

EDITORIAL COMMENT

Perceptions, Baby, Perceptions

by Roger A. Harris



Roger Harris, Editor-in-Chief

Perceptions form the cornerstone of what we call existence and represent the back splashed and tangible watershed from the deep "see" of reality. Likewise, perceptions provide the raw natural resource that societies use to build, bask, and bind within the security of their self-created structure and safety. Yet on the whole, perceptions are somewhat akin to playing Blind Man's Bluff by yourself or trying to find shadows in the shade—are they even there at all, do they even exist?

Well, the question's answer is both yes and "know," for while you and a thousand others may perceive a rainbow, we know that it is really

just an optical illusion; water fractures light into the million-prismed brilliance of an image whose whole is seemingly more powerful than the sum of its parts—except for the fact that without the parts, the whole wouldn't exist at all. So, if "seeing is believing," then we may, in fact, be believing in some thing that doesn't exist; blindly claiming and accepting the sum with little or no understanding of its parts (sorta like asking the question "If God made all, than who made God?").

World-renowned Howard University anthropologist Dr. Michael Blakney taught me that one must examine not only specific data, but also related relevant data, if one hopes to understand the essence of a specific circumstance. I'm trying to understand who we are and what we are about as a people at FSU, in Fayetteville, -america, and the world. For now, I'll confine my queries to and about FSU.

For instance, it really interests me that at this university, we still schedule mandatory classes that are required for graduation on the same day and at the same time. Worse, we

often offer these mandatory classes only once an academic year, so that if a student misses the class for some reason, the student will have to wait an entire year to retake the class.

It's strangely ironic that on any given day you will find more students walking away from rather than towards important events such as: the recent forums with 1996 Pulitzer Prize Honoree Dr. George Walker; the selection of our new police chief Jerry L. Monroe; or any campus, local, or national election in general.

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Either we don't know what's going on, don't give a damn about what's going down, or don't care about what will eventually happen both because of and in spite of our common impotence. What is worse is that we won't even offer to excuse classes to help boost attendance or to make their attendance mandatory (sorta like having to take Critical Thinking). Our collective actions (or inactions) speak reflectively about this a glaring contradiction in terms.

The silver lining to this swirling black cloud is that even though you will only have seven to fifteen students who attend any of these events, they are usually the same ones: formal and informal leaders who have chosen to get involved, effect change, make a difference. Are you amongst their number? Probably not.

Did you know that at this university, the selection process for the national Who's Who list is a screaming farce; that Capel Arena's operational hours are impractical in that they piratically prohibit most students from using it; that we don't have a weekend

college (even though three-fourths of FSU students are non-traditional); that we do have very limiting library hours of operation; that we won't see and shouldn't expect a 24 hour computer lab in the near future; that we now have to pay for events that we used to be able to attend for free (no offense, SAC); that the new and ridiculously high six foot speed bumps (I am not exaggerating) on Seabrook Road have made the new parking lot they

boarder a driving hazard (drivers would rather weave through the people and cars in the parking lot than risk destroying a transmission on the bumps). Is this picture (like the glass) half full or half empty? Semantics? No: perceptions, baby, perceptions.

Until the SGA senate and its presidents organize FSU students into a non-partisan voting block of between one to three thousand voters who will respond on their representative command to issues that affect both this university and this community, they are doing nothing more than playing house and building ice cream sand castles in the sun. Their focal point and my primary concern should first be you and I, here and now, one to one. Do you hear me? Can you feel me?

Once it's all been said and done, how we do what we do at FSU has more to do with the dances we brake and the chances we take than with what FSU's musicians induce us to do, because we can always say "know" to its happening. The time and space between knowing and doing is called life; its shared, conceded, and collective reality shaped by the ham-

see "Perceptions," pg. 5

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Submission Guidelines

All submissions should be limited to 250 words, typed and double-spaced, free of grammatical and typographic errors, and should include the name and telephone number of the author. Whenever possible, articles should be submitted in person at the Voice office, located in the Taylor Gymnasium, Rm. 3. For most expedient publication, articles should be submitted on a 3.5" 720k or 1.44M disk saved as a text (.txt) file. Electronic files may be sent through e-mail or by fax.

Corrections**Previous Edition:**

--The article, "On Matters of Race," by Gloria Siler was co-authored by Shawn Torry.

--The article, "Residence Life to Boost Student Participation, Community Service," was written by Jessica Brown.

For this Edition:

--The Bronco's Profiles and Religious Viewpoints will continue beginning with the January '98 edition.

*Beginning January 13, 1998, submission deadlines for all material to be published will be by the close of business every Tuesday.

On behalf of the Broncos' Voice staff, we would like to wish FSU and the surrounding community a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!