

4-1-1992

## The Black Perspective April 1992

University of Dayton. Black Action Through Unity

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University of Dayton. Black Action Through Unity, "The Black Perspective April 1992" (1992). *The Black Perspective*. 15.  
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# Black Perspective

The University of Dayton

Minority Student Affairs

April 1992

## RAPPERS ON THE SILVER SCREEN

by Valerie Colbert

Rap music has elevated to a new level in the last two years. Increasingly rap songs are dominating not only the rap charts, but the soul and pop charts as well. The popularity of rap music has enabled many rappers to receive starring roles in feature films and television shows.

Will Smith, rapper for DJ Jazzy Jeff and the Fresh Prince, has the starring role in his NBC sitcom, *The Fresh Prince of Bel Air*. Smith's deejay, Jazzy Jeff, has made several guest appearances on the show as Will's friend Jazz.

The rap duo Kid N' Play have had huge box office success with their debut film *House Party* and its sequel *House Party II*. Kid N' Play's hit movies spawned a Saturday morning cartoon and there is talk of the duo starring in their own television show.

John Singleton's *Boyz n the Hood*, a critically acclaimed film about three friends growing up in South Central Los Angeles, starred controversial rapper Ice Cube. His acting debut was praised by the critics. Ice Cube's role as DoughBoy, however, was not a big stretch for the rapper who grew up on South Central, witnessing first hand the violence that occurred daily on its streets.

*New Jack City* featured the acting debut of west coast rapper Ice-T. Ice-T, who has verbally criticized the police in his raps, played undercover cop Scotty Appleton in the film. Appleton's mission was to bring down drug kingpin Nino Brown. His performance in *New Jack City* led to several movie offers. One of the scripts was for the film *Ricochet*. In this movie Ice-T plays a drug dealer who helps Denzel Washington's character get revenge on an escaped criminal. The most recent rap artist to be featured on the big screen is 2 Pac of the rap group Digital Underground. 2 Pac plays Bishop in the hit movie *Juice*. 2 Pac's character goes on a killing spree in the film in an attempt to gain the respect of his street peers.

Although the movie roles for rappers have mainly been dominated by men, one female rapper is making a name for herself on the silver screen. Queen Latifah has starred in three feature films. She played a sassy waitress

in *Jungle Fever*, a self-assured college student in *House Party II*, and a record producer in *Juice*. Queen Latifah has also starred in an episode of *The Fresh Prince of Bel Air*. Because of her success at the box office, there is talk of Queen Latifah starring in her own television show along with rapper Monie Love.

The success and visibility of rappers in feature films has undoubtedly emerged from the increase in African-American movies. Most of these films portray the grim realities of life in Black urban areas. Rap music provides the perfect backdrop for these movies because the same issues are addressed in both music and the films.



## SHOULD WHITES ADOPT BLACK CHILDREN?

by Bernadette Harawa

Statistics today show that a higher percentage of black children in this country need adoptive parents than white children. This means that many of these children may go through life never knowing what it is like to

be a part of a real, loving family. Giving this need, should white parents wanting to provide a black child with this type of situation be allowed? When it comes to white adopting black children, a lot more is involved than just statistics.

The potential adopters must be able to provide the child with an appreciation of who he is in order for him to develop a healthy self-identity. They can do this by giving him

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## POSITIVE IDEAS THAT BENEFIT ALL CULTURES

by Adrian L. Morgan

For those of you who read the *Flyer News* on a consistent basis and for those of you who may be reading *Black Perspective* for the first time I would like to address the issue of what can and should be done by those who aren't black to help make themselves more culturally aware and eliminate their ignorance and acts which perpetuate and or illustrate this ignorance. At the same time I also hope to respond to Miss Greismar's letter to the editor which was written in response to mine in the *Flyer News*.

To begin with I am addressing Ms. Greismar in *Black Perspective* to avoid any further creative editing by the *Flyer News* which we were both victims of, and to guarantee printing as the campus paper has a number of space concerns which we do not.

In essence, Ms. Greismar has asked what can white people do to help the cause? She says this is the message she expected to hear from Haki Madhubuti's February 3 presentation here at UD and was disappointed that it was not his focal topic. In answer to her question I present the following and address it to all brave enough to read it.

