

THE BLACK EXTENDED FAMILY Elmer P. Martin and Joanne Mitchell Martin

In spite of slavery and its effects, black families have existed, survived and endured for centuries. The separation of husbands, wives and children only caused black families to strengthen rather than disintegrate. The general accepted attitude is that poverty, disorganization and crime are prevalent among blacks, but these are not conditions peculiar to the Afro-American culture. These are parts of the total American culture. These are not conditions caused by weaknesses of the black family, but are caused by weaknesses in American society and government.

The fact that blacks are strong survivors is evidenced by their continued ability to struggle in spite of poverty, unemployment and lack of education. After the freed slaves failed to receive the "forty acres and mule" they had been promised, they pulled themselves up and set forth to succeed as best they could. Separated families traveled hundreds of miles in an effort to reunite. Ties had been formed during their bondage and were not easily broken. Brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, husbands, wives relied on one another for strength. They unflinchingly gave assistance when and where needed. Thus the extended family emerged. (It actually began in Africa where family life was organized around elaborate kinship ties and a strong sense of community.)

The Black Extended Family by Elmer P. and Joanne Mitchell Martin diligently describes the black extended family, its strengths, weaknesses, functions, goals and capabilities for survival. There is usually a strong dominant family member who acts as the leader and provides a home base for other family members. This is generally a mother or father but is sometimes a brother, sister, aunt or uncle. When other family members need a home, financial assistance or simply moral support, they know they can turn to this dominant figure. The authors found that these individuals expended much energy in "keepingthe family together," "making it," "getting by," and "getting over."

Black extended families have traditionally existed in about moving," said rural areas. Urban migration, middle class status and a Laverne Carruthers, "but the most lavish makeover of selfish desire to succeed have created problems with the after I thought about it, I any room in the apartment, sustenance of extended families causing them to couldn't afford to move, so with walls painted deteriorate. Consequently, many blacks talk about "go- I decided to make this like cathodale blue, the addition ing back home" and unless they regain their sense of God, sense of family, sense of community, sense of struggle; and sense of identity, the core of their existence---the extended family---will cease to be.

Readers can appreciate the positive theme of this book. It reveals the struggles and strengths of Afro-American society and illustrates survival techniques for this darker race. It tears down many of the stereotypes assigned to the black family. Many of us who are urban creatures under the age of forty cannot identify with the extended family as depicted by the Martins, but perhaps we can evaluate our family situations, identify our values and perhaps re-define our goals thus salvaging and rebuilding the remains of black America, its culture and

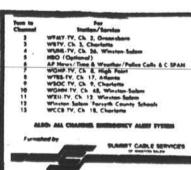
Mrs. Brice Honored at Recent Reunion

Winston-Salem was guest Self Reliance in 1978. Now a of honor when the 1963 minister, she preached her the yellow out into the hall, true. graduating class of R.L. trial sermon last year and Norris High School in was ordained last April. Thompson, Ga., held its reunion July 5-6.

Mrs. Brice was a former teacher and advisor to the

A former teacher at Anderson Senior High School, Mrs. Brice retired as director of senior citizens activi-

Mrs. Mary P. Brice of ties for the Experiment in









Mrs. Laverne Carruthers and daughter Tonya view their redecorated apartment.

Mother, Daughter Turn Apartment Into a Home

By David Puryear Staff Writer

They even redecorated the fish tank.

That's how complete a change the Carruthers family made as they painted, carpeted and furnished their apartment at 2767 Piedmont Circle. The apartments are owned by the Housing Authority of Winston-Salem but as far as the Carruthers are concerned, it's their own home,

"I had really thought do it myself." my home."

With the help of her 15-year-old daughter, Tonya, Ms. Carruthers redecorated her bathroom, hall, living room and kitchen over a period of about 21/2 months. Tonya was an enthusiastic assistant.

"I started on the didn't have." bathroom one day while my mother was asleep," said Tonya. "When she woke to work with her favorite up, I had finished it. I like color, green. Once again, surprising people."

Her "surprise" was a lively floral wall covering, creating a bright yellow, green and peach color scheme in the bath, accented with mirror tiles.

where they repainted the walls and woodwork and do it," said Ms. Carruthers. added a landscape painting.

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6 00 CHINA SYNDROME

It was in the hall that family, Leola, Cynthia and Laverne Carruthers learned Tawanna, also pitched in how to lay carpet.

on the project from time to

"I think it shows your

children to work together.

nothing."

