

THE HOT BOOKS

Kunjufu Examines Peer Group

By M.L.LaNey
Post Entertainment Editor
A new book by Jawanza Kunjufu is sure to turn more than a few heads as it makes its way into the public consciousness.

"TO BE POPULAR: THE BLACK PEER GROUP" is a very informative volume for students, parents and teachers alike.

Why do some youth associate being smart and white together? What does blackness mean anyhow? How can a degree of competence be instilled in the area of black academic achievement? These and other questions Kunjufu has brought to his forum of study. His view of the black peer group as a formidable obstacle in the search for answers to community problems is very specific.

He sees that choices are made based more on what youthful appreciations are about rather than clear mature viewpoints.

His questions brings clarity to the problems of poor achievement, violence in the schools and related problems.

Kunjufu does not feel that integration has done its part to



Jawanza Kunjufu

bridge the gap between white and black students.

The author has found, through his research, that young people have made a conscious decision that being smart is being white. By contrast, being black is, supposedly, being cool.

Community attitudes help foster an attitude that encourages these beliefs. Attitudes like low expectations, ongoing stereotyping and the ever present American racial bias that afflicts blacks.

Kunjufu presents the various elements of this puzzle and sorts out the essentials.

He concludes with some revelations about what works and what might.

His previous books include "THE CONSPIRACY TO DESTROY BLACK BOYS," VOLUMES I AND II. This work shows his continued interests in the troubles of today's black communities.

Reading through his findings is not the solution in itself. There are many aspects of the problem studied that most be examined even closer in order that effective measures be taken to undo the harm done.

TO BE POPULAR OR SMART: THE BLACK PEER GROUP is published by African American Images of Chicago Illinois.

N.C. Writers' Network To Meet

Members of the nation's largest statewide organization of writers will gather November 11-13 in Greensboro for the fall conference of the North Carolina Writers' Network (NCWN).

The three-day meeting at the Greensboro Sheraton Inn will include a keynote address by book critic Jonathan Yardley, winner of the 1981 Pulitzer Prize for distinguished criticism.

Yardley, a columnist for The Washington Post, is among 24 writers and editors on the fall conference program.

Other scheduled participants include poet Fred Chappell, professor of English at UNC-Greensboro; novelist Ellen Douglas, distinguished author of seven novels and writer-in-residence at the University of

Mississippi; North Carolina writer Jerry Bledsoe, author of *Bitter Blood*; Margaret Jane Oman, editor of *USAIR Magazine*; Jane Bernstein, a member of the editorial staff of *The New Yorker Magazine*.

Debra Kaufman, a Durham poet and NCWN president, said this year's conference offers a full slate of programs for poets and fiction and nonfiction writers alike.

"Anyone who likes to write, or who wants to learn to write better, will find a friendly welcome in this fellowship of writers," Ms. Kaufman said.

The \$95 conference fee (\$85 for NCWN members) includes three days of workshops, writing clinics, readings, meals and social activities, including Florida

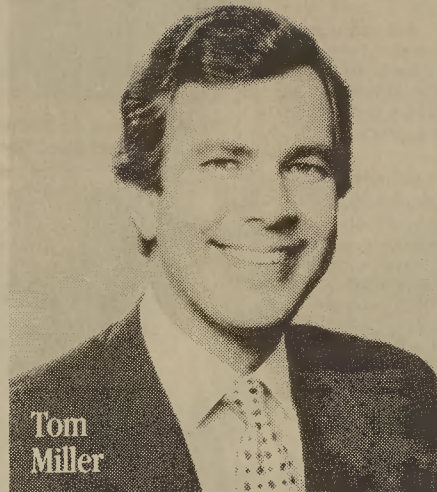
playwright Terry Galloway's solo performance of her play, "Out All Night and Lost My Shoes."

Detailed information on conference programs can be obtained by writing the North Carolina writer's Network, PO Box 954, Carrboro, NC 27510, or by calling 919-967-9540.

NCWN has more than 800 members in North Carolina, making it the largest statewide organization of fiction and non-fiction writers in the U.S.

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