Probably the most important and easiest act that if taken by every person would put us a great step forward towards world brother hood is acceptance. The ability to accept every person as an individual while taking into account, their ethnic, racial, social, educational and economic background is one of the most valuable skills in our multicultural society of today.

If you are not black and reading this newspaper then you are on the right track. Education is the key to the progress of any society, even for a society within a society. It is important to become conscious and aware of what the facts are and not always accept the established opinion. Let the education come from more than one source and allow for comparative analysis. After all what you see is not only a matter of what you choose to look at but also relies upon what others choose to show you.

Education also consists of experience. It is important to listen and watch programs that are in the African-American tradition in order to increase one's understanding of the African-American culture. There probably is no better way to show your support than your appearance at a function which is African-American oriented.

Most importantly education must go hand in hand with discussion. Talk to your friends and maybe those who aren't your friends of both races about race issues. Open yourself to the opportunity of being a student as well as a teacher and be ready for a personal change of opinion or two. What may at first resemble inner confusion is probably progress towards consciousness.

After education comes action. As mentioned before, attendance at black events is highly encouraged. As is support for protests of what is apparent racial injustice. Speaking out against wrongs that you notice as well as challenging statements of ignorance by your peers is not something which is easy to do but must occur for equality to be shared by all.

What I have written here is an oversimplified answer which is much easier said than done. I am aware of that, but none the less it is still the answer. Nobody said it was going to be easy but with time it becomes easier.

On a final note, the process outlined here can and should be applied to all ethnic groups and oppressed peoples. Even to the arguably abused group of white males. Furthermore, people hear the word minority and often think of black people and how they can be helped but we are not the only minority out there and it is important that we learn how to give as good as, if not better than, we are getting by becoming conscious and sensitive to other peoples besides the majority population and our own.

## LATE-NIGHT EDUCATION

My mind is an incomprehensible  
doodle,  
A mass of confusion and disorder  
As I struggle to keep my leaden  
eyelids up,  
Creativity flowing,  
Frustration from rising,  
And endurance strong.

The clock on the wall reports  
an hour  
For Cinderellas to be wary of.  
With a sign I return to improving  
my mind  
With late-night education.

## UD AWAKENS; NOW FOR ACTION

by Adrian L. Morgan

There is a sense of awakening surging throughout our community and I for one am glad to see it. People have been saying for quite some time that the 80's were a repeat of the 50's and the 90's are a repeat of the 60's. A lot happened for our people in the sixties and I'm not just talking about the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In addition to Martin L. King, both Malcolm X and the Black Panthers were major forces in the sixties. A return to the sixties may not be such a bad thing.

This awakening has been witnessed on the national level but it is also being evidenced on a local level as well, including right here at the University of Dayton. From personal discussions with individuals it is evident that there is an increasing desire on this campus to act in a positive way for our race. With the example that has been set by a number of programs by the Black Greeks and BATU it is time for us all to move to action.

It is my proposal that the black people of this campus seriously consider getting themselves involved in the power structures of this campus. In the past year, the president of Stuart Hall Council, the advisor to the Kettering Hall Council, and the advisor to Residence Hall Association all were members of our race. Each of these organizations are small groups which have a lot of power, politically and financially. It is in our best interest to increase our connections with this power.

Fortunately, it looks like steps are already being taken in that direction. Already we have Rachelle Harrison as our minority senator. We have Sonya Harris who has been appointed as the Service Vice-President for next year's SGA administration. Titus Thompson, who is the resident director of Founders will be the advisor for Residence Hall Association again in the '92-'93 school year. This is not success, although it is great progress, but simply first rung on the ladder.

It is no secret that the student leaders on this campus are a small circle and in reality their power and status never really change only their positions and titles do. For example let's take a look at the president and vice-president of next year's student body. Garry McGuire is currently the vice-president of operations, Tom Eggemeier is currently the president of NASCCU (National Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities) and these are only the obvious involvement these people have. In many cases, and these two are no exception, these student leaders have their fingers in more pies than Mrs. Smith.

At present, there is no black representation on the staff of our campus newspaper and none involved with the production of the Black Alumni Chronicle. (See ad on page ) For those of you who are communication majors and even those of you who aren't I urge you to get involved.

