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Black Perspective

The University of Dayton

Minority Student Affairs

April 1993

AFRICAN-AMERICAN MASS AND DEDICATION

By Dorene Wilbur

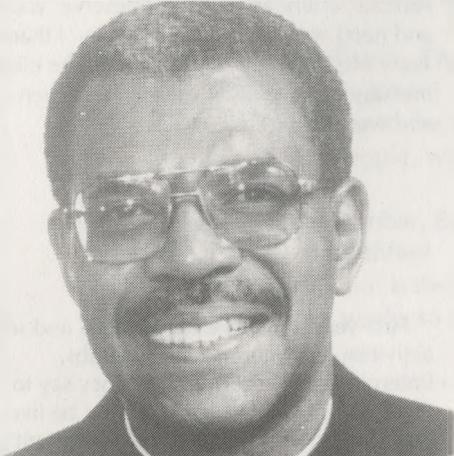


Photo by Larry Burgess

Rev. Joseph Davis, S.M.

Black History Month at the University of Dayton this year proved again to be a great success. All of the events brought about a better understanding of the African American culture to all involved, though one event in particular added an extra special touch that will also be remembered and appreciated not only in Black History Month, but every month.

The special event was the second annual Multi-Cultural liturgy in the African American tradition, co-sponsored by Minority Student Affairs and Campus Ministry. This year's mass was in honor of Father Joseph Davis, S.M., an African-American Marianist Priest from Dayton.

This liturgy, following last year's tradition, strived to celebrate the rites of the mass in an authentic and culturally-sound manner by proudly displaying to the community how African-Americans express their love for the church and God.

This was done through the beautiful colors of the Kente cloth, the glorious sounds of The Ebony Heritage Singers, and the rich colorful presence of African-Americans. One person who always took pride in these important elements of the mass was Rev. Joseph Davis, the man who Minority Student Affairs and Campus Ministry proudly chose to honor and remember at the liturgy on Sunday, February 21, 1993. This year's celebrant was Father Paul Marshall, an African-American Marianist Priest who works at St. Aloysius Church in Cleveland Ohio.

Father Joe Davis was a man who was honored and respected by members of the University of Dayton and the surrounding community. His life was dedicated to serving God and providing support for those he believed in, especially the African-American community here at the University of Dayton.

Father Joe was born (and raised) in Dayton, Ohio on August 17, 1937. He attended the University of Dayton, where he dedicated his life to Marianist tradition. Father Davis spent his adult life addressing the African-American movement in the Catholic church and cultural diversity at

UD. He was appointed to UD's Board of Trustees approximately two years before his death.

Father Joe willingly helped Minority Student Affairs and Campus Ministry with first annual liturgy by serving as the presider of the mass, along with Father Gene Contadino, S.M..

Upon his unfortunate death on July 24, 1992, Father Davis was serving as a Priest at St. Aloysius with Father Marshall.

Father Joe's memory will always be present at UD through The Father Joe Davis S.M., Memorial Library located in the Minority Student Affairs Lounge. His private collection of over 200 books was given to MSA at the suggestion of Fr. Davis's Marianist family in Cleveland and his blood family in Dayton.

They believed that his involvement with MSA would live on through the library which contains books ranging from African Art and Mythology to *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, along with many classic books addressing African-American issues. Rev. James Heft, S.M., UD Provost, dedicated and blessed the library at a special reception following the mass.

Father Joe will live on with every word that we read and with every event that UD and MSA sponsor. As African-American students we must remember that his dedication helped provide us with many of our current opportunities at UD. We thank him and love him.

TERRY McMILLAN SPEAKS AT UD

by Bernadette Harawa

Best-selling author, Terry McMillan spoke to a maximum-capacity audience at John F. Kennedy Memorial Union Ballroom on Thursday, February 11, 1993, co-sponsored by Minority Student Affairs and the Distinguished Speakers Series. Dorene Wilbur, a second-year student, welcomed the speaker and audience, and Debra Moore, Director of MSA, introduced Ms. McMillan.

Terry McMillan, a striking woman with high cheekbones and short, natural hair, told the audience that she'd just arrived in Dayton from Buffalo the hour before. However, she did not appear tired as she proceeded to read the chapter "Robin" from her *New York Times*—best-seller novel,

Waiting to Exhale. She described Robin as her "dumbest" and therefore favorite character. Ms. McMillan has also written two other novels, *Disappearing Acts* and *Mama* and has edited *Breaking Ice: An Anthology of contemporary African-American Fiction*. She has also received a three-year Fellowship and has spent time at two writing colonies. In addition, she served as a visiting professor at the University of Wyoming, where she taught creative writing at the masters level.

