

INTERRACIAL DATING: Do You Agree?

By Leah Irvin

Age is only a number, beauty is only skin deep, and it is what is on the inside that counts, right? Many people claim to agree with all or one of these statements, yet on the UNC-CH campus the sight of a young black male with a white female is cause for eye-rolling and/or some sarcastic comment. Those black males who consistently pursue white females are given "special" nicknames or mocked. But is a contrast in skin tone such a barrier that it is cause for berating or belittling from others?

It seems that within most close groups most of the members are racially alike. At UNC-CH, the ratio of African Americans to Caucasians is so small that it sometimes seems that one mingles with the same familiar faces everyday. Perhaps boredom of familiarity is why the phenomenon of interracial dating occurs on this campus. The young black male walking hand-in-hand with the young white female is always noticeable.

Sharese Pryon said, "On this campus, with so few black males, competition for available black men is fierce, when you take away those lost to white girls it makes our situation much more distressing."

The lack of eligible black males at UNC-CH is dismaying; yet it is not the only negative surrounding interracial dating. It seems as if some of those black males who choose to date outside their race also refuse to date within their race. This attitude is the reason why the disapproval of interracial dating is so prevalent. Carmen Scott, a sophomore, said, "I don't believe interracial dating is wrong. But I would not date someone just because they are one race or not date someone just because they are another," remarks UNC-CH sophomore Carmen Scott. Unfortunately, some males on this campus are notorious for doing just that. Carmen Scott continues, "It's true that every-

one has a preference when it comes to dating; but, when that preference is based on misconceptions or stereotypes then it becomes a problem."

This may be where the greatest controversy with interracial dating lies. Some black males attribute their desire to date outside of their race to the misconception that black females are too demanding or too high maintenance. Or, these men would state that they are only attracted to white females.

So perhaps the feeling expressed by some on this campus is not one of disgust but one of disappointment. It is disappointing that these black males can not find beauty or attraction in a race that is mirrored back to them everyday. It is disappointing that these males do not realize that any perceived extra effort they would need in order to maintain a relationship with a strong, black female would be more than worth it. It is unfortunate that they are missing out on a common bond between their own people; a basis that is unspoken and not understood. When a young black male chooses to date a white female he is forfeiting a connection that cannot be learned or contrived. Perhaps the biggest disappointment is what these men fail to realize: any extra effort perceived necessary for building a relationship with a strong, black female is more than worth it.

It would seem as though the obvious answer to the aforementioned question is the difference between someone's skin tone is not cause for berating or belittling from others. Instead, it is cause for an increased respect and admiration for those males who can appreciate all the extreme benefits of being with an African-American woman.

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