Although not positive I am pretty sure that there is not a building on this campus that does not have black students working in it in some form or fashion. This should be the same for the student organizations. SGA, UAO, SAAC and all the rest should have regular input from us. There are greater rewards than a paycheck.

It is nice to think that we live in a democracy and that the system works to meet the needs of all but we know the truth. The system, from Capitol Hill to Kennedy Union serves best those who demand its services and those are the people who run it. The opportunity for our demands to be met is upon us, all we need to do is reach out and take it.

## Writer upset about cultural coverage\*

I would like to congratulate both the staff of the *Flyer News* and the campus bookstore for their catering to the events of Black History Month which ended Feb. 29.

In my opinion, the bookstore was very progressive in their decision to make available works by African-American authors concerning topics dealing with the African-American experience in America.

In addition, the selling of jewelry in the African-American tradition, as well as the increasingly popular Malcolm X hats was also a commendable move. The *Flyer News*, for their part, also did an excellent job by printing photographs highlighting those events on campus which were in keeping with this year's theme of "Celebrating Shades of Black Culture."

However, now that it is March and the official Black History Month is over, it is my sincere hope that the *Flyer News* staff will no longer feel hindered by the theme of "Shades of

Black Culture" and begin to address seriously issues concerning the African-American community. When the entire month of February goes by, and I can't find a single viable article in my campus newspaper addressing African-American history or African-Americans, with the exception of sports, something is wrong.

Haki R. Madhubuti, who is a huge figure in the African-American community, comes to campus and receives only a 1" X 2" picture in the paper and no article whatsoever. Right below that is an even smaller capsule of what is going on in Black History Month and then next to that is a list of reference books so that students who desire to understand the African-American experience can. Oh, and lest I forget, turn the page and read a review of some little known rap artist, Del Tha Funkee Homosapien. For the rest of the month, please enjoy the pictures, because that's all you're going to get.

Excuse me, where was the review of Public Enemy's release "Apocalypse '91: The Enemy Strikes Black?" Why does something tell me that Guns N' Roses "Use Your Illusion I and II" didn't have any trouble getting press? It seems nobody could make it to the recent Jodeci concert here in Dayton, but the trip to Cincinnati for Van Halen presented no problem for the staff of our fine campus paper.

What really baffles me though is how a man who is trying to reform a whole race (Haki R. Madhubuti) cannot even merit a paragraph in this publication, while a man trying to reform Congress (U.S. Rep. John Buehner) gets to be on the front page. I find this situation to contain just a little bit of disparity, to say the least.

However, my bottom line is not to condemn the *Flyer News* as some racist rag only fit for reading by true WASPs and Ku Klux Klan members. The bottom line is that we, the African-American students at UD

would like some time given to our concerns and what goes on in our community, because we are part of the larger community on this campus.

The negative stereotypes that are often circulated about African-Americans continue to exist because all too often we are presented solely in the light of entertainment (sports, music, etc.) and negative images, while the positive things go unnoticed. Members of the media help perpetuate that cycle through their lack of progressive proactive reporting. Unfortunately, the *Flyer News* also seems to be falling into that cycle and it is time for it to fall out.

Nobody expects the *Flyer News* to turn into another *Black Perspective*, but we do expect better than what we've been getting. Don't let us down...again.

Adrian L. Morgan  
co-editor of *Black Perspective*  
sophomore history major

## Positive, motivating ideas would benefit all cultures\*\*

I would like to respond to the letter written by Adrian Morgan that appeared in the March 10 issue of the *Flyer News* concerning cultural coverage.

I do not pretend to know or understand everything, but I have attempted to be open to what opinions exist in the real world. I attended Haki R. Madhubuti's presentation. Frankly, I was not impressed with most of what he had to say. He spent an hour telling the audience that people with white skin were an African-American's enemy.

It is the white American's fault for everything that has gone (yes, 9.5 times out of 10) and is going wrong for the entire African-American race.

I had come to this speaker with great expectations wanting to know how my actions could

promote equality and unity, and found that I could belong if my skin were different. He spoke for an hour concerning the wrongs committed against African descendants. I am sorry that they happened, but give me some action that I can take to help now. I was not alive 30 or 40 years ago; do not blame me for what I cannot control.

