

# Ali's advice is an insult to black women

a critique  
by Monica Hawkins

"The blackwoman is not beautiful unless she is under total submission." This is one of the many ideas presented in Sharazad Ali's controversial book, "The Blackman's Guide to Understanding the Blackwoman."

Warning: Ali's writing may lack coherence and proper punctuation.

Ali begins her book by discussing the black woman when she was a young girl. The black girl's experience in the home was not pleasant. It is in the home that the black girl forms her opinions of the black man.

Ali states, "If a black girl sees her mother not serving the father, then the girl will grow up not serving her husband." The next phase is the teenage years of the black girl. "If the teenage girl has been pumped up with ideas of being some kind of super career woman, then she will ignore housework altogether, believing that she will never have to attend such menial duties. Things like meal planning, sewing, taking care of

her ma, and her children and making a peaceful home for her husband are not taught," Ali claims.

Ali describes three types of black women: the low life, average and high class. Ali states that the low life woman "may have been subjected to a subject multi-generational poverty, illiteracy and shame as a child. Her hair will also be greasy from wearing too much cheap make-up. Bathing is not important. Her bra strap may be gray from non washing and she may wear her panties two or three days straight. Her posture is that of a toad.

"The average woman is a blackwoman who is an enigma somewhat. She is neat, probably goes to church regularly, fixes her hair nicely and speaks coherently. Her fantasies of what a relationship should be like is patterned right off television or from True Confession magazines. The high class blackwoman is the smart possibly raging beauty; sexy-sexy-sexy blackwoman in this category are the most difficult to reach and train. She is a rat who behaves like a dog while pur-

ring like a cat."

Ali describes the causes of trouble in the black marriage—hypocrisy, dishonesty, disenchantment. Ali believes that the blackwoman does not pamper her husband enough. If she did, the blackman would want to stay home and not wander the streets. Ali believes that a blackwoman should be home before dark unless she is attending to an emergency. Ali believes that men can't stay monogamous. "While she (the black woman) does not obey the rules of governing her duties as a wife she expects her man to obey all the rules of the marriage vows of the monogamous commitment. She refuses to accept the truth about what apparently is his nature. There is no history of the blackman settling down with one woman and never desiring another. The blackwoman does not know that just because her man does not have another woman does not mean that he does not want one; he just has not figured out how to do it and keep peace."

Ali describes the appro-

priate time for a man to hit his woman.

"There is never an excuse for ever hitting a blackwoman anywhere but in the mouth. Because it is from that hole in the lower part of her face, that all her rebellion culminates into words. Her unbridled tongue is a main reason she cannot get along with the blackman. However if she ignores the authority and superiority of the blackman there is a penalty when she crosses that line and becomes viciously insulting it is time for the blackman to soundly slap her in the mouth."

Ali's book is an insult to the black community. What makes her think that she is an expert on all of the problems in the black male and female relationship? I believe that she is out to make money while causing an uproar in the black community. The book is an insult to black women. It is sad that ignorance has to come from a woman who could contribute something positive to the community.

Bennett students had differing reactions to Ali's book.

"I feel that her whole idea about the relationship between black men and black women sets our race back fifty years. She adds to the schism that is already apparent in the black man, the black family and the black race itself. I do feel she is a pawn for other racial groups to put the black race asunder now and in the future," says Rehan Overton, a junior.

Sophomore Jackie Scott says, "She is entitled to her own opinion and she is also entitled to freely express her opinion. Just as we the public have the right to accept ideas, we may also reject them. She isn't the first nor will she be the last person to introduce or discuss a controversial subject."

Ali is no spokeswoman for black females, one Belle says. "Sharazad is a person that will cause controversy wherever she goes. She claims to represent women of color, who for the most part feel she is anything but an accurate representation of the black woman," states Moneca Surida, a sophomore communications major.

## Newsweek goes off on "In Living Color"

opinion  
by DaMica Wilson

I was once told, "You know you have a sense of humor if you can laugh at yourself." I responded, "That seems strange." The person replied, "Well, truth is stranger than fiction—the stranger, the funnier."

I didn't quite understand that concept until 1990 when a sketch-comedy show, "In Living Color," directed, produced, and starring, the multi-talented black filmmaker, Keenan-Ivory Wayans, was introduced to me. The show is a take-off of the popular, long-running sketch-comedy show, "Saturday Night Live," but it has a mostly black cast. "In Living Color," like "Saturday Night Live," draws on current events, attitudes and popular personalities for the majority of its scenes. It also airs original skits.

"In Living Color" embodies the essence of that concept, which I didn't understand. Because the show has a mostly black cast, the majority of its segments are about black people, the lives we lead, the relationships we have, and the people we become. Because the skits, instead of being based on stereotypes of our people, are

based on the truth, it's easy to laugh at "In Living Color." And because the show explores situations one might have experienced first hand, and one can see re-enacted live, and "In Living Color," one can relate, and laugh at oneself.

Recently, I read an article, by Harry F. Waters with Lynda Wright: "Saturday Night Breakthrough: A new show tests limits," in Newsweek which sarcastically lauded the show for "daring to demolish black targets—long regarded as off limits by the white TV establishment." The article also suggests that perhaps Wayans is using the show as a vehicle through which he can spew forth racism, sexism, as well as his political views. The article takes shots at Wayans for taking shots at blacks, Jews and women. It also mentions specific personalities, such as talk-show host, producer, actress Oprah Winfrey and Nation of Islam Leader Louis Farrakhan, whom "In Living Color" has imitated in the past. And finally, the article expresses that even if Wayans isn't a racist or sexist, he is definitely a practicing nepotist, employing his brother Damon and sister Kim.

