

Endsights:

The truth is that everyone has some prejudice lurking in their minds. Whether it be a personal prejudice against another culture, race, etc., prejudice does exist in everyone



By Chandra McLean
Staff

It was approximately 9:47 p.m. on a Tuesday night. My roommate (whom I will call Lisa) was sitting Indian-style on the floor typing a paper that was due the following morning. I was sitting placidly at my desk pondering my schedule for that following day. All of a sudden, my roommate broke the silence with details of a very interesting incident that occurred the night before that really made the both of us wonder.

Lisa, my roommate, began telling me about a mixer that she attended the night before. It so happens that she attended this function with a blind date (whom I will call Ed) that a very close friend introduced her to. He was a 25-year old who graduated from UNC and who comes back to visit from time to time. As a result, Lisa accompanied Ed to the mixer. The first 15 minutes of this date proved disillusioning for Lisa, for she found out some very interesting things about Ed.

It seems that Ed enjoys listening to different musicians, especially M.C. Hammer. Although he stated that he wasn't a racist, he said that he could never attend one of Hammer's concerts because he did not feel comfortable in a place full of black people. At this moment, my roommate realized that the date was over. Ed tried to justify himself by leaning over toward a friend who was sitting beside him and saying "You understand what I am trying to say, don't you, man? I'm not a racist or anything." At this point, Lisa, who is a very strong believer and advocate of equality and equal opportunity, made a break for the door.

This incident causes many questions to arise concerning our personal opinions involving prejudice and racism. Prejudice is defined as a covert feeling that an individual has, whereas racism is defined as an overt act that the racist performs that allows others to know what type of person that he is. Many people declare that they are not prejudiced, yet their actions tell a different story.

Individuals such as Ed need "friends" beside them whom they can quickly turn to to help them justify their ignorance. It's kind of funny how a racist or prejudiced individual needs to have "backup", so to speak, in order to help them to make sense—

something that never ends up happening. On the other hand, a person who is against racism can stand alone and still display the most intelligence. Yet the question that befalls me is where do we draw the line that signifies if an individual is prejudiced?

The truth is that everyone has some prejudice lurking in their minds. Whether it be a personal prejudice against another culture, race, etc., prejudice does exist in everyone. The problem arises, however, when individuals refuse to admit their prejudice or when this prejudice turns into an act that negatively affects other people.

I don't understand the concept of individuals who say that they don't understand the concept of individuals who say that they don't want to be around a certain group of people because these people are different from them, yet they quickly argue that they are not prejudiced. I have to ask if they really know what they believe, or are they so ignorant and twisted to the point that they really believe themselves to not be prejudiced? Instead of getting caught up in such a puzzling form of mental confusion, I just rely upon the wise words of my pastor: "If one lies to himself enough, one will eventually grow to believe these lies."

Almost everyone is guilty of partaking in cultural relativism—judging a culture by the standards that are relative to that culture as opposed to your own standards. Of course, this ethnocentric judgement is wrong, but who is willing to admit that they have taken part in it? Of course there are those who proudly admit to being racist, and we allow ourselves to become angered by these people. Yet, shouldn't we appreciate the honesty of proud racists as opposed to the fallacies of ashamed ones? At least at this point, we have an idea of who to watch out for, and not have to suffer the consequences of any "surprise attacks." I hate to speak of this issue as if it is a war between professed racists who thrive on oppression and open-minded individuals who simply want a fair chance—but isn't it?

Well, at least my roommate thinks so. As for Ed (poor sap) I guess that he can forget going out with Lisa again in this century. Oh well, he can always seek psychological help for his fear of places packed with black people; Blackophobia I think it is called. Who knows? Maybe Ed will be cured in time to let M.C. Hammer "HURT HIM"!

Malcolm X Deserves Stronger Support

In conjunction with the series of articles on Malcolm X, I would like to inform everyone that between November 1 and November 4 there is a conference taking place on Malcolm X, his views, and the changes his views undertook during the course of his life. The conference will take place in New York City at Borough of Manhattan Community College where there is an expected turnout of many thousands of people. This is an international conference with global significance, especially to the African-American community; yet, at the organizational meeting for a UNC student delegation, there were only about ten students in total and many were not African-American. For a man whose views and outspoken attitudes were so important in transforming the entire minority community of the United States, this is shameful. As a student, or person in general, concerned about racial injustice it is vital to know about Malcolm X. Furthermore, this conference is in many ways a tribute to the man who did much to help revitalize African-American nationalism, and its distressing that there are not more people who are interested in attending. The next and last meeting to organize a UNC contingent will be held Tuesday night and as of now, the time and place are unknown. However, when this article comes out (Monday 22, 1990) they will be known and will be posted up and around campus and in the DTH. Therefore, I encourage you to find out about the meeting, attend it, and give serious consideration to going to the conference.—NIK Mittal

Express yourself about issues that concern *Black Ink* readers. Drop your article by Suite 108-D Student Union, or mail to *Black Ink*, CB# 5210, Student Union, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC 27514

--Announcing--

A special annual publication, sponsored by *Black Ink*, designed to showcase the artistic, poetic and other talents of African-Americans not normally showcased in *Black Ink*. For information, stop by our office at Suite 108-D in the Union. Expected publication date is Spring 1990.