Mr. Morgan, you are concerned about progressive, proactive reporting, there are applications for jobs at the *Flyer News* for next year. If you expect better than what you are getting, act on it.

When honestly looking at the coverage concerning African-American interests, there is a need for improvement. The problem may be expecting people to change without teaching them

how. Expectations are nothing without action. Suggest these jobs to others who hold similar views as yourself.

Please do not negate the good

that does occur. All is not as negative as you present.

Gina Griesmar  
sophomore English major

\*March 10, *Flyer News*

\*\*March 20, *Flyer News*

### English and journalism majors

Student staff writers are needed to work in the University's public relations office in the fall 1992 semester. Students help write, edit, proofread and produce all the office's publications—from news releases to newsletters including the *Black Alumni Chronicle*, *Campus Report* and the *University of Dayton Quarterly*.

Students with initiative and excellent writing skills are encouraged to apply. Preference given to students with newswriting experience or course work.

For more information, stop by the public relations office in St. Mary Hall 411 and talk with Tom Columbus, Deborah Smith or Kate Cassidy.

the right type of exposure and education, which can lead to the child's acceptance of himself and by others. By living in an integrated neighborhood, and sending their child to an integrated school, they provide him with the chance to experience racial diversity through exposure to his own culture in addition to others. The child's neighborhood and school will be the places outside of his home which help influence the way in which he will be raised. These settings will strongly develop and play an important role in how he relates to his peers.

Aside from just providing their child with a diverse physical environment, white adoptive parents need to instill in their children a knowledge and pride of their history. They should introduce their child to black authors as well as point out positive black role models in the community and media.

Through these measures, they will enable their child to develop a positive self identity and appreciation for his own culture, as well as others. Plus, it will help him to deal with the other problems which multicultural adoption

produces. He will have to deal with his not looking like his parents, the strange looks, insulting remarks, reaction of the extended family, and more.

Generally, still adoption agents and social workers try to match the race of a child with their adoptive parents because of the sensitive nature of the issues involved. However, according to the article "Mixed Feelings" from the *New Statesmen and Society*, it is possible that they might alienate potential black adoptees on the basis of finance and deferring cultural values. For example, the extended family which is considered very important within the black community may not be appreciated or understood by white social workers. As one black woman familiar with the adoption process says "they fail to take into account the nature of the extended family within my community. It is nothing unusual for me to pack the kids off to friends, aunts, uncles or grandparents when they get too much. I found this hard to get across." They might view the practice as shoving responsibility for her kids on someone else, instead of it being a way

to give herself a deserved break when raising them gets too stressful.

Many blacks wanting to adopt black children do not know how to get started with the process. Plus, the agencies often do not give out their criteria for judging applicants. Because of this, some people are afraid to even attempt the adoption process.

Overall, I think it is best if possible to match black children with black parents so that they can develop healthy self identities. However, if this is not possible, then it should be okay for whites to adopt black children. In order to make the adoption process more widely known to potential black applicants, information sessions should be held about eligibility requirements, the screening process, and what to expect after the adoption. Plus, there ought to be more blacks involved in the selection of applicants, and a fund set up to aid new adoptees.

Quote from the article "Mixed Feelings" comes from *New Statesman and Society*, pp. 26-7, Sept. 15, 1989.

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# BLACK PERSPECTIVE CONGRATULATES OUR GRADUATING SENIORS OF 1992

Dorian Archer  
Jean Boling  
Steven Booker  
Karen Brame  
Stacey Brown  
Michael Burdett  
Yvonne Burns  
Bettina Charles  
Amy Cheatham  
Valerie Clark

Cotilia Decembly  
Chad Douglas  
Stephen Fore  
Richard Fowler  
Trina Frazier  
Lisa Gerald  
James Hallett  
Bradley Hamilton  
Sabrina Hays  
Christine Hyman

Shirley Ivory  
Dina Jackson  
Erwin Jansen  
Angeleta Jones  
Greta Jordan  
Angela Lovett  
Fran McTier  
Erica Montgomery  
Virginia Moore  
Veronica Morris

LaChante Norman  
Adeyoyin Okunade  
William Peterson  
Jacqueline Rice  
Bobbi Richardson  
Tracey Singleton  
Annette Stevens  
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June Tyler  
Kenneth Walker