

Challenge '65 Provokes Deep Thinking in Debates, Lectures, Movie

By ANNE POOLE

If a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich.

John F. Kennedy
Inaugural Address
January 20, 1961

To begin with, this article is full of comments not of my own making but of the thrust of the key speakers at the Challenge '65 at Wake Forest College held March 11-13. In order to present some of the most controversial points, it is necessary to be selective; consequently, this report is one which focuses primarily upon the ideas from the lectures.

Dr. Harold Rhodes, a professor of political science at Wake Forest College, introduced the panel Thursday night. In a cursive historical study he went to the religious equality of Roger Williams followed by the political equality of Thomas Jefferson ("all men are created equal."). When Henry George asked, "Doesn't mankind have equal rights to the natural gifts of life?" Woodrow Wilson answered, "No, mankind must be able and willing to work. We may have an equal start, but we must let natural endeavors proceed. The United States, according to Rhodes, has emphasized equality since its early foundation. He posed this question: How may our dream of equality become a reality? The panel then sought to focus upon sociological factors, communication's role, academic processes, and law enforcement's value.

Barriers to Equality

Dr. Thomas Pettigrew, presently serving as an associate professor of the Social Psychology Department

of Social Relations, Harvard University, illustrated three structural barriers to equality in the social milieu of the United States. First, landlords who do not repair property are exempted from property tax laws more than those landlords who do repair property. Second, the army provides extra educational programs for candidates who are most likely to succeed. Pettigrew suggests an educational program for those *least* likely to succeed in order to help them to improve. Third, the veiled social barrier of the minimum wage legislation hinders equality. The minimum wage legislation does not cover service workers, such as waitresses.

Newspaper's Role

C. A. McKnight, editor in chief of the *Charlotte Observer*, made several observations about the newspaper's role in the emerging Negro's equality. In 1955 he observed two things about the newspaper medium: 1. The new story was usually bigger than the article showed. 2. The minimum coverage was usually unbalanced and distorted. Later he observed the following: 1. Editors failed to grasp the essence of the Brown Decision. 2. Few newspapers developed competent men to cover the stories. 3. Editors feared the reader's reaction. His conclusion was, "Prejudice is the result of ignorance and fear. It won't stand long against the facts."

"The trend of newspaper communication is more toward the unhappy fact that newsmen and cameramen are becoming participants," so McKnight stated. In a fiery eloquence he challenged the group to "understand better why so many people are poorly equipped to compete in society."

Academic Role

Dr. Daisy Balsey, chairman of the English Department of Winston-Salem State College, focused her attention upon the academic role in equality. Usually standard tests are the means to obtain an academic profile of an individual. In studies of the correlation of the whites and Negroes taking standardized tests, the picture shows a sizable gap. Her questions prick: How can we close the gap?

Why does the gap exist in the first place? Her answer pointed to the "quality of experience" as the key "that defines the man," not the "condition of hair or color of skin." She said that "any psychologist will tell you that the brain is the same grayish matter in all races."

Negro and Employment

Dr. George S. Pfaus, New Jersey State Director of the U. S. Employment Service, discussed the complaints he receives in the employment service. In the past, the complaints focused primarily upon employment and public accommodation; however, the complaints of '65 focus primarily upon housing. "What does this imply?" he asks.

Two observations were made by Dr. Pfaus. First, the Negro as a member of the minority group in New Jersey now has a job "which enables him and his family to seek better housing." Second, the "psychological change in the individual attitude shows he desires the kind of housing that his increased earnings have made possible."

Negro in Mississippi

Part of the highlight of Thursday evening appeared as Hodding Carter III, editor of the *Democratic Times*, spoke of Mississippi and the emerging Negro there. He emphasized the following:

1. The Civil Rights Bill has had its effect in Mississippi.
2. The victory of Lyndon Johnson told Mississippi the United States' attitude. Some 61 per cent of the nation voted for Johnson while 87 per cent of Mississippian votes were for Goldwater.
3. There are fewer economic forces now in Mississippi. Carter, however, in contrast to favorable development in Mississippi, illustrated some alarming concerns in Mississippian development:
 1. A Freedom School was burned to the ground.
 2. There are some 42 per cent Negro population in Mississippi but only 5 per cent of the Negroes are voting.
 3. There is a rising Klu Klux Klan which is violent and dangerous.
 4. The White Citizens Council, known as the "responsible racists," are applying economic pressure.

Civil Rights Bill

The concluding lecture of Thursday evening was led by the witty Ned Kenworthy, Washington correspondent for the *New York Times*. His dramatic discussion of the Civil Rights Bill included such ditties as follows:

1. Mrs. Humphrey to husband before he begins to speak, "Now remember, Daddy, the speech doesn't have to be eternal to be immortal."
2. Senator Dierkson to his secretary: "Every day this office is filled with preachers, rabbis, priests."
3. Judge Howard Smith spoke of the Civil Rights Bill as "this nefarious bill."
4. Dierkson to Senate regarding the Civil Rights Bill: "They are remarking America and you won't like it."
5. Hubert Humphrey said of Dierkson when Dierkson supported the Civil Rights Bill, "He got religion."

6. Kenworthy ended his address in his usual poetic way. He spoke of the time in history when it may be that "justice rolls down like water and righteousness becomes a mighty stream."

