

# Editorial

## From the editor's desk

By Bertie Ray, III

"Are you having a problem? Did someone put a root on you? Ray, take that '...' off your head! Are you pledging? What club are you trying to get into? Ray, why are you acting silly? You know that black stuff on your head makes you look stupid."

All day long I received funny looks, fake smiles, wimp handshakes, no dinner guests in the cafe. Ultimately, I was made to feel humiliated because many were ignorant that the black soot on my forehead was a symbol of the 40 days and 40 nights that Christ spent being tempted by Satan which marked the beginning of Lent, the period leading up to Easter.

Now who should be made to feel undereducated, uncultured, uncouth, unexposed - ignorant. Certainly not those braves who had the courage to swallow their "not knowing" and ask the big question - what is that black stuff on your forehead?

For those who asked, I explained to them in vivid and concise details. Now they know. They may not appreciate it, but they have been exposed to something new so that when Ash Wednesday comes around next year, they will know and be able to tell their friends who simply point and look.

Who's better off? Those who do not know anything about Christianity except for presents at Christmas and new clothes at Easter or those who suffer the humiliation of being pointed at, avoided, and laughed at for a couple of hours. Most assuredly, those who handle the

humiliation with grace and a forbearing sense of forgiveness are better off. Or maybe not.

Someone once said that "ignorance is bliss." I analyze this to mean that those who do not know the power and strength of their minds and capabilities are better off, simply because they will never know what they are missing, nor how to find the answer to life's most challenging questions. In this way, the unintelligent are better off than the persons after intellectual pursuits.

My question now is, "which is most dangerous - knowing or not knowing?" Some will say it depends on what it is one knows. Others will say it is who one knows. Yet the brighter ones will say it is what and how much about what one knows.

For instance, do you know Black history? If so, is it the kind that has been watered down and neglected and rewritten by other ethnic groups? Or is it the kind learned from older Blacks such as a grandparent or an elderly neighbor? Is it the kind taught by some fanatic activists or the kind preached from a humble Baptist pulpit? It does not matter too much what kind it is, so long as it is being learned - by you.

Do not be afraid to learn Black history. It can and will assist in making you a better person. Do not just stand back and point and laugh, like you did on Ash Wednesday; ask questions and challenge the answers. Strive to become a better, more intellectually astute individual.

## The misfortune of a senior

By Mvemba Makumbu

After flunking my first auditing test, I woke up the next morning with a horrible thought: I am about to graduate from St. Augustine's College with no connections. Who'll write my five letters of recommendation for graduate school with a 2.00 grade point average?

I believe I have wasted four years of my precious life attending college. No doubt I brought it upon myself by committing one social faux pas after another since my freshman year at this fine institution.

With all those negative articles printed lately in the local newspaper about black students, I now realize that I blew my chance for a spot in this land of opportunities when it was offered to me on a silver platter.

My misgiving came in during my sophomore year, when a fellow classmate taught me you don't have to go to classes every day. Homework usually doesn't count here at St. Aug. You just need to show up for the final. If you flunk it, you can always talk your way out of it during your senior year.

But, what are we going to do? There is always something going on around the campus, he replied. There is dancing every weekend in the Emery gym, fraternity step show or sorority parties at Fevers, even during the final exam week. Why not attend all those events instead of classes?

Yes, that is a good idea. In fact, I did spend three years without missing any party sponsored by St. Aug organizations. The soirees were enjoyable, and the music was always unsurpassed.

More recently, I couldn't join the two dedicated honor societies on campus, Alpha Chi and Alpha Kappa Mu, because of a poor grade-point average.

I figured that if I get this article printed in the Pen, someone will see what a fine, upstanding, trustworthy alumnus I will be and give me a job with a high starting salary. But I cannot even remember all the words from the Falcon Anthem.

Anyway, I have neglected to demonstrate my institutional loyalty in a satisfactory way. I have let down Dr. Robinson, Dr. Wiley Davis, every devoted professor. I could have been a brilliant scholarship student if I hadn't listened to that guy.

I have failed to grasp opportunities offered by the college. As a senior I don't even know the process of graduation. Who will do my senior clearance form, because I do not remember my advisor's name or his office. Maybe the registrar's office will do it for me. I believe they are too busy for that.

Freshmen and sophomores: avoid repeating my fate while your party invitation is still in the mail. I just forgot to take the Golden Road to Post Graduation.

## Letters to the editor

Dear Editor:

The president of the United States and his administration, as well as numerous senators and congressmen, continually espouse so-called democracy throughout the world, but somehow South Africa and Israel are never included in these discussions. Have you ever wondered why?

Israel is the watchdog for American interests in the Middle East and we support them to the tune of \$3 billion in U.S. aid. South Africa on the other hand is one of the richest countries on the planet Earth with vast resources, many of which are vital to the U.S. in its attempts to develop the most powerful and potentially destructive arsenal in the world.

So, it is in the best interest of those in control that the people remain ignorant so that they will not only not question America's oppressive foreign policy, but even support it. We are led to believe that all of our efforts abroad are of a humanitarian nature or an attempt to stop the spread of communism.

In reality, what the U.S. foreign policy is mainly concerned with is protecting capitalism, an economic system that thrives on the exploitation of cheap labor and natural resources wherever they are found. And quite too often this is in so-called Third World countries.

These are reasons why we attempted to assassinate Castro in Cuba, invaded and took control of the tiny Island of Grenada, and are so hell-bent on removing the Sandanistas from power in Nicaragua. These independent countries were and are attempting to be self-sufficient and control their own resources and labor. This attitude is anti-capitalism and is therefore classified as communism.

The American people have been conditioned to hate communism and as a result are always ready to bear arms and defend America against this evil threat, without even knowing what communism is or what they are really defending.

I strongly believe in democracy, but I also believe that every person and therefore every country has the right to self determination. The democratic process is a vital part of this process. To espouse democracy throughout the world without mentioning South Africa and Israel is utter hypocrisy.

Frank E. Godfrey

Dear Editor:

The events are over, but the memories live on. This was one of the best Homecomings ever. The Student Government Association really deserves a big hand for a job well done.

Alex Dabney really went out on a limb with the first ever Gospel Concert for Homecoming featuring the groups Commissioned, Luther Barnes and the Red Bud Choir, along with our own Gospel Choir. This was one of the most important decisions to be made, and congratulations Alex on a job well done - it was a big success!

Overall, this was a very exciting weekend for all the Greeks and everybody affiliated with the Saint Augustine's College family! Let's hope and pray that next year will be just as exciting as this year - if not better!

There will be a chance for all the Greek organizations to show their stuff again as we are making plans for our Greek Week coming up in April! There will be another step show and basketball tournament - so until then - peace!

Timothy Antonio Stroud

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