

Racial tensions probed

When college-bound high school students consider which college to attend, they would consider, most likely, the school's academic requirements, the location, the student population size and the social life. And for black students considering predominately white universities, the list is a little longer to include the number of other blacks at the school and the relations between blacks and whites. Recent campus news stories may give those blacks considering UNC-CH greater concern.

Last semester, due to several incidents involving racial harassment or violence from white students directed toward black students, the University is forced to confront its attitude towards improving campus race relations. Initially, three specific incidents were disclosed at a meeting involving members of the Black Greek Council and the Black Student Movement last November. The three cases consisted of:

- A black female physically and verbally assaulted by a white male classmate during a physical education class.
- A black female physically and verbally assaulted by two white female residents of Hinton James dormitory.
- A black custodian working on predominantly white North Campus transferred to more racial integrated South Campus after he received threatening notes from students dissatisfied with his work.

But as reported during that meeting and in a letter in *The Daily Tar Heel* Nov. 23 concerning the meeting those incidents are not rare. Several more such incidents were reported by the Black Greek Council and the BSM.

As many as 12 letters were sent to the *DTH* concerning the racial incidents during the next weeks including letters from the chancellor, the vice chancellor of student affairs, the student body president and the BSM chairperson. A couple of student campus publications, the *DTH* printed a house editorial and the *Phoenix* featured an article about the matter.

Letters were also sent directly to students on campus and to faculty to read in classes about the administration's concern to maintain harmonious racial relations on campus.

As a result of the reported racial tensions, the approval of a new course, "Perspective on Black/White Relations" on campus.

But racial differences have been the focus of several campus programs in the past as black/white discussion groups sponsored by the Carolina Union and the Black/White Dialogue committee composed of students and faculty focusing on improving relation between black students and white instructors. However the problems resulting from misunderstanding between the races persist and as some administrators admit — the tensions that surfaced have been around for a long time.

A national survey's findings, for instance, reported that 63 percent of the UNC-CH black students questioned acknowledged they had experienced some form of racial discrimination in a March 3 *DTH*. The survey results, for the University, as it turns out, were consistent with four other state universities polled nationwide.

A new campus group, to form specifically from the racial tensions, is the "Study Committee on Race Relations." The committee will work as Harold Wallace, vice chancellor of university affairs, describes "to capture the tension of the community and put it in a positive force." Composed of students and faculty, Wallace said it will work as a task force, working with different segments of the University community seeking aid to improve its race relations. The committee won't check problems on a case by case basis but "a long term view on how the University might improve race relations."

In fact, this can be viewed in the combining of Orientation and Pre-Orientation (designed for and mostly run by minority students) for freshmen next year.

Wallace said the committee will deal with attitudes basically, to seek suggestions to aid the particular segment of the University community which approaches the committee for help. Since interracial problems, in general, stem from misunderstanding and lack of mutual respect, it seems the new committee will enjoy a long and rewarding stay at the University.

TURNER



THE SLEEPING GIANT

Sister's Corner

Sisterhood thrives

By DONNA WHITAKER
Columnist

Throughout the years, concerts in American life have changed. For example, Americans went from newspapers to radio to television as the dominant means of obtaining information. Even the concept of family has changed. "Family" use to mean warmth, security and cohesiveness. However, those features seem to be fading in today's families as the number of murders, assaults and rapes involving family members increase.

All family concepts haven't disappeared, though. One of the thriving concepts that has endured the ages is sisterhood. Black people have been known to express this concept to total strangers of the race, if only in words. It isn't uncommon to hear black men say "What's happening sister?" or hear black women say "Hey, sister!" to black women. It's not uncommon for black women to group together and hang together and classify themselves as sisters, even though they don't have the same mother. Sisterhood thrives despite the problems it may encounter.

One way sisterhood is thriving is through black sororities. These sororities stress sisterhood; many were founded on the basis of promoting sisterhood. The three black sororities on the UNC-CH campus attest to that. Alpha Kappa Alpha, Delta Sigma Theta and Zeta Phi Beta sororities unite women who are interested in promoting sisterhood.

Sisterhood doesn't come easy to ladies in the sororities. They have to go through rush, a pledge period and a period of internal growth to really appreciate the concept. But the hard work pays off.

Andre Flowers of Wadesboro is a senior majoring in public relations and communications. She is also president of DST. She said that her pledge period helped her mature a great deal. She said that she learned how to work with other people, set goals and make decisions within a group.

"After I pledged, the closeness I felt with my sorors was unexplainable," Flowers says. "It's like my sorors are my family here. I've learned from them like I've learned from my older sisters."

Odessa Stubbs, president of ZPB, says that her pledge period helped her, also. She says that she has grown more confident of herself with the help of the sorority.

"The sisterhood and the projects I've done have helped me tremendously," she says.

Black sororities are service-oriented. The heads of the sororities on campus say that service projects help their sisters develop sisterhood and womanhood.

Karen Bryant, a junior from Supply who is majoring in pharmacy, is basileus (president) of AKA. She says, that womanhood is achieved by her sisters through projects such as fund raising from the United Negro College Fund and visiting underprivileged kids once a week.

"We hope it stems from the inside and go outside so that other people will see it," she says.

The members of the sororities try to overlook gossip and rumors about them, the head ladies of their respective sororities. They work together and give each other support so that their sisters can withstand pressure from persons outside the group.

Stubbs, a senior from Southern Pines who is majoring in sociology, sums up the meaning of sisterhood. She says, "Being a sister is being there whenever a sister needs you."

Well said, Miss Stubbs.

BLACK INK

"The essence of freedom is understanding."

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