can't win, but she hopes the Democrats can.

"I do think it's more important to elect Mondale-Ferraro than to elect Reagan-Bush," she said.

Her own party's role is to raise issues that might arouse enough popular support to influence the ideas of the Democrats.

She feels that racism should be a violation of the law. "We're talking about criminalizing racism," she explained. "There should be laws against the Ku Klux Klan, laws against the Nazis."

Her party, she hopes, will serve as a conscience as it did in 1932 when it campaigned for the jobless.

Triad awaits Prince's "Purple Rain"

by Ellesia McCracken

The event is in such popular demand that some Belles, like thousands of other Triad fans, endured four-hour waits and bought tickets costing \$17.

Prince's "Purple Rain" tour, sold-out nationwide, reaches the Greensboro Coliseum Nov. 14 and 15 with two 8 p.m. shows.

The tour, the biggest of the 25-year-old recording artist's career, is being fueled by the movie of the same name and the top-selling album, which also serves as the film's sound track. At the theater, "Purple Rain" netted over \$7 mil-

lion in its first week and received some favorable reviews.

Despite his vast success, Prince is a controversial figure, exciting adoration and occasional scorn on this campus.

Sophomore Beneda Carver represents the views of Prince advocates. "His creativity simply astounds me . . . if I could describe Prince with just one word, I think I would pick 'evolution,'" she said. "I mean a process in which something or someone changes into different and usually more complex form."

Another Belle, who requested

anonymity, said: "Prince is a man who relates to my deepest inner feelings. He's my inspiration to wake up to this rotten world in the morning. I love him and everything he is about."

A detractor, listening to Prince's song, "Oh, Sister," stated, "Prince is sick."

Another student, who asked not to be named, seems to summarize both views. "I listen to Prince almost every day, but I believe that he is the anti-Christ and that all people who follow him and worship him will indeed be laughing in the purple rain, and they will burn in hell along with the

rest of the demons," she predicted.

The recipient of this heat, Prince Rogers Nelson (each with six letters), is from Minneapolis. Born to a black father and an Italian mother, he had a very troubled childhood and began running away at 12. Often he stayed with Morris Day, who has also become a successful musician, and his mother.

At 17, having mastered many instruments, Prince produced, arranged, mixed, composed and performed his first album, "For You." His next five albums—"Prince by Prince," "Dirty Mind," "Controversy," "1999" and "Pur-

ple Rain"—came out regularly with no more than a two-year wait for his fans.

Appearing with Prince will be his band Revolution; Apollonia 6, who played his lover in the movie and has a Warner Bros. album; and special guest Sheila E., whose album is "The Glamorous Life." There may be a flash appearance by Prince's close friend Morris Day and his group The Time.

But people will be swarming to see the man who has changed the meaning of "revolution." Prince will mesmerize, hypnotize and send out that feeling of freedom once again.