

Black Ink

The essence of freedom is understanding

Black Student Movement Official Newspaper
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Vol. XV, No. 8

February 28, 1985

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Black History Month Still Has A Purpose

by Joy Thompson
Staff Writer

*Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us*

These lines from James Weldon Johnson's *Lift Every Voice and Sing*, represent the ideas Carter G. Woodson had in mind when he established the historical association that created Afro-American History Week 58 years ago.

Woodson was disturbed by the one-sided presentation of Black history. He felt it wasn't accurate or adequate. Often, Whites downplayed or totally ignored the accomplishments of Black people and the many roles they played in American history.

Woodson felt so strongly about the need to collect, study and document Black history that he founded the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History in 1915.

Reginald Hildebrand, a lecturer in the history department and the curriculum in African and Afro-American Studies, discussed the importance of studying Black history.

"There are a number of reasons why people should study Black history," Hildebrand said. "One is intellectual curiosity. It is a way of expanding your intellectual horizon."

Another reason Hildebrand pointed out was that Black history can add a body of knowledge to a student's background. "Most students come here (to the University) with a meager background in Black history," Hildebrand said. "Black students," he said, "help's one to fill in the gaps about Black history and understand the subject."

"In addition, it allows you to have a sound knowledge of American history," he said.

Black history also allows a person to get a different perspective on American history, he said. "It is also important in raising conscious about some social concerns relative to the Black community," he said.

Some progress has been made in this area in the establishing of Black history courses as legitimate history courses on campus.

"I found when I first started teaching here (around three years ago), I had some difficulty establishing Black history courses like other history courses—not like a rap session," Hildebrand said. He said he found that the battle to establish legitimate Black history courses easier, but far from over.

"Still some people approach Black history as a course you can relax in," he said. "I resent that view very much, but I don't come across it very much now."

Whether a Black history observance is adequate varies depending on the attitudes of the people sponsoring it, he said. "I am pleased by the interest initiated by students on this campus," he said.

"Black History Month observances can be very useful," he said, "but to raise consciousness about Black history is an on-going process. My concern is when it becomes counterproductive—if people view it as an alternative to making it an on-going concern."

BSM Began With Demands, Got Results

by Kevin Washington
Assistant Editor

They were sitting on Chancellor J. Carlyle Sitterson's desk.
All 23 of them.

It had taken some time to hammer out the group of demands on a typewriter—even the Black Student Movement Central Committee was proud of the work it had done to prepare the demands during the past weeks. But, it was time to show the University what they had done.

On Dec. 11, 1968, Sitterson had not been able to officially receive the list of 23 demands upon the University, but Claiborne Jones, assistant to the Chancellor, had given the Chancellor's regrets and placed the list on the Chancellor's desk.

Preston Dobbins, BSM chairman, and his entourage handed the five page document to Jones, talked for a while, then left.

The Black students had long since decided that somethings were wrong with the University. They wrote at the beginning of their demands: "The Black Student

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(Photo by Ralph Ward)

Somethin' Funny Wacko?

If you've never seen this face, you probably never stop by the Pit. Eric "Wacko" Walker can be caught roller skating in the Pit some days or, on a day like today, cracking a smile—which happened to catch the attention of our photographer.

BSM Discovery Program Saturday Well Attended

(Related stories on pages 4 and 5.)

The Black Student Movement sponsored Discovery, a celebration of Black History Month, on Feb. 23. The program, which was held in the University's Carolina Union, consisted of a number seminars on Black college, economic and political life.

The N.C. Black Student Leadership Caucus and Black Reunion Alumni Committee were also responsible for organizing the event.

Attended by several hundred students and former University students, the program which began at 11 a.m. and lasted until 5 p.m., featured guest speakers from the University as well as around the state on such topics as Blacks in the Media, Job Opportunities for Black Graduateds, Black Student Leadership effectiveness and South African Apartheid.

Speakers included attorney Mickey Michaux, a state legislative representative;

Julius Nyang 'Oro, an assistant professor at the University; Miriam Thomas, an anchorwoman at WTVD television station in Durham; and William Barber, president of the N.C. Association of Black Student Government Presidents and SGA president at N.C. Central University.

Several University students as well as alumni participated in the program.

A banquet for Discovery participants was held that evening. Henry Frye, an associate justice on the N.C. Supreme Court was the keynote speaker. Frye was also the first Black person to graduate from the University's law school.

A candle light vigil in remembrance of a Black food worker's strike in Feb. 1969 was held in the Pit after dark.

A cultural program featuring the Ebony Readers, Yours Truly and the BSM Gospel Choir ended the day's events.