

Why do we need a

BLACK PRESS?

With hundreds of mainstream newspapers on the presses many people wonder if the "black press" is really necessary.



They feel that news is news, regardless of whose mouth it pours from. However, today's news is tomorrow's history, and our elementary and high school history texts have already shown



Harlem Renaissance and the Chicago Defender, mainstream media victimized black Americans. They were poorly represented and inaccurately depicted. Even today, news tends to portray the same "types" of images. We turn on the news and see the black woman wearing a mismatched outfit with curlers in her hair using incorrect English while she gives her eyewitness account of some recent event.



While mainstream media may not purposefully seek out the worst representation of our people, they are obviously not concerned enough about our portrayal to recognize the problem. However, the "black

ESSENCE

us that if we don't get it right today, our children and grandchildren may not get the true story tomorrow.

The Charlotte Post

Back when the "black press" was just a dream, before the

press" has been instrumental in depicting African-Americans as



the respectable, capable and intelligent people that we are.

There are publications that focus on a more accurate depiction of women than those found in magazines like Cosmo, Mademoiselle and Seventeen. Ads in those magazines never phase me because 9 out of 10 of those emaciated models are white, something I can never be or strive for. I cannot see myself in the face of one of those small Calvin Klein models in Vogue, but when I open up Essence, that is beauty that I can identify



with.

If you don't think black media is necessary, watch a couple episodes of ABC Nightly News, and compare representation of blacks in relation to those on "BET News with Tavis Smiley." The makers of FUBU got it right when they created their motto: a little something "for us, by us."

By Akilah Imani Nelson
babyblu27@hotmail.com