McMillan described herself as being an obsessive writer who rises every day at 5:00 a.m. and writes for four hours, before taking

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Terry McMillan

McMillan Speaks *(cont. from page 1)*

her eight-year old son to school. She said that she never bases her characters on friends, even though she is influenced by their experiences as well as her own. In fact, noting the "ups and downs" women experience with the relationship game led her to ask the question, "Do we as women expect too much from men?" as the basis for *Waiting to Exhale*. She came to the conclusion that no, women do not expect too much. In order for men to treat women how they deserve to be treated, women should keep their expectations high. Men should pay attention to how their behaviors make women feel because women don't take things very lightly, even if men do. She said that many men take women for granted because women are not afraid to show men how they feel about them.

McMillan also told aspiring writers to be honest with themselves and write from their hearts. She said that they should not try to impress anyone and should know when to take themselves seriously. She also advised that they should not limit themselves to reading just black literature. *Waiting to Exhale* is currently number 10 on the *New York Times* best-sellers list. It has literally launched the author into the international spotlight, and the book has almost become African-American women's bible for gauging relationships with African-American men. Screenplays are currently being written for both *Waiting to Exhale* and *Disappearing Acts*.

The Black Perspective is a University of Dayton student-run and operated publication. This paper aims to be the eyes, ears, and voice of the UD Afro-American community. The general editors urge the study body to use this paper to publicize their upcoming events and to express their thoughts on issues/events (national, state, local etc.) that affect the African-American community. This paper should reflect the intelligence and determination that exist within the African-American community on this campus. The paper solicits student writings in all forms: editorials, feature articles, commentaries, poetry, or any other forms that address relevant issues. The editors do reserve the right to edit material and to choose material that will be published; however, only material that is presented in a foul, derogatory manner will be rejected. The paper accepts writings from all UD students.

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WAITING TO EXHALE: A Message of Life, Love, and Friendship for African- American Women and Men

by Ramonda Gates

Waiting to Exhale is a story that is all too often told by African-American women from all over the country, the story of the never-found Mr. Right. Women from all different levels of and careers are having difficulties finding, let alone keeping, a man. The frustration of this situation is clearly present in the *New York Times*-best selling novel, *Waiting to Exhale* by Terry McMillan. Her novel is both an inspiration and affirmation to African-American women while it sends a strong, straight-forward message to African-American men.

Her characters project the affirmation and inspiration, as each woman portrays the strong black-woman paradigm. Gloria works long hours at her salon, struggles to raise her teen-age son alone, and also works to control her weight and loneliness. Robin, although not very bright when it comes to relationships with men, still has a "good heart" and tries to help her mother cope with her father's fatal illness. Bernadine's life is complicated by a deceitful husband, a bitter divorce, and numerous financial woes. The fourth and final character, Savannah, is the essential backbone of all the book's main characters. Her life is the most stable; she has some worries about her mother's housing and finances, due to her new job and career change. The main factor, however, in Savannah's life is her unfortunate run-ins with Mr. Wrong at the right time. Admiringly, she takes every disappointment with stride and still has hope of finding intelligent male life on earth.

African-American women are able to relate to these characters and the topics they discuss. In addition, the novel affirms the fact that the African-American women who are having troubles with a man—or having trouble finding a man—are not alone.

McMillan's novel is a strong straight-forward message for African-American men. Many men may think since the novel is about women it is for women. The contrary is true, however, *Waiting to Exhale* is for everyone. Critics say that it is one long, painful love letter conveyed to black men from black women. Robin, one of McMillan's characters, says, "A woman's love is not a right but a privilege." Many men have not come to this realization. The male characters in this novel range from pure asinine and repulsive to strong and sensitive. These perceptions are presented through the communication of women to each other. When men read this book, they

should think about women's feelings and should try to be more sensitive to women's concerns.

On a personal note, I think *Waiting to Exhale* is excellent. I was able to relate to several of the dating situations or rather the dating disasters. Although the women were in their thirties and I am twenty-one, I have no trouble relating to these four women. The novel made me laugh, but most of all, it made me think I will probably view my future relationships with a "a new attitude," demanding more from my boyfriend. As an African-American woman, I deserve, want, and need respect, love and loyalty. I thank Terry McMillan for this novel and the clear messages she sends to both African men and women.

ALL WORK AND NO PLAY

By Cleo Syrh, Jr.

First-year students enter campus and see activities, intramurals, varsity, clubs, fraternities and sororities, and they say to themselves I want to join them, or be like them, but their schedule does not permit any time to be well rounded. They assumed it would be easy to balance school, studying, work, and friends, along with extra-curricular activities, but this is not true for all students.