Negro and Ghetto

The Friday morning session opened with Dr. Thomas Pettigrew speaking on "The Negro and the Ghetto." His description of the Negro ghetto included such qualities as under employment, lower I.Q.s, lower incomes, and inferior schools. In describing the plight of the Negro ghetto, Pettigrew included educational problems, social psychological problems, and economic problems. The educational problems focus upon the disadvantages of the unbalanced schools. "The value of public education is to achieve the dream of equality," said Dr. Pettigrew. Ever since the Gary, Indiana, and Kansas City, Missouri, District Court ruling supporting the local school boards' apathy toward public integration, the American dream of equality has not been realistic in education, so Dr. Pettigrew stated. Dr. Pettigrew also mentioned three social psychological considerations:

1. Negroes need to be taught in a kind of society in which we expect them to later be performing.
2. The standards of the Negro schools do not meet the standards of the white schools; consequently, the Negro faces a dilemma in higher education.
3. The double voice of society splits the Negro's intention. He hears on one hand, "Work hard to be a success" and on the other hand, "Know your place."

Pettigrew also elaborated upon the higher process of creativity in education. He emphasized the importance of "openness to experience" of "recognition of personal differences," of "willingness to be obedient," and of the "desire for diversity." His point was this: Segregated schools are not good psychologically. Being separate denotes inequality.

Following Pettigrew, Nat Hentoff, an expert on jazz, spoke of some of the stereotypes of Negro ghettos. His focus was upon New York. The following facts may be of interest:

1. Of the 290,000 Negro families in New York, 27 per cent earn less than \$3,000 a year and 70 per cent earn less than \$6,000 a year.
2. The stereotype idea of "no hope" in the Ghetto is wrong. The Negroes are not a wasteland of people, but a people with a subculture — love of jazz, blues, rhythms, humor.
3. Some \$300,000 is being spent in Harlem to make over one street while only whites are given the jobs on this construction project. Of course, there is a bad school on the corner.

Hentoff sees the solution to the ghetto dilemma in the Negro vote. He recommends "black" political blocks to break the ghetto." On the immediate scene some ten cities have "community unions" in which people meet and seek to solve immediate needs and concerns.

One problem which faces people is seen in Hentoff's statement: "If people are comfortable, they don't feel what poor people feel."

Unemployment

Friday afternoon's session presented statistics on unemployment. Mr. Hobart Taylor, Jr., a member on the President's Committee on Equal Employment Opportunities, introduced the following question: Since automation has increased demands for skills and decreased jobs available and since the labor force has increased, what are we going to do with the increasing labor force when technology calls for less jobs?

Mr. R. A. Whitehorne, the I.B.M.'s representative to the National Urban League, presented a different twist to the assumed "automation dilemma." He said that "literally thousands of jobs have been created from computers." He said that "most people who go into the computer field are college graduates." The job market is expanding, but the requirements are also expanding. Traditionally few Negroes are entering the hard sciences — physics, engineering, mathematics.

Whitehorne concluded his address by describing the function of the computer. "The computer is the tool of man. It may do a job fast, but as a tool it is a follower, not a leader. With the computer we are able to attack jobs we were not able to attack before."

"A Raisin in the Sun"

The session closed Saturday night with the movie, "A Raisin in the Sun." Such comments as the following occurred in the movie:

"Don't believe this little plant gets more than a speck of sunlight all day."

"Say after me — In my mother's house there is still God."

"One for whom food is not enough."

"I see stars I can't reach out and get."

MARS HILL CONFERENCE

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Miss Carolyn Barrington, Mrs. Carolyn Happer, Dr. T. C. Parramore, and Dr. Frank Grubbs from the history department; and Dr. Leslie Syron and Mr. Vergean Birkin from the sociology department.

Several papers were read at the conference, including "The Relationship of Geography to Ancient Egyptian Art" by Dr. Lemmon and "An Evaluation of Samuel Gompers as a War-Time Labor Leader" by Dr. Grubbs. Dr. Lemmon was also the chairman of a panel titled "The Freshman Survey Course: Problems and Suggestions for Improvements."

KAPPA SIGMA NU

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On several occasions, Dr. Riley has served the U. S. Government. She was a member of the Commission of Government Security which was authorized by the 61st Congress to prepare a survey of security practices in this country. She also served on a Civil Defense Advisory Committee.

Dr. Riley is a member of the College English Association, Kappa Delta Pi, a national education honor society, the National Council of Teachers of English, the Tennessee Folklore Society, and the South Atlantic Modern Language Association. The following statement about her chosen profession reveals something of the sensitive personality of this distinguished educator: "Teaching provides a way in which one's own personality might continue to live, even in the half-recollection of the student. This provides the teacher with an escape from the obliteration that comes for many with death."

On a more personal note, Dr. Riley's hobbies include keeping house, cooking, and music. She has studied voice, and she has sung in several amateur choral productions in Nashville.

At the Kappa Nu Sigma program, Dr. Riley will present a lecture entitled "The Paradoxical Education of Aphrodite, Ceres, and Minerva." During the program, the old members of Kappa Nu Sigma will tap new associate members from the junior class and recognize the sophomores with the highest scholastic averages.

Book Auction Is Successful



Who'll give me 25¢
Who'll raise it?
Who'll give me 50¢

These were familiar calls last week at the English Club book auction. Chief auctioneer, Dean Peacock, opened the event with such books as *Rabbit Run* and *O Ye Jigs and Juleps*. A copy of Dante's *Divine Comedy* had an added attraction—Dr. Rose's sophomore notes on the first page. Later in the evening, English Club members assisted in auctioning the books.

The book auction is the only profit-making project of the club.

Profits go to the sponsorship of Suthi Joseph, a boy in India. Receipts this year totaled \$63.

Present at the auction was Dorothy Merritt, originator of the book auction.



Meredith girls find that the auction is an entertaining experience and an inexpensive way to build a personal library.