

## The Campus Echo

Thursday, Nov. 20, 1997  
 'Excellence without excuse.'  
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 Durham, NC 27707  
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# Hats off to Chancellor for building bridge between races in Durham

Much has been made of "tension" between the races in Durham. From the race for Durham school system superintendent last year to the election of Durham's new chief of police to the citywide elections held last November, race, it seems, has been pivotal in much of Durham's politics.

That's why Chancellor Chambers' town meetings to discuss race couldn't be more timely.

Since last fall, Chancellor Chambers and Duke President Nannerl Keohane have joined forces to form Durham's Committee on Racial Understanding. They and other groups in the Triangle have taken it upon themselves to generate honest and open dialogue about race relations in the Bull City.

In a time when the university's flaws are garnering much attention, Chancellor Chambers' interest in and commitment to bettering race relations in Durham deserves high praise.

The Echo applauds the Chancellor's efforts to better the community, applaud the fact that he takes note of what takes place on and off-campus.

Since we at North Carolina Central University are an integral part of the Durham community, the chancellor's efforts to better Durham can only serve to help the NCCU community.

The town meetings on race are a first step toward breaking down the barriers that exist between people of different races, faiths and cultures in Durham.

In light of that, it seems all the more fitting that the leader of a historically black university is a key player in the effort to bring people in Durham together for honest discussions about race and race relations.

Keep up the good work, chancellor.

### Letter to the editor

## Safety and campus cleanliness priority for first-year student

My main concern is the safety of NCCU students and a respectable campus. Appearance and presentation are very important especially when one's school is involved.

I, a freshman here at NCCU, have observed the uncut bushes, overgrowth and the awful smell of sewer drainage located near the Pearson cafeteria.

When I first arrived in August, the landscape was pleasant and appealing. The bushes located around the James E. Shepard library and the Pearson cafeteria were manicured, and the hedges were trimmed.

But now as the months progress, the scenery has taken a turn for the worse.

The bushes and overgrowth are tall and wide enough to hide a mentally unstable criminal waiting for his or her next victim. There also must be better lighting. In the evening in certain areas visibility is poor due to the lack of good lighting. For example, a student is coming from the library at night. Exits are not well-lit and criminals could be lurking in the shadows. Central has to do everything in its power to make this campus safe for campus for students.

This year it will be time for NCCU's annual evaluation by SACS (The Southern Association of Schools and Colleges). Before SACS arrives, I know that Central will have cleaned up the campus. By the time the gardeners are finished cleaning and planting new shrubbery, this campus will look professional and polished.

A piece of Central's budget should be put aside towards a campus clean-up. I would enjoy helping our campus so that I, along with the other students, can feel safe and proud of the school as a whole instead of the portions which are neat and well-lit.