After reading the article,

I didn't understand why a news reporter would watch a sketch-comedy show and try to make it newsworthy. Obviously, things must be awfully dry around the Newsweek offices. "In Living Color" is a comedy show, nothing more, nothing less. It takes the ordinary and makes it extraordinary. If people get offended by or upset about "In Living Color," perhaps it's due to their own insecurities or phobias.

When referring to Wayans as a racist, I'm not sure how, if at all, the article is defining racism. Are Waters and Bryant calling Wayans a racist because he makes jokes about his own people, or because he makes fun of Jews? Does laughing at someone who is portraying a character who happens to be of another race make one a racist? In the words of one of Wayans' characters, "Homey the Clown," "I don't think so." And how could laughing at those characters portraying people of your own race be held racist? Wayans has not set out to prove one race better than another. Wayans just wants to have fun with everyone. If Waters and Bryant had watched another segment of "In Living Color," they may have seem skits about Mexicans, Chinese,

Russians, and Germans. The point is exactly the one Wayans made himself, "If the show picked on only one group, I could understand people being uptight. But we get everybody." So possibly Waters and Bryant aren't blasting the show for depicting black personalities, but because it has also portrayed white personalities — TV evangelist Jim Bakker, plummeting millionaire Donald Trump, and lo and behold, Pope John Paul II.

The article claimed that the program is "catching heat from feminists" because it has "snickered at under-arm shaving," and "tampon ads." Wayans has conceded that "my sensitivities probably are slanted toward a more male point of view." But how else could he be slanted—he is a man! The skits were not meant to be taken personally. They were all in fun and based on the truth. The show is for entertainment. Let's lighten up! Have we come to the point that we cannot laugh at ourselves?

Although Wayans is the producer and director of the show, he repeatedly says that he allows all cast members to submit ideas for skits. Wayans employs several actresses and female dancers who have all taken part in

the plot development. They do not think the show is sexist.

When the article fails to get Wayans and or the show on all other grounds, it terms Wayans a nepotist for employing qualified family members (who auditioned like everyone else) and divulges information about his growing up in a Manhattan housing project. That's a low blow if ever I read one.

The article ends on a political note, claiming to take the show beyond the racial. It explains an episode in which Lassie's words are interpreted by Timmy's mother, "What's that, girl? You think there's danger in the reunification of Germany? Timmy says, 'Maybe we should stop lining Lassie's bed with U.S. News & World Report.'"

Waters and Bryant concluded, "For some reason, we like that one best." That comment was obviously based on the fact that U.S. News & World Report is a rival magazine. Could our roving reporters possibly be laughing at another magazine's expense? I wonder if there is an elaborate term for that.

## Frosh survive tough initiation

(from page 1)

Most of these rising sophomores feel that they are leaving their freshmen days as better women. Many opt to be alone or have just a few good friends instead of being a part of a clique as many were as new arrivals. Looking back on their first year these young Belles feel that they have matured, become more responsible and learned a great deal about life and living away from home.

When asked what she will miss most about being a freshman, Kimberli Hunter laughs and says, "being the new face with the guys across the railroad track."

## Bellefest brought excitement

by Dawn Collins

The campus was wired with electricity. The atmosphere was full blown with optimism. The usual pessimistic foreboding associated with past Bellefest activities seemed to be absent from the attitudes of most Belles on April 6 and 7.

"This year was the first time that I have attended Bellefest and thoroughly enjoyed it. There were more activities than in previous years," says junior Lacy Pugh. Sophomore Moneca Surida says, "Bellefest was a festive day for most Bennett students. This year the festivities were better organ-

ized, which in turn lifted the morale of most students."

Freshman Kimberli Hunter didn't feel quite as excited about Bellefest as the majority of Belles did. She says, "It was a joke. It was not what I expected, and there were not a lot of activities like they said it would be."

With a few exceptions, students were generally very pleased with this year's activities.

Belles expressed a great appreciation for the events that lasted throughout the weekend.

"Bellefest was 'live.' We should have more activities like that," says sophomore, Shamonda Horton. There were

live music and deejays, and the local radio station 102 JAMS was here.

"The music made the day because they played nothing but up-to-date tunes," says sophomore Monique Jones. There were vendors that sold everything from jewelry to pictures. Sophomore Tracey Justice says, "There should have been more vendors there although the ones that were there had a very wide variety of things." Each residence hall had a hospitality booth which sold things and greeted guests.

As a part of Bellefest weekend, Bennett served as the host director for the Campus All-Star Challenge. There

were twelve other colleges and universities that participated in the All-Star Challenge. North Carolina A&T State University came in first place. However, all participants received \$1000 for competing. Bellefest came to a close with the All-Star Challenge Dance held at the Sheraton. The attire was casual and there were 200 people in attendance.

Bellefest started years ago with the student body and SGA sitting on the grass socializing. Then it was cut out. But Mr. Herb Jackson, director of student activities, picked it back up three years ago, and ever since then it has been going strong.