Some students came to campus with the realization that with school, studying and work that there are not enough hours in the day to do everything. The main reason for the student's extra work load is that some students are forced to help out their parents by paying some of their tuition, which is 4,795.00 per semester. Another reason is that college students realize they are not children anymore and want to be financially stable to pay for their own things, so they will not have to call home and burden their family for cash, because their family is already paying tuition bills.

With all of this burden lets take a look at a typical student's availability. There are 24 hours in a day, so let's begin with this number. Twenty four minus eight hours for sleep, minus 3-4 hours for class, minus 3-4 hours for studying minus 1 1/2 hours - 3 hours for meals depending on how social one is. Now lets say the average student works 8 hours per week and in extreme cases a freshman may work 15 hours per week. With a time consuming schedule such as this, it leaves little time for a student to get involved.

This is a message to all first year students. I know everyone wants to walk on campus and make a difference, but we have to put our priorities first. Remember that we are all here for an education first, then we can get involved in other extra-curricular activities.

WHY BLACK HISTORY MONTH

By Bonita Terry

Billie Holliday, Leontyne Price, Mahalia Jackson,
Women paid the price.
Lifin' up voices strong and melodious
Sendin' out the message that they were devoted!

Daniel Hale Williams, Charles H. Drew, Mary E. Mahoney,
Oh! I thought you knew!
Devotin' their time to the medicine cause
For these three people, we stop. We pause.

Paul Lawrence Dunbar, Booker T...Alice Walker
What about these three?
Writin' and rhymin' is their claim to fame
Creatin' literary works so we'd remember their name.

Zora Neal Hurston, Hallie Q. Brown...Marva Collins
These girls got down!
Education: The three R's to you and me.
Teachin' the Black people to set their minds free!

Ole' Nat Turner, Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman,
Lord, Blacks on the loose!
Freein' slaves and leadin' em toward the star.
Yeah, I do believe you oughtah know who they are!

Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Littl' Rosa Parks,
Let freedom ring!
Equality for all! Civil Rights! Civil Rights!
The Ku Klux Klan still came in the night.

Matthew Henson, W. C. Handy, James Weldon Johnson,
If we knew these folk, wouldn't that be dandy?
Explorers, musicians, we've got'em all.
Pavin' the way so we can stand tall?

Jesse Owens, Authur Ashe, Hank Aaron,
They felt the clash!
Breakin' down barriers on the track, court and field.
For their undaunted plight, we hasten. We yield.

Why Black History month in 1993?
Because if it weren't for Black people...where would we be:
Celebrate them! Honor them!
Give them their due!
Believe me my friend, we'll do the same for you!

PIECE OF POWER

I have a piece
a piece of Power
with it people respect me
They do what I want
and the they accept me
The piece makes me strong
I've been weak and
insignificant for too long
for once they feel fear
when I come near
WHY?
Cause I have that cold metal
piece slipped between my
fingers
the thought of ceasing
another's breath lingers
I have everything except
love and friendship
without it dies my soul
and my heart is stone
but I will still have control
And someday be alone
or looking down the dark tunnel
of another's piece of Power
searching for a peace of mind.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY MEETING

by Adrian Morgan

"We [African-American students] do stuff; cops get on us. They [Caucasian students] do stuff; cops think it's funny," stated Atris Everson at an emergency community meeting held by Minority Student Affairs on February 24, in Virginia W. Kettering Plaza Multipurpose Room.

That sentiment summed up the perception that many African-American students have of the UD Public Safety Department. As a result of a recent incident, these feelings came to the forefront and students convened to meet with John Delamar, Director of Public Safety to discuss what they see as a trend of clearly unfair practices.

The catalyst for this meeting was a confrontation between six African-American women and the UD police. The women involved were sophomore Letitia Alston, juniors Tasha Matthews and Aliya Barnhill and seniors Rachel Gabriel and Adrienne Granberry. Mary Roberts who is a senior at Wright State University was also involved. According to the women, as they were driving home on their way from a party their car was pelted with snowballs by thirty or so white students in the ghetto. After stopping the car to confront the students the ladies were then confronted by the UD Public Safety. The women alleged that the public safety officers initially refused to get involved and then after being asked by the

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AFRICAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY MEETING *(continued from page 7)*

women to intervene were reluctant and referred to one of the women in derogatory terms. It is also the women's contention that none of the students who were throwing snowballs were reprimanded or had to produce identification even though they initiated the incident.

Due to the fact that the incident is still under investigation, the Public Safety department would not comment.

For the many people who were present at the community meeting this incident sounded too much like ones they had encountered for them to question its veracity.

