

Dive into the 'jects'

Chancellor's book club choice details life for two children growing up in a Chicago housing project

By Shirley Townsend & Nicolette Beatty
Voice News Editor & Staff Writer

Did you ever think you would be in a book club? If not, you are now.

If you are a student at Fayetteville State University, or you teach here or work here, you are being challenged to be part of the Chancellor's reading club. This year, the club will be reading *"There Are No Children Here"* by Alex Kotlowitz, who did a signing and presentation on campus last week.

What is the club all about?

The basis of a reading club consists of more than reading. It also expands social horizons on an intellectual level. Each year the FSU community is encouraged to read and discuss a common text chosen by the chancellor, Dr. James A. Anderson.

The FSU reading club intends to introduce readers to diverse ways of understanding and experiencing the world, as well as supporting positive ideas of using education as something that should be done inside and outside the classroom.

This year, the reading club will sponsor "reading circles" to bring the FSU community together for small group discussions.

"We will discuss the book in our freshman seminar classes, and will have innovative activities to enhance the flavor of the text," said April Raines, who is the co-chair of the reading club.

The club will also collaborate with the Fine Arts Series and speakers to provide cultural events for students.

The Chestnut Library also serves as an active participant of the club, by sponsoring activities for students, alumni and the community.

Students and faculty both seem to think the reading club accomplishes its goals.

In a post-discussion survey, 70 percent of students agreed that the reading club encouraged many students to read more. Sixty-six percent agreed that it encouraged discussions with their instructors while 88 percent responded that they would recommend the reading club to other students and committee members.

What is this year's book about?

"There Are No Children Here" is a nonfiction book that details the

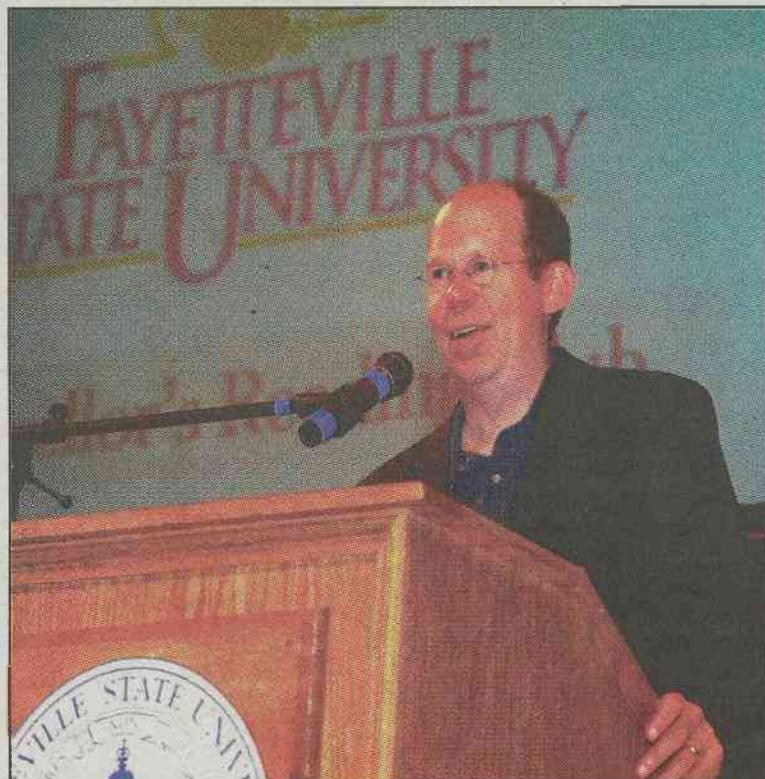


Photo courtesy of Dennis McNair

Author Alex Kotlowitz speaks to FSU students and faculty about his national bestseller *"There Are No Children Here"* at an event on campus last week.

story of two young boys and their family growing up in a world of crime termed the "other America," by Mr. Kotlowitz.

