

Thomas hearings a cruel joke

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EEOC from February 1984 through March 1985, serving as spokeswoman for the commission and managing a staff of 27 employees. She was managing editor for the *Winston-Salem Chronicle* from November 1987 through February 1990. Wright, a Republican, testified that Judge Thomas had made "inappropriate" remarks about her body, asked her for dates, and showed up unannounced at her apartment once.

Many of those who knew Wright, who is now an editor for *The Charlotte Observer*, say they believe Professor Hill's testimony. "I believe them both, because I worked with Angela, and I know her to be an honest, decent woman," said one former co-worker.

Judge Thomas adamantly refused to resolve the question of how much interest he has displayed in pornography. College acquaintances of his noted that he had often entertained them with his accounts of pornographic movies, and women's groups noted that pornography is frequently used in sexual harassment.

Judge Thomas charged the Judiciary Committee with allowing racism to taint the proceedings, which he referred to as a "lynching" and stated he would have preferred "an assassin's bullet" to the anguish and character attacks he was forced to publicly endure.

COMMUNITY DISTURBED

The hearings brought forth strong emotions between blacks and whites, and men and women. Sensitivities are high this week, and the windows of households and offices are rattling with debate.

"My insides are aching," said a black female executive. "The way it was handled has driven a

wedge between black people. If the political lines had not already been drawn, with prominent blacks saying they didn't want him, this would have been handled differently."

Dr. Deborah Winfrey agrees. "It's like Judas kissing Jesus. The others are able to absolve themselves, and say, 'See, his own people did it to him.'"

Thomas' credibility was questioned by those who were struck by his statement that he had never had a discussion about Roe vs. Wade, the controversial abortion rights landmark case of 1973. Professor Hill's credibility was questioned by those who wondered why she did not press the issue ten years ago, when the harassment was allegedly occurring.

SENATE HANDLED POORLY

Mayor Martha Wood spoke to the fact that as early as September 9, Professor Hill told a Metzbaum aide of being sexually harassed by Judge Thomas.

"To me, the really crucial issue in this whole thing is the fact that all of those Senators knew about this and dismissed it. That speaks volumes. That kind of insensitivity to profound issues cannot continue unchallenged."

On September 12, Professor Hill told the entire Judiciary Committee of sexual harassment by Judge Thomas, requesting that her name and the allegations be kept confidential. On September 20, the hearings ended. The questions of sexual harassment had not risen publicly. On October 5, *Newsday*, a New York newspaper, reported the charges in its pages, whereupon the hearings were resumed under the watchful eye of the media.



Thomas outside his home in Alexandria, Va.

Mayor Wood echoed the sentiments of many women in noting that, as a result of the Thomas confirmations, many people are taking a more serious look at male-female communications. "As the mother of a 16-year-old son, I say that sexual harassment works both ways. And we must recognize that there are appropriate and inappropriate forms of behavior in the workplace. People must speak up, identify and call attention to put-downs. We must build and maintain a level of trust. The jokes in the workplace won't fly anymore."

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Roderick Mitchell

Roderick Mitchell, is one of our youngest residents at age 33. He is originally from High Point. His employment history includes Marnarc Furniture Co., where he was a service person for 4 years. He also worked at Hardees in High Point for over 7 years as a service attendant.

Roderick is a member of First Methodist Church of High Point and has been a member of the Usher Board and has also sang on the Young Adult Choir. He received a special award for outstanding achievements from Good Will Industries. He can "strut his stuff" playing putt putt golf, having won both 1st and 2nd place in a tournament. He also enjoys pool and volleyball as well.

Roderick is single. He is just waiting for the right gal to come along.

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Harassment

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appeals ruled that the employer violates Title VII if "prompt and appropriate remedial action" is not taken after learning of sexual harassment. In other cases, the court ruled that the employer is liable even if the company forbids the behavior, and regardless of whether the employee lost any tangible job benefits as a result of the behavior.

Marian Ackerman and the Council on the Status of Women offer the following advice:

THREE RULES TO REMEMBER

1. Name the behavior. The woman must say: I find this offensive. Please don't do it anymore. One secretary, besieged with salesmen, uses humor, and asks them: "Are you trying to sexually harass me?" She says that makes most men jump ten feet and back off.
2. If you have said, I find this offensive, and the behavior continues, do what Anita Hill didn't: Keep a diary of each account. Also, if it happens in front of a co-worker, turn to him or her and ask for corroboration by asking: Did you hear/see that?
3. Tell personnel. Most agencies and companies with more than 15 employees come under the EEOC authority and are liable. Once you tell them, the company then must take action to stop the behavior.

Teachers

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extreme.

"Some of them had grandparents that were really conservative and some said they were embarrassed."

Matt's approach would be welcomed by Sallie Cook, who teaches government and economics at Holt High School in Tuscaloosa. Cook said most Alabama history classes rely too heavily on textbooks that include trite or sketchy information on the role of blacks.

"Not too much has been taught about black history in Alabama schools," said Cook, a former Alabama Education Association president who has taught for 28 years.

Cook would like to see a separate class on black history but admits it would be better to incorporate it into the main history curriculum.

"That's the only way students will learn to appreciate different cultures - by learning about all the people and races at the same time," she said. "If you do teach something about one group or one minority in the classroom then you get people saying you're teaching black history."

New board elected

On Oct. 7, 1991, Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Forsyth County, Inc., a United Way Agency, announced the election of its new board members and officers for next year.

New board members include Richard A. Brenner, Richard D. Hancock, Victor P. Mills, Tori Roemer, Sterling Spainhour, and W. McNair Tomow.

The new officers for 1992 are as follows: Karen Kehler, president; Bruce Holliday, first vice president; Brenda Hodge, second vice president; Simpson Brown, treasurer; Dolly Taylor, secretary; and Wayne Scroggins, immediate past president.

Additional board members are Richard Battle, Tom Brinkley, Mark Cullinan, Art Hardin, Earl Harper, Barbara Hearn, Harold Holmes, John Hunt, Sharon Murphy, Benny Murrill, Larry Paul, William Pitzer, Joe Siereno, Sandra Thomas, and Gary VonCannon.

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