Courtney A. DeRiggs  
 Freshman

### Write to us

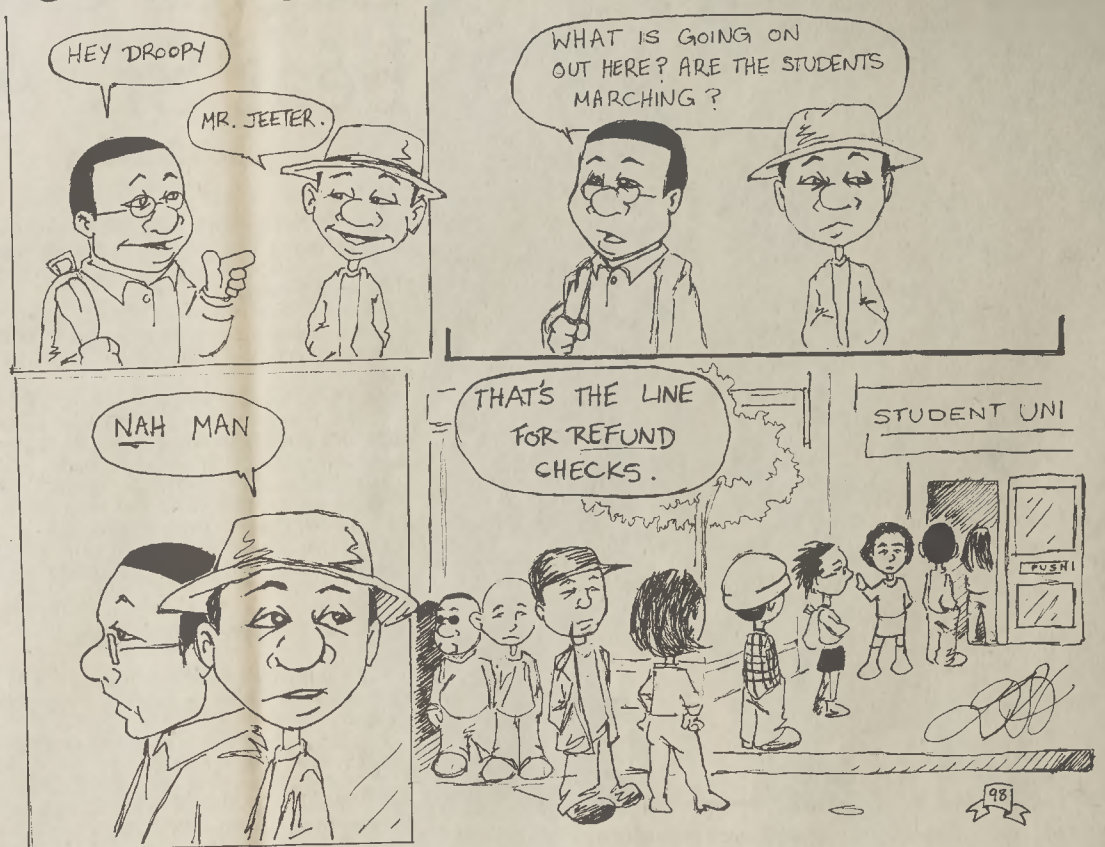
The Campus Echo welcomes letters from the North Carolina Central University community and from friends of the university.

Letters must be no longer than 350 words. We prefer that letters be typewritten or submitted on a Macintosh-formatted diskette with a paper copy. Letters must be signed and include the writer's phone number. Unsigned letters and letters without a phone number will not be published.

The editor reserves the right to edit letters for length, spelling and grammatical errors, libelous material, obscenity and vulgarity. The Echo reserves the right to reject any letter. Names will be withheld upon request if authorship can be confirmed. Submit all correspondence to The Editor, The Campus Echo, 319 Communications Building, North Carolina Central University, Durham, NC 27707.

## Eagle Country

by Dustin Harewood



### My turn: Doug Johnson

## MLK Day: Let's start giving it the honor it deserves

I don't know about you, but I'm tired of the negative stigma that surrounds Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday.

I am not saying that there shouldn't be a holiday, but I do think the day should not have so much media coverage. The media coverage on King's birthday is reminiscent of the sales reports around Christmas time.

The media reports answer all questions about the holiday's events, but are they properly communicating Dr. King's message?

In other words, what does the day really mean? Is it just another day off from work or school where we look at the news on television and say to ourselves, "Oh, I'm sure glad they did something nice for Dr. King this year?"

Or should we take the time to reflect on some of the problems that plagued our society then, plague our society now, and probably in the future?

Martin Luther King lived before my time. Growing up as a fiery, young black man, whenever I thought of the civil rights era, I automatically related to the ideologies of Malcolm X.

In my hasty, brash reasoning, I saw King as someone that was soft. I felt as if he didn't represent the angry folks in the black community.

Images of MLK, marching, singing, and making speeches flooded my psyche, and I thought of him as the antithesis of a soldier.

When I thought of a soldier, I thought of the brother in the constant struggle for the liberation of Black people, and King did not measure up.

