

Femmes Fatale : It's Woman Versus Woman at UNC-CH

By Michelle R. Williams
Guest Writer

People encounter many social problems in today's society. One of the more controversial topics is sexism, which has been the focus of much debate on college campuses in recent years. Webster's Dictionary defines sexism as discrimination against people on the basis of sex. It can also be interpreted as an attitude that one sex is inferior to the other. These definitions imply that discrimination is made on a male to female basis. However, when one concentrates on the UNC-CH campus, where the women outnumber men 5 to 1, a power struggle between females has emerged. In order to compete in this battle, women often resort to such tactics as gossip, deception, and they seek high social status to achieve personal goals at any cost.

Women seem to find petty things to talk about when it comes to degrading other women, and even venture into fabricating stories. By participating in gossip, some women hope to obtain power

over their sisters, and they are particularly harsh critics of each other, especially in terms of appearance. Many people congregate outside the Undergraduate Library and Greenlaw Hall, an area of campus, which for many constitutes the "yard." This is a central hangout for those who want to scrutinize their fellow students. One can hear critical comments, such as "She knows that ain't her hair!" or "What is that she got on?" and the like. Many times, this kind of criticism seems to be almost force of habit for some women; women are used to critiquing each other.

Women also gossip about each other's personal life, mainly concerning sexual relations. I often hear, "Girl do you know who she is sleeping with now?" This is yet another way for females to empower themselves at other women's expense. They feel that as long as they know the "goods," or gossip on someone else, they have the upper hand.

Betrayal is another tool utilized to achieve goals for certain women.

The strategy of manipulating another person for personal gain is quite prevalent. One example of this broken trust is when a female plots to gain the boyfriend of an associate. First, she will befriend her perspective mate's girlfriend, and through this association, come in close contact with the other woman's man. Then, when the time is right, she will make her move and that's when "all hell will break loose." After all is said and done, "I'm sorry," is never heard, and nine times out of 10, the new relationship does not even last. The odd thing about this, is that there is no reason for a woman to "steal" a man from another. Sometimes, a woman does this just to prove she can. In this way, betrayal can make a female feel superior to another.

The status of women in social groups can bring about jealousy. As seen on campus, there are many sororities, for example, that many women would like to join. But if you don't have a certain amount of money or if you do not look a certain way, then you are rejected solely on these principles. Because of this

type of labeling, some common stereotypes have circulated throughout the UNC campus. For instance, in the past, members of Delta Zeta sorority have been referred to as the "EasyDZ's, Alpha Kappa Alpha has been accused of discriminating against dark-skinned individuals, and the letters of ZTA (which stands for Zeta Tau Alpha) has been interpreted by some to mean "zits, tits and ass." These titles might be the result of jealous females denied entry into these groups. It is also another way women have divided themselves and exhibit female vs. female sexism.

In addition to the Greeks, there are certain cliques around campus united by traits such as skin color, hair texture and styles of clothing. One has to look or act a certain way in order to be accepted or even noticed. Some cliques have similar power to sororities, in that if a person is accepted into the elite, she may feel superior to others who were not.

By no means can it be said that female-to-female sexism is limited

to this campus. One can take a look in just about any social setting and find that the same things go on in different forms. Many women feel that they are superior to others because of jobs, money and physical appearance. As to why this kind of sexism occurs, one must point the finger to the society in which we live. Such emphasis is placed on females being the prettiest or the thinnest, that women have become accustomed to competing with each other. This situation lacks a clear-cut solution, but if lines of communication between women could be opened, much of this nonsense would stop. Also, mutual respect is another possible solution. Women should respect the feelings and "properties" of their sisters. By doing this, the majority of problems that women have with each other would cease.

Williams is a freshman physical therapy major from Rocky Mount.

Class of '92 Kentes and Armbands Show Culture

By Ravita Taylor
Guest Writer

Attention all graduating African-American seniors:

You are invited to attend the First Annual African-American Senior Celebration on Saturday, May 9, 1992.

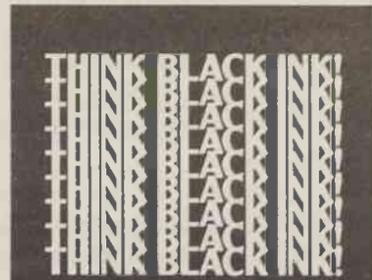
After contemplating my four years' experience at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, I decided to organize an event recognizing the existing adversities that we, as African-American students, face in our strivings for advancement. The economic, social, and political injustices historically plaguing African-Americans collectively do not escape us simply because we are students at the "diverse" UNC-CH. Present issues concerning a justifiable free-standing Black Cultural Center, an endowed chair for our beloved Dr. Sonja H. Stone,

and well-deserved benefits for UNC-CH housekeepers exemplify the basis of my views. As students, we face these issues in addition to combating ignorance of African-American history and culture that surfaces within the classroom. Too often we find ourselves correcting false ideas and assumptions expressed through textbooks and teachers themselves. The totality of these conditions partially describe African-Americans' unique experiences at UNC-CH, and I feel that we have more than sufficient cause to celebrate our earning a degree regardless of these pronounced obstacles.

Beginning Wednesday, March 25 through Friday, March 27, the executive committee of the First Annual African-American Senior Celebration (Tammi Hampton, Terri Stroud, and myself) will accept orders for "Class of '92" Authentic Kente stoles and red, black, and green armbands. These

items, intended to be worn at the First Annual African-American Senior Celebration ceremony on May 9, 1992 and at the general commencement on May 10, 1992, can be purchased in front of the Student Union (no personal checks accepted).

Any juniors, sophomores, or freshmen interested in actualizing this African-American Senior Celebration as a tradition at UNC-CH as well as anyone with general questions concerning this event may contact me at 933-7023.



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PRE-ORIENTATION 1992

Applications are currently available for students desiring to serve as counselors for Pre-Orientation 1992, a program that targets incoming minority freshmen.

Applications are available at the Sonja Haynes Stone Cultural Center and at 04 South Building. The deadline for the return of these applications is March 31, 1992 by 5:00 p.m. For further information, contact Camille Gaddy at 962-6992.