

## Nourishment For the Conscious

Hello.

Television is candy for the mind, someone once said. Similarly to idly munching on sweets, watching television is not particularly healthy and it leaves viewers with a false, short-lived feeling of energetic satisfaction. The lifeless 30-minute situation comedies, the movie house presentations that have been sliced, diced and of course, ruined, and the assembly-line one hour dramas spewed out by the tube make it difficult to distinguish between television programming and an open landfill. But wading through the refuse does yield a few quality programs, like CBS's "Northern Exposure," the Fox Network's "In Living Color" and "Roc," and NBC's "Sisters," "Cheers" and "Murphy Brown."

NBC's comedy "A Different World," under the canny guidance of writer/director Debbie Allen, has become one of the most humorous and intrepid shows on the small screen. In previous episodes, Allen and her talented corp of actors and actresses tackled some of the most pressing issues of the day: the Gulf War, interracial dating, AIDS, and safe sex.

Accordingly, the January 16 show confronted racist attitudes. During the episode, college alumni Dwayne Wayne (Kadeem Hardison) and Ron Johnson (Darryl M. Bell) were jailed along with three white students after a rival football game between their respective schools, one historically black and the other traditionally white. When Ron collected on a bet made with the white students before the game, he told them their team might perform better on the gridiron if they "had more brothers on the team." Dwayne rushed onto the set just as one of the students grabbed Ron and another spray-painted the letters "N-I" on the hood of Ron's car. A scuffle ensued and the five men were arrested.

At the cell, a campus police officer tried to get to the bottom of the dispute and ended up guiding his five detainees through a discussion about racist attitudes in the United States. The officer attempted to show that racism can be a two-way street. He addressed the anti-affirmative action opinions held by the white students as well as Ron's earlier statement about the number of blacks on the opposing team, which some (not me, however) could construe as racist.

After their release, Ron and Dwayne reached the car and found that someone had added the crucial letters to the unfinished message. There it was: the word "nigger" written in gold paint, standing in stark relief to the automobile's bright red color. Apparently, some stranger had finished the job. Therein lay the episode's most powerful and thought-provoking message on what it means to be of a darker skin color in America. We know there is always someone willing to finish the job of racism. Always.

One can only hope that more shows will follow the lead of "A Different World," and address the important topics of our times. Allen's show proves that it can be done and that a large viewing audience can be maintained in the meantime. Maybe if we transformed this candy for the mind into food for thought we could effect real change.

God Bless,  
Myron B. Pitts

# Black Ink

"The essence of freedom is understanding"

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# Inside Black Ink

Tuesday, January 21, 1992

## Cover Story

### A DAY IN THE LIFE...

Annie Pettiford rises at 1:30 a.m. every weekday morning. Last night, she did not sleep at all. A Black Ink staffer sees first-hand the working like of A UNC housekeeper. Page 6.

### IT'S TIME FOR BILLY!

Billy Ray Penny, the friendly wise-cracking cook at Time Out on Franklin Street kicks some knowledge about life. Page 3.

### OPINION

•The Media Issues Committee aims the gun at one of our own. Wonderboy takes it on the chin. Page 5.

•What does it mean to be Greek? A member of an African-American fraternity gives his perspective. Page 5.

•Black or white? a.p.p.l.e.s students examine attitudes toward interracial relationships. Page 8.

•We have dropped the baton passed by King and others in the Civil Rights Movement. Page 8.

### THE STONE LEGACY ENDURES

Sonja Stone will live on with our honored ancestors in the collective conscious of those who love her, writes Margo Crawford, director of the Sonja Haynes Stone Black Cultural Center. The late professor of Afro-American studies was and is a Fourth Soul professor. Page 9.

### NEWS

•Blacks take longer to seek medical treatment for heart problems. Page 10.

•The fellows program, designed to build leaders for the future, is seeking applicants. Page 10.

### THE RUNNING MAN

Cross Country and track stand-out Andre Williams is one of the nation's best. Daily training is tough but worth it, he says. Page 11.

### THE LADIES GET THEIR TURN

Wondergirl! That's right, your eyes are not deceiving you. Page 12.

### About the Cover

University housekeepers like Annie Pettiford are more than just women who clean our buildings and dormitories. They are a discontented group, and they plan to make their demands for better treatment and higher wages a public issue. Page 6.

**CORRECTION:** The Nov. 11 article, "New Pageant Brings Black Women to Limelight," contained an error. Blackwell, Mance, and Meaders were pageant coordinators, not sponsors. The Ink regrets the error.

*Black Ink*, founded in 1969, is the weekly newspaper of the Black Student Movement at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. It is published Mondays during the academic year and does not discriminate on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, religion, race, ethnic origin or handicap. All manuscripts, letters, photos, illustrations and other materials submitted are welcome and must be signed. The *Black Ink* office is located in Suite 108-D of the Student Union. Mailing address, CB# 5210 Student Union, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC 27514. Phone, 962-4336. One year subscription in U.S. and possessions \$20.00. Single copy, \$1.00 (Make checks payable to *Black Ink*). Any announcement or advertisement to be printed must be submitted the Wednesday before any publication date. *Black Ink* is published completely by university students on the SCAPEGOAT desktop publishing system and printed by Village Printing Company.