

Prioritizing blackness, inventing America

By Benita Dillard
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

Can black people reinvent America in order to give back to the less fortunate?

Bev Smith from Black Entertainment Television spoke at Johnson C. Smith University last week. She said the purpose of BET is to touch the voices, eyes, and ears of the black community all over the world. BET is bringing a new era to the black community and eventually it will be heard on the radio. As the growth of the BET progresses she's often told she says, "We are too black." With these four words it moved Smith into the discussion, can black people reinvent America in order to give back to the less fortunate?

Her answer, "We as black

people must invent America first, until we are free no one is free; therefore America does not exist. As long as the white man keeps blacks down then he will not be free."

"We need moral values in the black community, she says, in order for black people to overcome the misrepresentation in America."

The prime example to illustrate the weakness of blacks is Congress thinking about taking over Washington, D.C. police force because its predominantly black. She emphasized, "We must invent America, blacks in 1996 are tired and asleep we are so unaware of what society is doing."

In order for African Americans to progress instead of regress they must take certain steps to invent America.

She says, "They include cleaning up our acts and language, talking to each other, smiling, and quit being concerned about what the white man thinks." Black people have got to work hard in America in order to succeed instead of degrading one another when doing well, and must commend each other to create more positive role models, Smith said.

She feels, "Being black in America is getting to know one another, until you know what another black person have gone through keep your mouth shut, get involved with activities."

Until you live on someone's street keep your mouth shut, to make America better you must put effort into it. When you get yourself together America will be a better place."

Law was a role model

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Joyner said he didn't take any of Mr. Law's classes, but was influenced by him nonetheless.

"His classroom was the entire campus," Joyner said. "He was an accomplished ping-pong player. He spent many hours in the student union interacting with and educating students."

Daniel Hoffman, associate professor of political science, was a frequent table tennis partner of Mr. Law. He called him "my best friend in Charlotte."

"I'm just at a loss," Hoffman said. "It's a horrible thing, a shock. He hired me. I remember there being a question on my application about hobbies and I put table tennis. He asked me about it and took me to his house to play, where he whipped me soundly as he always did. This was part of the interview. That doesn't sound conventional, but that was Jim Law."

"He would stop and listen to my problems and concerns and really care. That made him a very special person," Hoffman said.

Mr. Law even offered Joyner

advice when he moved from head women's basketball coach to men's.

"He pointed out the differences in coaching the male athlete and the female athlete," Joyner said. "He was very instrumental in advising me. He spoke very clearly about the things I needed to do."

Law is survived by his wife Aurelia Liston Law, daughter of former Smith president Hardy Liston; two sons, Stanley Law and Eric Law, who teaches Spanish at the university, and a daughter-in-law, Anita Law.

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Jewel was also one of the featured speakers with the African American Women on Tour (The Nation's Foremost Black Women's Empowerment Conference) which included: Maya Angelou, Iyanla Vanzant, Lynn Whitfield and Phylcia Rashad.

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