

EDITORIAL COMMENT

BECOMING AN ACTIVE UNIVERSITY

by Matthew Royal

Many have protested the transience of Black History Month. February seems to be the only time during the year that Black history is given any special focus. At the end of this month, they say, Black history, culture, literature, and art fade into obscurity. While Black History Month helps inform many people of otherwise overlooked aspects of American history, and of course the history of Black Americans as a special cultural group, relegating the study of Black history to a single month during the year can serve to identify this study as a sort of curiosity. I've heard some Christians say that the two times each year when their religion receives the most attention — Christmas and Easter — are so sensationalized that their meanings are forgotten. Let's not allow the same to happen to Black History Month. Without continual reminders throughout the year of the importance of these studies, we risk trivializing them.

With this ideal in mind, our university can stand out as an exceptional community resource. Because of its location and its history, FSU has a remarkable opportunity to enhance the cultural and educational development of this area. Fayetteville State, of course, is the university for the Fayetteville and Fort Bragg area. Therefore, our university is in an important position of leadership. Since Fayetteville does not have the numerous colleges and universities that areas such as Raleigh-Durham, Tidewater Virginia, and Greensboro have, FSU has a special responsibility to "fill the gap," providing cultural and educational resources for the hundreds of thousands of people in southeastern North Carolina.

The university of today provides more than just a campus at which classes may be taken. The university's influence doesn't end with the classes it provides or with the sports events it promotes. The university can act as a magnet for people, groups, events, and ideas which otherwise might not be available to the surrounding community. And of course, Fayetteville State, as an historically Black university, can become a leader in presenting opportunities closely tied to its own cultural and historical tradition.

The university's Office of Student Affairs is not only responsible for main-

taining dormitories and the Student Center. Student Affairs should also be bringing numerous cultural events to the university on a regular basis, for the benefit of the students. Most importantly, these events should include many which are especially appropriate to the university environment. I'm not saying that we shouldn't have more contemporary, popular events; I am saying that Student Affairs should be especially concerned with providing opportunities which are closely associated with FSU's educational mission and with the expansion of its cultural and artistic horizons.

The concept of academics at a university includes more than just classwork, syllabi, and grades. There is a wealth of knowledge that can be made available to our students and the community through the university. If we provide a forum, nationally and internationally recognized speakers on countless topics can be brought to Fayetteville. Why? Because our students, and the community, should be given the opportunity to pursue an education beyond the classroom atmosphere. Last month's column by Wakesa Madzimoyo decried "mis-education"; and while FSU may not be intending to "mis-educate" anyone, it's pretty obvious that there's always more to the story than the knowledge provided within the confines of the classroom. The School of Business and Economics, the School of Education, and the College of Arts and Science, then, can introduce our community to notable researchers, authors, and others who can expand our educational experience.

Many of our students will soon enter the business world after graduation. Those in today's business world must deal with complex issues, with implications beyond what can be covered in the classroom environment. The School of Business and Economics can bring speakers to the university who address these issues, whether they deal with contemporary society, business ethics, economic theory, or the implications of operating within a multicultural society.

For over 125 years, the institution which is now FSU has been training future educators. The School of Education can expand upon this training because the study of education today is a dynamic discipline, with new techniques and theories emerging on a regular basis. Because of its history
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