

## Learning From A Fallen Hero

Hello.

They are the media figures—the athletes, entertainers, politicians and special interest leaders.

We admire them, try to emulate them and in many ways idolize them. They are held up as being the cream of American society, and their private lives become public fodder for fans and critics alike. Often, they seem more than human, and when they are revealed to be merely terrestrial beings like ourselves, it comes as a nasty sobering shock.

The nation received such a shock last week Wednesday when basketball great Earvin "Magic" Johnson announced that he had HIV, the virus that precipitates AIDS, and said he would retire from the sport he loves. Few could ever imagine that the well-loved Los Angeles Laker, 32, would see his illustrious career terminated by a non sports-related "injury" of a different kind. Johnson has pledged to fight against his inevitable illness and has graciously decided to be a spokesperson for AIDS awareness.

And this is the only good part about an otherwise tragic event. Johnson, a powerfully influential darling of the media, can really bring home the seriousness of the AIDS epidemic. His mere contracting of the virus sends the strong message that AIDS does not discriminate on the basis of race, age, sex, sexual orientation or, most importantly, social status.

Johnson's effectiveness as a spokesman would primarily lie in his ability to reach a seemingly unreachable group of Americans—the young black teenage set. Cynics that we are, my older brother and I have dubbed this group "The Lost Generation," meaning they have been swallowed whole by drugs, violence and apathy. Until a few days ago, I had given in to the philosophy of, "Salvage those you can, and write off the rest." But this type of thinking ignores the possible utility of speakers and leaders who can legitimately relate to contemporary black teens, speakers like Johnson.

One TV anchor said he noticed a general movement to "eulogize" Johnson before the player's actual demise. This is the last thing I seek to do and Johnson has, after all, not yet been afflicted with AIDS. It is hoped-for that he can live a long life and spend a part of it disseminating the gospel on the disease and other pressing social issues.

I have not been too long divorced from my teens. I'm still married to my youth and I know what's out there. I see the disillusionment and consequent disdain on the faces of my brothers as our race wades through these trying times of conservative politics. It's literally difficult for some youth to care. It is my sincere hope that prominent blacks, the media heroes, will take to their respective soapboxes and talk straight about the problems facing African-Americans. With a firm commitment and a dose of Divine Intervention, maybe they can weave a little Magic and turn things around.

God Bless,  
Myron B. Pitts

## Black Ink

"The essence of freedom is understanding"

Editor: Myron B. Pitts

Associate Editor: Corey Brown

Layout Editor: Renee Alexander Photography Editor: Michael Bowden

News Editor: Rolanda C. Burney Opinion Page Editor: Jacqueline Charles

Business Editor: Kevin McNair Circulation/Personnel Manager: Kathy

Reiners On-Campus Editor: Lee Richardson

Staff: Natalie Baucum, Morgan Bates, Pamela Best, Keisha Brown, Sherry Byrd, Jennifer O. Ferguson, Latricia M. Henry, Scott Johnson, Lisa Lavelle, Felts Lewis, Roger Madison, John T. McCann, Chandra McLean, T.J. Stancil, Tonika M. Tillman, Corey Sturdivant, Stefan Tyson, Natarsha Wither-spoon

Cartoonists: Douglas Barrier, Delancey Bennet, Lem Butler, Stefan Tyson

## Inside Black Ink

Monday, November 11, 1991

### Cover Story

#### UNDERGROUND MAKES WHILE THE MAINSTREAM TAKES

Despite what many think, pop music's fans and musicians have borrowed frequently from the resources of the jazz, soul and rap industries. Pages 6.

#### REFLECTIONS OF A STUDENT LEADER

Mark Bibbs, Student Supreme Court Chief Justice and the first student appointed to the UNC System Board of Governors, thinks blacks need to become politically active on campus. Page 3.

#### OPINION

- The Media Issues Committee notes a recent *Daily Tar Heel* article that goes in the right direction but takes the wrong path. Page 4.
- Two readers respond to the Carolina Athletic Association controversy and another takes on Wonderboy. Page 4.

#### NEWS

- Journalism Professor Chuck Stone lays down the "Canons of Blackness" in a recent lecture. Page 5.
- Three student entrepreneurs have launched a different kind of pageant -- Miss Black Carolina. Page 5.
- UNC Housekeepers are appealing to student groups for help and two of them, the Student Environmental Action Committee and Students for the Advancement of Race Relations, have accepted. Page 8.
- President Harry S. Truman: Was there a racist behind all the civil rights legislation? University professor William E. Leuchtenburg talks about it. Page 7.

#### RAP TRACKS

Black Sheep, the latest Native Tongue faction to rap at the door of success, and former N.W.A member Ice Cube come correct with two outstanding releases. Page 10.

#### LIBERATING THE MIND

Blacks Should Seek Afrocentricity, said leaders at a national conference for Black Cultural Centers. Page 9.

#### About the Cover

Mainstream musicians like Marky Mark are picked more often than "true" soul stars like Guy. Page 6.

**CORRECTION:** The Oct. 28 photo of education professor Frank Brown contained an error. Brown is former Dean of the School of Education. The Ink regrets the error.

*Black Ink*, founded in 1969, is the weekly newspaper of the Black Student Movement at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. It is published Mondays during the academic year and does not discriminate on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, religion, race, ethnic origin or handicap. All manuscripts, letters, photos, illustrations and other materials submitted are welcome and must be signed. The *Black Ink* office is located in Suite 108-D of the Student Union. Mailing address, CB# 5210 Student Union, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC 27514. Phone, 962-4336. One year subscription in U.S. and possessions \$20.00. Single copy, \$1.00 (Make checks payable to *Black Ink*). Any announcement or advertisement to be printed must be submitted the Wednesday before any publication date. *Black Ink* is published completely by university students on the SCAPEGOAT desktop publishing system and printed by Village Printing Company.