In my old opinion, King's birthday was the first school holiday of the year; nothing more and nothing less. I failed to see the significance of his role in the struggle. While I still have the utmost respect for the warrior spirit in Malcolm X, I now realize that King's strategy of non-violent

*'The people of Baton Rouge probably did not reflect much on Dr. King's message after a march there in his honor ended in murder.'*

demonstration was the most effective medium to show the nation and the world the evils of social oppression in the south.

King's organization of boycotts, sit-ins, and marches was a triumphant message, not only to the United States, but to the world, of how peaceful lovers of freedom could stand together bravely against vicious dogs, powerful fire hoses, and evil, brutal police officers.

What was I thinking about? It was easy to go out and commit violence! It was easy to go out and get mad! King, the peaceful warrior, said, "We need to turn the other cheek."

If it wasn't for King getting arrested, assaulted, bitten, dehumanized, and just plain violated so that his people could have the same rights as whites, where would black people be? I have come to realize that Dr. King is an elder in the Black community to be respected by all!

This is why I get upset with all the nonsense that occurs on King's birthday. I understand that in Baton Rouge, La., there was a fatal shooting during their King Day march.

The people of Baton Rouge probably did not reflect much on Dr. King's message after a march there in his honor ended in murder.

How could two black men let a personal

argument escalate into homicide during the non-violent icon's day of remembrance?

In Phoenix, Arizona, a 16-year-old youth accidentally shot himself at a community celebration in honor of the slain civil rights leader.

Now, this incident was not intentional and he did not harm anyone but himself. But, can anyone tell me why he would need a gun at an MLK party?

Due to King's spiritual convictions and social accomplishments, January 19, 1998 was, perhaps, the day out of the year where people could have tried to be the most peaceful.

Instead the day ended with senseless violence! What is this world coming to?

For King Day '98, I decided that I would attend the march that was held in downtown Raleigh. I expected the march to be a spiritual gathering of the people in Raleigh grateful to Dr. King. When I heard that the forecast predicted snow for that morning, I began to feel that the weather would weed out all of the individuals that were less serious about paying homage to Dr. King.

After all, who else would waste their precious time in inclement weather other than hopefuls for victory over gender, class, and racial oppression?

Greek fraternities and sororities were amongst those in attendance (which was fitting; I understand King was a member of Alpha Phi Alpha).

But instead of focusing intently on the man of the day, it seemed as if the time represented a day of networking for some members of their respective organization.

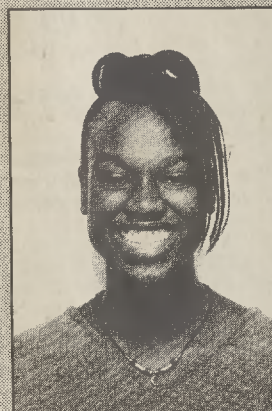
I think many of us need to reconsider our reasons for coming to these events. If you can't grasp the true meaning the occasion, maybe you should stay home!

## SOUND-OFF: How should NCCU observe Black History Month?



"I don't think Black History Month should be a month--we should be doing something all year round."

**Tracie Richardson**  
 Junior  
 Nashville, N.C.



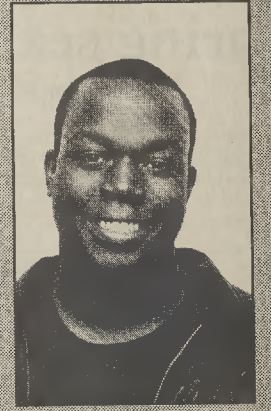
"There should be a class that covers all areas of black history--we could learn about George W. Carver and people we don't know anything about."

**Curlyn Smith**  
 Sophomore  
 Washington, D.C.



"A candlelight vigil is nice but it should be something innovative, something we're interested in--a concert or some kind of sporting event promoting unity."

**Matthew Forney**  
 Senior  
 Charlotte



"We should have a program to honor the achievements of blacks throughout history, maybe a musical tribute to black history month."

**Clifton Gray**  
 Sophomore  
 Washington, N.C.

## The Campus Echo Wants You!

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- Reporters
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- Ad sales representatives

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