

Freshman Gripe

By La'Tonya R. Rease,
Staff Writer

I think I speak for the majority of black freshmen when I say that my expectation of UNC were much more positive *before* I got here and actually started classes. I thought that through the Black Student Movement black students at UNC were a unified group and looked out for one another. This myth started with Pre-Orientation. "Pre-O," our introduction too the university, was, I thought, a welcoming committee by our fellow black peers who were interested and concerned about our welfare. We had private "raps" with our Pre-O counselors who told us about which classes to take, and those to avoid. They informed us about the subtle and overt racism on campus and simply told us "how it really was" at UNC. Most importantly, when most of us left the program, I think we all felt a little motivated and inspired because we were told that no matter what, we would make it at Carolina.

But after it was all over and all of the other upperclassmen returned for the semester, the camaraderie and sense of belonging that we had developed had dissolved. All of a sudden the very same people who urged you to attend class every day barely noticed you at the Pit

and rarely, if ever, spoke to you. The Black Student Movement suddenly became every man for himself, and we were left alone with the Black Freshman Movement.

What happened to all of the support and encouragement? Where are our counselors now, when we need someone to talk to about a failed test of a personal problem? How else are we expected to "make it" in a predominately white institution without the help, advice and *friendship* of our more experienced colleagues? Perhaps there should be an "After-O," or a Black Buddy system where upperclassmen adopt a freshman for the whole school year and teach him/her the ropes. Black Buddies could attend on-campus activities together and meet with other buddies in the program. This would remedy the noticeable absence of freshman faces at BCC- or BSM-sponsored activities and would perhaps better integrate them into the UNC system. Freshmen would actually feel as though they were a part of the university, due to a support system, and in the meantime would make important friendships with the upperclassmen. We just want to feel as if we are *in* the system, not just *of* it. All we *really* want is they unity and encouragement that was promised us from the beginning.

Fantasizin'

i think it would be so cool if i could sing...

if i could sing, i would hum smooth medleys and sing *vicious* songs that make your hair stand on end and send shivers down your arm.

It would be so great if people would stop and listen everytime i sang in the shower or crooned with my buddies on the front stoop. i would want a voice with *presence*, i would be like Aretha.

Then again, it would be pretty neat if i could produce movies or even just act a little bit like Mr. Sidney Poitier. i would maybe hook up with Spike Lee and together we would make a blockbuster of a movie and attend the Academy Awards together...

But i also wish i could write mind-blowing poems like my girl, Nikki Giovanni. i think it's the greatest thing to see your name in print, even if it is just in a 12th grade English textbook...

Yet, i still wouldn't mind being a political activist or an Alvin Ailey dancer or a prosperous businessperson...but the more i think about it, the more i realize, that the hardest thing i could possibly be, is me.

La'Tonya R. Rease

Black Diaspora Love

By Theresa Jefferson

"Black Diaspora Love" was an emotional and thought-provoking student performance presented in the Student Union Theatre, February 28.

Diaspora is defined as the settling of scattered colonies of Jews outside Palestine after the Babylonian exile.

But that night as the lights dimmed and flickered brightly back on, revealing the extraordinary performances of the all-black ensemble, diaspora referred to the dispersion of blacks outside of Africa in a continual search for "the promised land."

Director Patrick Johnson, a senior speech communications major from Hickory and the first recipient of the Wallace Ray Peppers Award for the Performance of African and African-American Literature, is to be congratulated for his insightful leadership, direction and skillful acting.

Sharing the stage with him were five of UNC's most talented black students.

Cedric Brown, a senior public policy analysis major from Winston-Salem, evoked a multitude of emotions: laughter, sadness, pride and shock with his distinctive performing style.

Regina Carter, a senior speech communications major from Greenville turned in a spirited, sassy performance that was phenomenal.

Nevaina Graves, a sophomore from Asheville, epitomized the true essence of black nobility in her modern dance and regal deportment.

Lesley Renwick, a senior journalism major from Thomasville, presented the literature with an inner strength that immediately appealed to the audience.

Gregg Redmon, a sophomore speech communications major from Statesville, entranced the audience with his easy wit and dramatic skills.

The multi-talented cast enamored and enlightened the audience by incorporating contemporary ballads, blues and traditional spirituals with its excellent dramatic endeavor.

"Black Diaspora Love," a performance of poems affirming black love, epitomized the reality of black pride and relations.

Some of the distinguished authors represented included: Sonia Sanchez, Sam Greenlee, Mari Evans, Claude McKay, Don L. Lee, Pearl C. Lomax, Langston Hughes and Linda Cousins.

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