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What You Think

Do you think the University should require students to take a Black History course?

Daryl Parham, Freshman, Business Major, Lynchburg, Va.

"I don't think it should be mandatory because some students, especially white students, will not be interested in black history."

Kraig Holt, MBA, Baltimore, MD.

"Yes it should be—for black students because we need to know about our background in order to set and reach goals; for white students because they need to understand our culture and where we're coming from."

Mary Ellerbe, RTVMP, Senior, Pinehurst, NC.

"For General College it might not be required but for majors such as history it might be necessary because Afro-Americans have contributed a lot to the country's growth."

Lisa Poovey, Senior, RTVMP Major, Raleigh, NC.

"I can see some majors requiring an Afro-American History course. People who study languages and international studies need a broad view, and need to know where a particular culture is coming from."

Donnie Wallace, Freshman, Business Major, Everetts, NC.

"Maybe it should be mandatory because everybody should know about Black History. With Afro-American History as a mandatory part of our curriculum, people will learn how and why black people are here, necessarily through slavery."

Felicia Taylor, Freshman, Biology Major, Lumberton, NC.

"I feel that students should be required to take an AFAM course because it is an exposure element. Students in high school only study American History. Here they should take Black History as well."

Brenda McDaniels, Junior, Chemistry Major, Baltimore, MD.

"It should be required as any other history course is required, because most 'history' is lacking in Black History. Then again, it should not be required because all students are not required to take a history. If AfAm courses are made mandatory, I am sure there are other courses just as important which should be required."

Danny Lytle, Freshman, RTVMP/Broadcast Journalism Major, Hickory, N.C.

"I don't think it should be mandatory. The curriculum should be left to the particular student. In college most people choose what they like and dislike and shouldn't be forced to take certain classes."

Sharon Peace, Economics Major, Henderson, N.C.

"I think he's got a chance at winning the Democratic nomination, but as far as the presidential election, I'm not sure. He's got a lot of prestigious people behind him as well as against him. People like Jesse Helms who have already said they would never support him will be a big drawback for him. And, a lot of people who have pull are for Reagan. It's good that he is running to give black people an incentive to go into politics and express themselves as politicians. I think that if he doesn't win, his running will displace the black vote and give a lot more pull to Reagan's votes."



Daryl Parham



Kraig Holt



Mary Ellerbe



Lisa Poovey



Brenda McDaniels



Felicia Taylor



Danny Lytle

Ensemble energizes enthusiastic audience

By Kevin E. Washington

The Chuck Davis African-American Dance Ensemble is one of the best dance companies on the East coast—and probably in the country.

Davis' performances are a tribute to the humanity of the world as the Ensemble called for peace, love and respect for everybody.

The concerts, which are a combination of African and Afro-American dance styles, are a family affair by which the spirit of the audience becomes one with the dancers on stage. They are at once exciting, emotional and enlightening.

Davis brought his spectacular Ensemble to the Duke stage on Feb. 24 during which "Africa spoke and America answered." The echoes of West Africa were everywhere as Davis proceeded to show the audience that, "Dance is very well and alive in this state."

The performance, which always includes audience participation, opened with the ceremonial pouring of the libation by an African griot, Dr. Victor Maafu from Ghana. Call and response gave the ceremony a family aura as if all had come together for a warm reunion.

The Ensemble drummers welcomed the audience with the Epararo, the call of the drums. A triad of rhythm makers spoke to the audience with their magnificent instruments for all to enjoy the cele-

bration. The dancers entered and greeted the audience further to the Bantaba, the dancing ground where all important events take place in Gambia. The Labaan dance style from Senegambia was displayed by women and men in bright colors that emphasized the fusion of African and American cultures.

As the drummers beat out the rhythm of Africa with tireless arms, the dancers moved across the stage as if they were spirals of water in a huge fountain.

The welcome was complete and the festival began.

Davis premiered his piece, the **Powerful Long Ladder**, which was a tribute to African-American womanhood.

Venita Ashford, Toni Hall and Leah Wise were the poetic griots who spoke of the power and endurance of women. Ava McFarland performed to Nikki Giovanni's poem "Ego Trippin'" with an energy that was unmatched by any of the dancers in the first half of the show.

The four women who represented the faces and personalities of womanhood in the **Powerful Long Ladder** were Ivy Burch, Lou Carter, Gail Martin and Gloria Muldrow. The music was recorded by Sweet Honey in the Rock.

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In praise of womanhood

By Kevin E. Washington

Elizabeth Cotton and Sweet Honey in the Rock showed the power of womanhood through song during Women's History Week on March 9.

The concept, which was sponsored by the Durham City Association of Educators, featured performances of two musical phenomena.

Elizabeth "Libba" Cotton, a 91-year-old native of Carrboro began the concert with her earthy folk songs. She scrubbed floors for 75¢ a week to buy a \$3.75 guitar when she was nine. She taught herself to play—left handed—and wrote her most famous song "Freight Train" at age 12.

She told the audience that folk songs are the songs that the individual makes up.

Cotton played a religious song first and said, "I put Jesus first and then I can go on."

Her voice crackled as she sang her music, but there was a warmth of experience there.

Her second piece, "Freight Train," involved audience participation. The song, which has been recorded by Peter, Paul and Mary and Taj Mahal, is a simple folk song yet has a joy which comes only with simplicity.

In between songs, Cotton entertained the audience with humorous

tales of her life and philosophies.

Much of the program was religious in nature, a tribute to Cotton's Christian upbringing. "Why don't you Pray for Me," "There's a Deacon in the Church (and he won't do right)," and "I'm Glad Salvation is Free" were all part of her tribute.

Someone then brought out a banjo, and she showed the audience how dexterous a 91-year-old woman can be. By far the best part of her performance, the banjo seemed to show another side of Cotton to the audience. Her strumming was melodious and the audience was pulled into the beauty of her music.

Sweet Honey in the Rock, a quintet from Washington, D.C., originally part of the vocal workshop of the D.C. Black Repertory Theatre Company in 1973, brought to the stage a message for all the oppressed people of the world.

Dressed in brightly colored tie-dyed gowns, the five members of the group sang harmoniously bringing their message of freedom.

Sweet Honey in the Rock felt its way through each piece as if they knew it well. They told the audience such things as "The dead are not dead, they are with us if we listen"

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