

Happiness Through Health

Black Neurosurgeons Urge Limited Use Of Operation

by Otto McClarrin
Special to the Post

BLACK NEUROSURGEONS URGE LIMITED USE OF OPERATION: Behavior-altering brain surgery should be permitted on violent or disturbed mental patients when nothing else will help, two prominent black neurosurgeons said recently. Such operations, called psychosurgery, have been under attack in recent years by blacks and other groups as a potential weapon, according to critics, to murder the minds of minorities.

Dr. Jesse Barber, chief of neurosurgery at Howard University Hospital, estimated that 500 to 600 psychosurgery operations are quietly performed each year in the United States. Speaking along with Dr. Barber at a National Minority Conference on Human Experimentation held recently in Reston, Va. Dr. Ernest A. Bates, also a neurosurgeon, called for government controls or guidelines for performing psychosurgical operations which are the more sophisticated successors of lobotomies performed in the 1940's and 1950's.

Bates, assistant clinical professor at the University of California in San Francisco,

co, said psychosurgery is done without adequate consideration or follow-up by most of the surgeons performing it. Nevertheless, he said, "it is not possible for me to give a blanket condemnation of all psychosurgery."

I and other physicians have seen those who are under such great personal distress that they would prefer psychosurgery if all other methods (of treatment) have been given an adequate trial (and failed)." Bates added that such operations should not be done on persons under 21 or on prisoners.

Dr. Barber acknowledged that there have been good reasons for disadvantaged groups to fear operations that affect their brains. But he said that black opposition is "unfair to black patients," and "has prevented neurosurgeons and psychiatrists from developing knowledge and techniques." Both Barber and Bates said there is no evidence that the operation is performed on blacks to any greater extent than on whites.

In fact, Barber said, "it is not done on blacks," partly because of black opposition, partly because government officials will not finance it for

welfare patients. "And poor blacks don't have money to pay for it," he said. Barber said a common charge is \$1,000.

BLACK MALES DEVELOPING MORE CANCER THAN WHITES: Black males are developing more cancers than whites and their survival rates are poorer, according to a new analysis of cancer statistics. The figures showed that the cancer rates for black males jumped 36 percent between 1947 and 1969 while the rates of cancer developing in white males increased 6.7 percent in the same period. Cancer in women in both races dropped by 13 to 15 percent.

The report, published in a Journal of the American Cancer Society, said the rise in cancer incidence rates in black males was largely due to increases in cancers of the lung, colon-rectum, prostate and esophagus.

Herbert Seidman, chief of Statistical Analysis for the Cancer Society, said part of the reason black males have been developing more cancers probably can be attributed to exposure to extra environmental factors. Also apparent, the report said, is that cancer is diagnosed earlier in

whites than in blacks. Early diagnosis and treatment increases survival rates. The overall five-year survival rate was 31 percent for white males and 21 percent for black males. In women, the survival rate for all cancers was 47 percent in white and 37 percent in blacks.

The statistics showed that

cancer rates in black males were lower in 1947 than in whites, with 282 cases per 100,000 in white males and 248 cases per 100,000 in black males. In 1969, 301 cancer cases were being reported in the same population size for white males and 337 for black males. (NNPA)

Miss Steele Named

"Teacher Of The Month"

A Charlotte native has been named the "1976 February Teacher of the month" in the Greenville S.C. County School System.

Miss Gertrude Steele, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Steel, received the honor recently. She is in her third year at Berea High School in Greenville, S.C. where she is one of the counselors of the Junior class, representative for SCEA, and sponsor and founder of B.A.C.T. (Berea Action Club for Togetherness).

The oldest daughter among Steele family, Miss Steele is a 1969 graduate of West Charlotte High School who graduated from Winston-Salem State University in 1973. She currently is working towards her M.A. degree at Clemson University. She is an English major.



Miss Gertrude Steele...An English major



Harvey Gantt
...Able Politician

City Councilman

Harvey Gantt Never Set His Sights On Being A Politician

As the only black member of the seven-man Charlotte City Council, Harvey B. Gantt is a pioneer.

But, if you ask him, he will tell you that he never set his sights on being a politician. He has wanted to be an architect and he is one...a good one.

"I always thought the closest I'd ever get to government would be as an advisor for city planning," Gantt said in a recent interview. He has a wide, far-reaching background in architectural planning in Charlotte and throughout the state.

The 33-year-old architect is a rising star on the political scene in Charlotte and his presence on city council is being felt.

Blacks comprise about 22 percent of the city's 300 thousand population and Gantt feels that he may be the lone black representative for sometime because council members are elected at-large. He favors district elections, but believes his fellow six council members do not support such a move.

Gantt said there is a move underway to consolidate the

city and county governments. He said a vote on this question is expected in 18 months.

The black councilman is doubtful that such a plan would win his support without a provision for a new election. By virtue of the public office he holds, Gantt represents a large segment of Charlotte's blacks community, but, he does not presume to speak for all blacks.

"There is no one monolithic group of black leaders. I personally think that is dangerous," Gantt said. He added that many blacks in the city have followings in many different areas.

"Everybody's doing his own thing, but not together," Gantt said.

"I don't think we've ever had very strong black leadership in Charlotte. We've never had a crisis behind which we coalesced," he said. "We've always had moderate leadership," he added.

Gantt acknowledged that his victory in the city election was due to a coming together of many black groups. However, he said since the election, black political power has not been significantly felt in Charlotte.

If Gantt sounds like a daring pioneer, it's only because he is one.

As a youngster in 1960's he braved hostilities and resistance of state and local school officials to break the color barrier at formerly all-white Clemson University to become its first black student. He finished with honors.

As an architect, Gantt has worked as a partner in two firms before his own in 1971. He also has worked as a staff consultant for the Boston Model Cities program and Urban Development Program. He directed some planning activities for Soul City and he is a visiting Urban Design critic for the College of Architecture at Clemson.

Gantt is a member of the Board of Trustees at Friendship Baptist Church. He is married and the father of two children.

Hazel Ellis To Serve With Recreation Board

Hazel Ellis, a 21 year postal service employee and Station Manager of University Park Post Office, has been appointed to serve on the Mecklenburg County Recreation Board.

Ellis, of 1813 Trentwood Place, is expected to confirm his appointment by the County Commission soon. He was notified in a letter mailed to him on Monday, February 2, according to a spokesperson in the County Manager's office.

The new appointee is pleased about the offer. He will serve a three year term as one of nine board members.

Other blacks who have served on the board include Jack Brayboy and Joe Harper III.

Ellis indicated that he is not fully knowledgeable about his



Hazel Ellis
...University Park manager duties with the board and is not yet ready to set goals he expects to achieve during his term.

He is married to Dorothy M. Ellis and they have two sons, Eric and Scott.

Hearing Set For Third Ward

The Charlotte City Council has scheduled a public hearing for 3 p.m., Monday, March 1 in the Council Chamber at City Hall, 600 East Trade Street. The Purpose of the Hearing is to give citizens an opportunity to review and comment on the Community Development and Redevelopment Plans for the Third Ward Community Development Target Area.

Persons wishing to speak at the hearing should contact the

City Clerk at City Hall or call 374-2247 no later than noon March 1. Copies of the plans are available for public inspection at the office of the City Manager and the Community Development Department, Cameron-Brown Building, 301 South McDowell Street.

Charlotte is scheduled to receive approximately \$10.051 million in second year Community Development funds for physical and social improvements in nine target areas including First Ward, Grier Heights, North Charlotte, Cherry, Third Ward, West Morehead, Southside Park, West Boulevard and Five Points.

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