When one student asked Delamar hypothetically what would happen if the colors of the participants in the incident described had been reversed, Delamar could not answer before another student put forth his own reply. He cited a recent encounter with Public Safety for making snowballs when he was all alone, let alone him and thirty other black male students.

Throughout the ninety minute meeting, many of the thirty or so African-American students present were all too happy to recount similar incidents of bias.

Delamar attempted to impress upon those present his commitment to equality and that prejudice was not something he was going to tolerate. "I believe everybody is entitled to a) protection under the law and b) respect as a human being," stated Delamar. Later in the evening he clearly delineated his stance on prejudice stating, "I have a very short tolerance for prejudice in any form, whether it's black prejudice, white prejudice, yellow prejudice—and it all exists."

The most important issue for Delamar though was to inform students that they have a right to complain and to encourage them to do so. "I cannot change what I do not know about," stated Delamar.

Whether students went to Minority Student Affairs first or to Public Safety did not matter to Delamar, as long as people

came forward with their concerns.

Four basic steps were outlined for students who did have complaints or might in the future. 1) Maintain ration and reason. 2) Find out who you're dealing with. 3) File a report. 4) Come to MSA and we'll deal with it.

Delamar also explained that students have a right to know what's suspicious about them if they are stopped for suspicion and to know the badge number of an officer if they ask for it. Delamar suggested that if students are denied access to this information, they should get whatever information they can (license plate, car number, time and location, etc.) and file a complaint.

In light of all of this information, John Jones a first-year student asked, "What can we expect for the future?"

"You can expect it to stop!" replied Delamar.

DJ BOBBY H

by Adrian L. Morgan

"I'm not satisfied with the radio stations here," explains Bobby Hopkins when asked why he formed a radio show dealing primarily with popular African-American music. "92 (WROU 92.1 FM-urban contemporary) sucks and there's nothing else, so I decided I'd play my own stuff," stated Hopkins.

And that's exactly what Hopkins has done. Working with the campus radio station WDCR 640 am and with some help from his friend John Motto, who had a classic rock show last semester, Hopkins has begun putting his own brand of good vibrations over the airwaves.

His show began in January of this semester and seems to be doing quite well. Already the show has earned a rating in the top fifty percent of the WDCR radion shows having been ranked 19 out of the 46 different radio shows currently broadcast by the station.

Another reason for starting his show was to add a diversity to Dayton's college station that Hopkins felt was missing in comparison to other college stations across the country. The music for this show concentrates primarily on reggae, rap and contemporary black singers and singing groups. Examples of the music are Shabba Ranks, 2 Pac, Mary J. Blige and Jodeci.

One of the problems that has hurt Hopkins show is the lack of music at the station. And since this show is cutting new ground for WDCR there is no music which is of use to Hopkins. To combat this Hopkins brings his own music and that

which he doesn't have he borrows from friends.

An additional hardship is trying to get music which lacks profanity or trying to bleep it out while playing it. Professional radio stations receive clean edits of various songs but for the amateur there really isn't much out there without buying cassette or CD singles which can be very expensive. WDCR deejays receive no money for their services or their record collections.

For Hopkins being a DJ in Dayton may be a one semester activity. Due to outdated technology in the radio station not many people on campus can hear the broadcast. For Hopkins this is upsetting since often times it "seems like I'm just playing music for myself," states Hopkins.

If you're interested in catching DJ Bobby while he still is on the air the time do it is every Sunday from 4 p.m. until 7 p.m. on 640 am. The request line is x2664 and according to Mr. Hopkins, "We'll play anything—as long as it's clean."

LEARNING THROUGH VOLUNTEERING IN EAST ST. LOUIS

by Matt Bickel

The University of Dayton through Campus Ministry is now offering a summer volunteer program in East St. Louis, Illinois.

Contrary to the traditional summer program working with white rural poor of the Appalachian Mountains in southern Kentucky, the University now offers the

opportunity for a unique individual to volunteer in America's toughest poor urban inner-cities, working with the predominantly African-American population.

This challenge will include a variety of activities that will help the people in this area. Some of the possible ways a volunteer's time might be spent include working with children in recreational centers, tutoring in former crack houses now turned into learning centers, working in local soup kitchens, and working with grass roots community leaders on the myriad of pressing problems in the inner city.

An example of last year's success was the reinstatement of trash removal for the first time since 1989.

The challenge calls for a unique individual who is willing to give eight weeks of their time and is prepared to walk away from this experience a different person. Race and gender are not excluding factors but laziness is.

The individual selected will receive room and board free with their service and an additional stipend the amount of which is yet to be determined.

If you would like further information regarding East St. Louis Summer Volunteer Program please contact Matthew Bickel at x1399 or Sister Nancy in Campus Ministry at x3339.