"I had a man put down time as did a neighbor, the carpet in the hall," she Lessie Williams, who prosaid. "I watched him. I saw vided company to Ms. Carthat when he came to a ruthers during the long days doorway, he had to stretch of work. it farther."

So, when she found a parents care," said Tonya bright blue remnant large of her mother's family proenough for her living room, ject. "Some parents just go Laverne decided to do it on and leave their kids like herself.

"I took out a butcher "It was an exciting proknife and started cutting," ject for her and I," said Ms. she said. "If I see Carruthers. "I think it's something done twice, I can nice for parents and

The living room received of a wall to wall wraparound bright blue velvet sofa, a wet bar, twowalls of mirror tiles, and fish net hung from the ceil-

"My favorite color is blue," said Ms. Carruthers. "We wanted something odd, that other people

When it came to the kitchen, Tonya had her chance they used a combination of wall paper and paint, with contrasting trim on wood surfaces, to give the kitchen a sunny, open atmosphere.

Tonya now has visions of a career in interior decorating, dreams which The Carruthers carried her mother hopes will come

> "I'm going to push her to The other members of the

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12:00 WHODUNIT?

8 00 VOICES

0 00 JAWS 2

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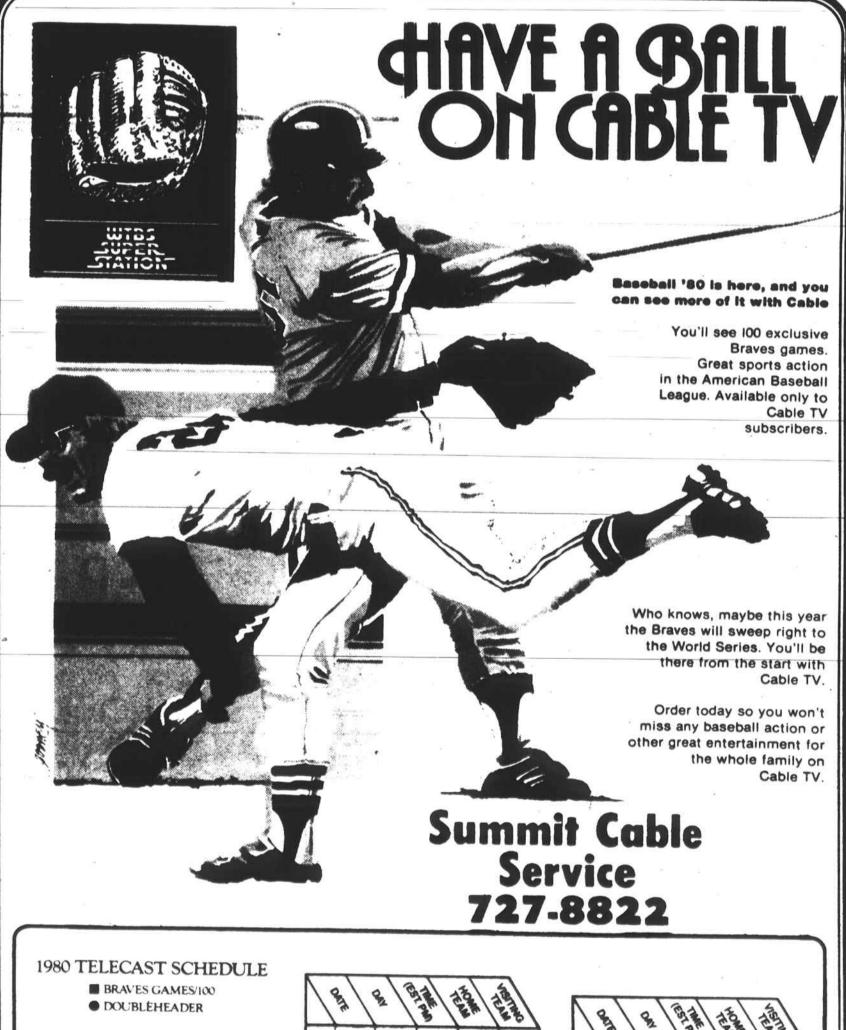


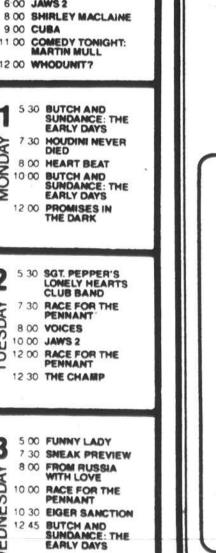
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