

When Will UNC-CH Get Its Black Cultural Center?

By Terrence E. Garrison
Contributor

On December 9, 1988, nearly two years ago, the UNC Board of Trustees voted 11-0 to support a Black Cultural Center, but failed to appropriate any specific funding for a BCC. With few exceptions, the majority of UNC students and a lot of faculty seem to support this idea. According to a report that same year, one problem which hinders the building of the proposed 10,000 to 15,000 square feet (as proposed by the BCC Planning Committee) building is funding. Given the fact that we have waited for 2 years, I think it is time the student body, especially the Black Student Movement, resurrect this important issue with even greater emphasis and initiative. It is apparent that many faculty members do not really support the BCC, but say they do in order to appease the BSM and the student population at large. They use funding as a cop-out. We must take upon ourselves as African-American students to raise the necessary funds. The rest is up to the University. We should do this by mobilizing the entire African-American student body (and miscellaneous supporters) to solicit funds from private sources, especially African-American alumni. An organized effort on the part of African-American athletes (Why? Why Not !!!), the Black Student Movement, Black Greeks, African-American faculty, and all others who

realize the importance of this issue could provide some of the necessary funds. The burden of education, which is that of the university, is the purpose behind a BCC. Therefore, part of the responsibility falls on the University.

Some argue that a multi-cultural center would not benefit the students of UNC or that African-American students and the university have no use for an expanded Black Cultural Center. In fact, one member of the BOT who was strangely absent during the 11-0 vote supporting the BCC, reportedly made a comment that students who want African-American culture should go to a black college. Perhaps this is true! I suspect that a boycott of Pre-Orientation, Decision Days, Summer Bridge, and Project Uplift and all other minority recruitment programs would be a great service to aspiring, minority UNC students who do not wish to attend a university that is insensitive to their needs and ignorant of their culture. Especially given the fact that there is a legal "mandate" issued by the federal government requiring certain universities to put forth reasonable effort to recruit minority students. With this in mind, it is important that we continue to lobby student congress for a bond referendum, raise private funds and quiet the seemingly ignorant (maybe even racist, ouch!) attacks on the obvious need for a BCC. I think it is a disgrace for the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the flagship university of the UNC system to

deprive its students of the educational and cultural opportunities that a BCC would provide. We should look at U.-Penn., Cal.-Berkeley, Cornell and Purdue as examples.

To address the issue of a multicultural center, what makes anyone think African-American students will be satisfied with a small space in a multi-cultural center when Black students are already dissatisfied with the small space we have in Frank Porter Graham Student Union. It's that simple. African-American students at UNC have been victimized by the lack of understanding of African-American culture. Black Greeks, for instance are continuously harassed by the campus police during their pledge process although they are not engaging in any illegal activities. They are told not to sing, and are asked why they are not permitted to speak to white people, when in fact, pledges do not speak to anyone, black or white. Black Greeks are criticized for the use of alcohol in their pledge process which is not even a part of the process. African American studies is a curriculum when it should be a department. There is a shortage of African-American faculty (Housing, Academic, Administration, etc.). African-American athletes do not participate in activities designed for Afri-

can-American students. Why is this? These are the results of the cumulative effects of a lack of cultural awareness on the part of whites and blacks.

In 1989, Predominantly white schools enrolled 80% of Black college students, but only produce 60% of black college graduates. There is a real problem. Also, according to an August 1990 survey in Black Enterprise magazine, 57.5% of African-American parents prefer that their child go to a black college; 86.8% think black colleges serve a purpose that mostly white schools cannot serve; and 40.3% think it is worse for a African-American student to attend a white college versus a black college. This constitutes a definite public image problem.

If the faculty, administration and students at UNC really support the university, they will see how a BCC could help solve the problems of minority recruitment and retaining of students and faculty, racism in general, public image and lack of cultural awareness. The burden of education rest on the shoulders of the university.

Terrence E. Garrison is a Political Science major with a minor in Afro-American studies from Henderson, NC.

Black Periodicals-- They Do Satisfy A Definite Need

By Teresa Jefferson
Contributor

Ebony, Jet, Essence, Black Enterprise-What is the need for these so-called black magazines? What purpose could any magazine serve that openly caters to one specific race? It could only succeed in damaging already fragile relations between blacks and whites. If whites began publishing such discriminatory chronicles in white America, the black community would be up in arms. Yet it is okay for blacks to wrap themselves in a blanket of indignities and self-righteousness in the pages of these discriminatory periodicals and dare non-blacks to attempt to enter their world.

These are just a few of the false assumptions many people have about black periodicals and their goals. These assumptions prove false to anyone who takes the time to examine any of the past or current black magazines. They satisfy a definite need. The lack of representation in both quality and quantity that black America receives in the mass media produces the increasing demand for specialized periodicals catering to the black community.

Black America finds in these magazines an increasingly well-rounded picture of itself. Not only does it learn of its unpublicized, but important contributions to the world, but it also learns of the many positive aspects of black life. America, as a whole, is asked to realize that the world is not entirely white and that what is nec-

essarily right and accepted by whites may not always be right for blacks.

One of the main intents of black periodicals is to accent the positives of black America. They offer alternatives to the general-market periodicals, which generally ignore the positive aspects of black life. There is a definite need in blacks to see themselves pictured beautifully, to view on the printed page something other than slums, and to learn that at least some black men and women can be successful in this highly competitive world. Black periodicals fill this void with articles as inspiring as the success stories of black businessmen to the rare eye-catching advertisements of attractive, happy, middle-class black families.

Throughout America's history blacks have been portrayed as inferior in all aspects of everyday life. In all facets of American mass media blacks are depicted as drug-pushing, ignorant, lazy welfare recipients. These rigid stereotypes set by the dominant white culture are both demoralizing and demeaning to all blacks. Blacks, especially the children, view these negative images of their race day after day in the headlines and photographs of practically all forms of media. A message that blacks are truly subordinate to their white counterparts is continuously hammered into the hearts and minds of black youth. After years of receiving this subliminal message, this youth begins to believe

see Filling the Void, p. 9

Visit South Africa Chicago, Harlem Broadway and Czechoslovakia

with nationally and internationally known artists

SARAFINAL

(January 22, 1991)

JOSEPH HOLMES CHICAGO DANCE THEATRE

(February 16, 1991)

THE BOYS CHOIR OF HARLEM

(February 9, 1991)

INTO THE WOODS

(March 18, 1991)

FELD BALLETS/NY

(April 12, 1991)

THE SLOVAK CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

(October 14, 1990)

THE WAVERLY CONSORT

(November 30, 1990)

Special bonus show

SISTERS (April 4, 1991)

Season Tickets on sale now

UNC Students save 50%*

(SEE EIGHT GREAT SHOWS FOR LESS THAN \$60!)

Staff/Faculty save 20%*

(With Union Privilege Card)

*Over Prices for individual shows

Tickets for individual shows go on sale September 4

Call the Carolina Union Box Office

962-1449

Visa and MasterCard accepted

1990-1991



PERFORMING ARTS SERIES