From shootings in the courtyard to dozens of funerals, the atmosphere of Henry Horner Homes, the projects where they grew up, is anything but childproof. Set in a Chicago slum in the 1980s, Mr. Kotlowitz discusses the tragic loss of innocence among children and adolescents.

The story starts off in the summer of 1987, introducing readers to the main characters, Lafayette, Pharoah, and LaJoe. Throughout the book Mr. Kotlowitz uses first-person narratives to inspire us with the boys' stories.

The reader gets to follow 9-year-old Pharoah and 12-year-old Lafayette as they witness multiple shootings forcing them to hide in the hallway while bullets flew through their windows. The boys tell readers about various hiding places they find in order to escape the horrors of the "jects."

Readers are taken on a journey as the boys' brother is repeatedly thrown in jail, while their mother struggles to maintain a stable household. Daily the boys strive to overcome near-fatal situations.

"It's okay where you come from but you have to be responsible for where you are going," said co-chair, Mrs. Crittenden, expressing the message the committee wants the students to interpret after reading the book.

Mr. Kotlowitz said in an interview with *The Voice* that he made the personal decision to use an unstable setting due to the close relationship between him and the main characters. He praises the residents of the Henry Horner community in helping him expose the negative influences of the lower class neighborhood.

He also stressed that the silence of stories about poverty and individuals that have been raped of opportunity is what motivated him to focus on the specific setting for the narrative.

"I tip my hat off to Fayetteville State University for talking about such an issue and acting on such matters of our community growing up," Mr. Kotlowitz said.

Get your copy. □ *There Are No Children Here* is available at the FSU Bookstore for \$14.95 plus tax.

New departments and majors bring new opportunities

CAMELLIA SANSBERRY
Voice Staff Writer

Beginning with the 2010-2011 academic year, Fayetteville State University has added five new departments to the College of Arts and Sciences.

All of these departments were created to reduce the size of larger departments so they can be managed more effectively. Also, there is hope that since the departments are smaller there can be greater focus to specific areas of study and most importantly, students.

The Department of Chemistry and the Department of Communication have both been developed to enrich students who major or plan to major in the respective fields. In many ways, these departments will allow students a more rewarding, fulfilling academic experience.

The Department of Chemistry and Physics stems from the Department of Natural Sciences and now has three degree opportunities including a Bachelor of Science in Fire Science and a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry.

With 17 new, full-time faculty who each hold doctorate degrees in their fields, two staff members who are laboratory managers, and one administrative assistant, students now have a more focused working environment and a smaller student-to-teacher ratio.

In addition, there are three new laboratories located in the Lyons Science Annex.

"It is the first time there has been a department focused entirely on the physical sciences," said interim chair Dr. Booker Juma, "This will provide students with a sense of belonging. It will show them how to navigate a pathway to their careers."

With the addition of the Depart-

A Quick Look

Department of Communications, Dr. Todd Frobish, Interim Chair

Department of Chemistry and Physics, Dr. Booker Juma, Interim Chair

Department of Biological Sciences, Dr. Abdelmajid Kassem, Interim Chair

Department of English, Dr. Ed McShane, Chair

Department of World Languages and Cultures, Dr. Tim Ajani, Interim Chair

ment of Communication comes a new journalism major, a new student computer lab, a more advanced student internet radio station with Bronco-iRadio.com, and also a television studio that is currently being renovated.

Students will now have the chance to use top notch equipment and modern technology. Dr. Frobish, interim chair, believes that this department is important for both the students and the entire campus.

"Media keeps us informed, and brings people together giving a great sense of community. Students can now be trained in the use of modern technology and be well prepared when they leave the university" Dr. Frobish said.

The addition of each new department adds flavor and academic diversity to FSU, and seem to be only the beginning more academic growth at FSU.

IMPORTANT ACADEMIC DATES

October 15-18: Fall Break; No classes

October 29: Last day to withdraw from classes

November 11: Veteran's Day; No classes

November 17: Last day to withdraw from university