

EDITORIALS

Do White People Need Black History?

A rebuttal to our March 1992 cover story.
by Wayne Hodges.

Do white people need Black history?

This was the question raised as the theme of the March 1992 issue of the Broncos' Voice. Staff writer Matthew Royal used this question to compose an article which was a collection of other students' thoughts on the subject (including my own) and his own opinions on the subject.

After reading the article written by Mr. Royal (whom I know personally), I was stupefied by his position on the question. Mr. Royal stated that whites do not need to learn Black History because "in contemporary American society, one can go far and do much without ever knowing a single fact regarding [B]lack history. Black history is not needed to incorporate a business. Black history is not needed to file taxes. Black history is not needed to communicate with others." These comments are Mr. Royal's, to my surprise and I felt obligated to rebut them as a Black man.

Unfortunately, he is looking at this question idealistically rather than realistically. Most of Mr. Royal's thoughts deal with what one can do physically. Education goes beyond the realm of the physical. Education in any field (in this case history) deals with the mentality. And it is the whites that lack a mentality supplemented with Black history that continue to be the main supplanters, liars, and exploiters, of the other peoples of earth. Whites who know not true Black history engender prejudice, racism, and discrimination in this society. They have been diseducated, miseducated, and misled. If whites learned Black history, they would see the great accomplishments that Blacks and Africans made in America and Africa, and would have a greater respect for Blacks as individuals, as a race, and for Black and African achievements.

Dr. Carter G. Woodson, the father of Black History, states in *Miseducation of the Negro*, "In history . . . the [Black] had no place in this curriculum. He was pictured as a human being of the lower order . . . No thought was given to the history of Africa except so far as it had been a field of exploitation for the Caucasian." Dr. Woodson is correct and just in his assess-

ment. This portion of history is all whites (and some Blacks) seem to have been taught. As Dr. Woodson also states, "You might study the history from the elementary school throughout the university, and you would never hear Africa mentioned except in the negative. You would never thereby learn that Africans first domesticated the sheep, goat, and cow, developed the idea of trial by jury, produced the first stringed instruments, and gave the world its greatest boon in the discovery of iron."

If whites were to be truly educated on these accomplishments that Blacks and Africans made at one point in history, they would realize that through all the unmitigated suffering and pain that Blacks have endured, there still lies within Blacks in America and Africa, the quiescent ability to do them again.

So, in my assessment, whites do NEED Black history so that there will exist a mutual respect between Blacks and whites for each other's historical accomplishments. They NEED it so that attitude and behavior patterns of prejudiced and racist whites may possibly be assuaged and changed. Whites learning Black history is an essential in the perpetuation of freedom, justice, equality, and all other principles of "rightness" in the world. Mr. Royal should heed the previous comments.

Also, I was astonished at some of the comments by other students in the article. I was not astonished by the persons making these remarks, but rather how their comments entailed so much ignorance. I was also humored by their attempts to avoid answers to the question.

One sir responded to the question in this manner: "All people need all history." Yes, all people do need all history, but that was not the question at hand. I am sure if the sir would check himself he, to, would see this fact; moreover, if the sir would capitulate to the eyes of reality, he would distinctly see, considering the present condition of race relations in this nation, that the history of the Black man deserves excessively more than a modicum of attention.

Quri Simmerly, with whom I also hold acquaintance, made a comment which stated "the problem with history is that people find many excuses and irrelevant problems of the past and try to bring them into the present. Only our actions from the present can solve the problems for the future."

Surely Miss Simmerly does not believe this, but if in fact she does I hope her position is an evanescent one. Miss Simmerly does not truly understand that as every moment of the present ticks away, it changes into the past and also the future. History's role in society is one much more profound than the superficial thoughts of Miss Simmerly.

As Malcolm X stated, ". . . it is impossible to understand the present or prepare for the future unless we have some knowledge of the past."

So, I state to all those persons who responded to the question negatively or managed to "get around" the question, I can see as a result of their comments and responses that they do, in fact, need Black history.

Full Scholarships (For In-State Students Only)

by Albert Johnson

When an administrator called me on the phone a year ago and told me that I was receiving a full scholarship to Fayetteville State University, I jumped for joy. A couple of weeks later, I received a letter from FSU that explained the scholarship criteria. The letter said that my award was a "full scholarship at an in-state rate." At first, I did not understand this phrase; so, I called FSU and was told that an enormous amount of tuition would have to be paid by scholarship students who were out-of-state residents. [This meant that in-state students would have to pay no additional fees but out-of-state students would have to pay the difference between in-state and out-of-state tuition.]

When I realized this, I did not think I would accept FSU's scholarship offer. As time went by though, no other school --- including the one in my hometown --- offered me any money. This made me reconsider FSU's. Besides, I wanted to get away from home, because I needed a change from my regular atmosphere. So as things turned out, I accepted the scholarship, realizing that my tuition would only be partially covered.

After my first semester at FSU, I earned a 4.0 GPA. When a few people heard about my accomplishment, they told me what a fine example I was setting as a Chancellor's scholar. As I thought more about these remarks, I considered them to be insults instead of compliments. Of course, most students with Chancellor's Scholarships receive the same amount of money. But, out-of-state students, like myself, have to pay at least \$2500.00 more per semester.

Whenever I tell someone I'm here on a Chancellor's Scholarship, they automatically assume that I'm one of the elite students whose tuition is fully covered. Well, I am "fully" covered but only at an in-state rate. The more I thought about this, the more upset I became. What was bugging me the most was not the fact that I was paying \$5000.00 for tuition this year; it was the fact that I was put in the same category with students who were fully covered when in reality I was not. Out-of-state scholarship students are given the

same amount of money and have to keep the same requirements (3.2 GPA, 6 hours community service every week) but are still only partially covered. So how could out-of-state students be looked at in the same manner as in-state students?

The phrase "full scholarship at an in-state rate" was so vague that when a few out-of-state scholars arrived at FSU, they believed they had a full ride. When they found out the truth, they felt as though they were cheated. How many of these students will return next semester remains to be seen. Those out-of-state students who are returning have obviously accepted the fact that they are on partial scholarships.

The big problem though is distinguishing "partial" scholars from Chancellor's scholars. Since scholarships for most out-of-state students do not cover even half of their tuition, why should they be given the same requirements in order to keep their "awards" as those who are fully covered? Is it really necessary for a student to do 6 hours of community service every week for his/her scholarship, when he/she is the one that needs help paying for tuition? I say it is too much for a student to work so hard for a partial scholarship and still have to worry about paying an enormous amount of money. Granted, these students can always look towards financial aid, but there are no guarantees that financial aid will cover the rest of their fees. Therefore, out-of-state scholars should not have to perform community service or be required to keep a GPA as high as fully-covered scholars.

Being considered a "full" scholarship recipient is an insult to my pride. When I earned a 4.0 GPA, I earned it for myself, not for the sake of the scholarship. Likewise, when I perform community service I do it as a human being.

By continually regarding me as an "elite" Chancellor's scholar, the administration gives others the wrong impression of my true status as a Chancellor's scholar. The lack of distinction between those who truly receive full scholarships and those who receive only partial scholarships implies that we who in fact receive partial scholarships should be just as grateful as those receiving a "free ride".

Because I am offended by this policy, I refused to accept the "Chancellor's Scholar of Distinction" award I earned for making the Chancellor's List.

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