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The Black Perspective November 1993

University of Dayton. Black Action Through Unity

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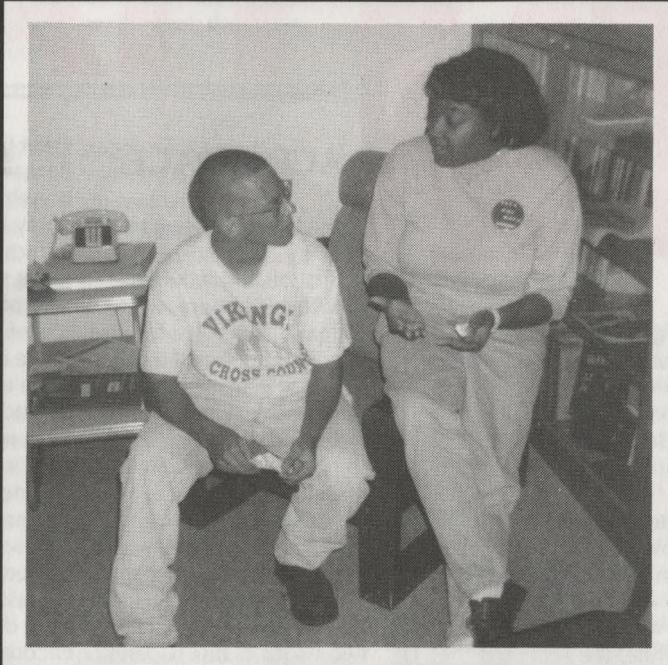
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Black Perspective

The University of Dayton

November 1993



Photograph by Stephen Green

PEER MENTORING

by Adrian L. Morgan

"If I could have had somebody it would have made my adjustment a little easier," says Genaia Toi Hill about her decision to become involved with the African-American Peer Mentoring Program.

Rachelle Kelsey, a junior, was the originator of the program but was unable to return this semester. Since she did not come back, Hill assumed her position as Program Coordinator. The program's main purpose is to provide African-American upperclassmen who would be able to show them around in the first few days and answer any questions that they might have whether it be in the first week of school or during second semester finals.

This year all of the students who were accepted and attending Dayton were offered a mentor in a letter sent home welcoming them to the University. It's kind of hard deciding who needs a mentor and who doesn't so we just offer it everybody," says Hill.

About 15 mentor/mentee pairs were made for this year's first year class with many of the mentors being assigned two mentees. Matches were made according to

major, interests, hometown and hobbies. In addition to herself, Hill was also received help this summer from Assistant Coordinator, Chris Wilson; Assistant Director of African-American Student Services, Kathleen Henderson and summer intern John "Chip" Moore who is a first-year student.

"We're not trying to make mentors and mentees go day in and day out and be best friends," says Hill. However, the pairs have already spent a bit of time together. All of the mentors came back early to help welcome their mentees at orientation.

There was also an African-American prayer service which they attended together and they recently held a social hour in the lounge of Diversified Student Populations.

Future plans include a possible trip to King's Island and some type of academic incentive program.

Over the next couple of years, Hill hopes to have all of the African-American first year students paired.

"As far as my mentees go, I hope to help them anyway possible," says Hill. "Hopefully, they will go on to be mentors as well."

UD'S OWN AUGUST WILSON

After ten minutes of watching senior Dominic Jones and first-year student Kelli Maggard play the parts of Clay and Lula respectively, in Imamu Amiri Baraka's *The Dutchman* their director has a list of comments for his actors.

"You didn't shake to the beats... laugh after lying...look to the audience...like I told you before, have fun with those lines...I know it's gonna be hard but you know I can't have none of that."

Hard but fair, Roderick Lewis, junior education major and theatre minor, takes his plays very seriously. He knows that he is fortunate to be able to even direct this piece by Baraka and one other scene from the *Birth of the Blues* by Ben Caldwell. Lewis does not hesitate to explain the difficulties of doing pieces that relate to African-American culture on a campus where only two percent of the population is black.

At the first open auditions this semester, Lewis saw a total of two African-American men and no black women try out. According to Lewis part of the problem has to deal with the numbers but there is more to it than that. There is also a perception that UD Theatre is not interested in doing works that deal with black people and very little publicity about Lewis's emergence as a figure in the theatre groups on campus.

"There's no enthusiasm by African-Americans for theatre," says Lewis. "That's why you will not have an all-black play here."

Lewis hopes to change that, beginning with his position on the Studio Theatre Board and this article. As a member of this five student board, Lewis has the opportunity to direct and write plays that the whole campus can participate in if they choose to. He plans to use this position to expand upon the work he is already doing and get even more African-Americans involved.

"I can provide things that African-Americans can relate to plus something I like and provide some diversity for the theatre department," says Lewis.

"I love plays that are written by black playwrights," continues Lewis. But complains that since he has trouble doing an all-black scene right now, he has serious doubts about bringing an all-black production to stage, like *Fences* or *A Raisin in the Sun*.

DIRECTOR —Continued on page. 4

GUEST COLUMN

JUST A FEW THOUGHTS, PROVOKED BY A BOOK

by M.Y. Discuvres

Andrew Hacker's book *Two Nations, Black and White, Separate Hostile, Unequal* is an excellent understanding of racism in America. I found it thought-provoking, and I thought it identified many of the issues that black Americans have to deal with every day, as well as many of the reasons for white Americans' attitudes toward black Americans.

I feel that in many cases Hacker is correct in saying that whites cannot understand the black perspective. Much of the reason for this is because of the lack of black history taught in America. In talking to friends who have come from many different school systems in different states, I have learned that many times only those educated in inner-city, predominantly black schools, got an education with a substantial amount of black history in it.

Those people I have talked to who have grown up and attended school in a richer whiter community, got very little black history in their curriculum; perhaps a paragraph here or there about a black person who did something that the whites approved of. This is biased and unfair and does not allow white people the freedom of choices they

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 African-American community. The general editors urge the student 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 reflects 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 derogatory manner will be rejected. The paper accepts writings from all UD students.

Editor

Adrian L. Morgan

Contributors

Adrian L. Morgan
Leroy White Jr.

Photography

Stephen Green

need to learn about *real* black history and the goodness and diversity of it.

Although in America, it is not necessary for whites to learn about black history and their culture, blacks find themselves being forced to understand the white perspective because this is what American society is

receive the acceptance accorded to other groups, including newcomers arriving from as far away as Asia and the Middle East. In the view of those who set the rules, if you are of African origin, you will never fully fit the image of a true American" (41).

But we must remember blacks are

WHAT

ACE'S SPACE

by Adrian L. Morgan

First of all, I would like to take this opportunity to formally apologize to everyone looking for the October issue of *Black Perspective*. There was none and there is no one to blame for that but myself.

Now that that is taken care of let's address a more substantive issue. You are reading what may be one of the last two issues of this paper.

That's right. **LAST TWO!!**

I have been involved with this newspaper ever since I have arrived on campus. Since my sophomore year I have served as editor and prior to that, I wrote on whatever the editors needed. In all that time I have seen nothing but a declining interest in *Black Perspective*. The decline has become so

great that now I am sitting here writing a paper by myself. And as much I enjoy it, it is time for me to move on so that I can make preparations for the next phase of my life.

Unfortunately, as I move on it appears that there will be no one left behind to take over. There are a number of explanations as to why no one appears to be interested. And I do not excuse myself from blame.

I've been in charge for the last three years and I have done what I can to encourage people to become a part of our staff or to just contribute on an occasional basis. As you may have noticed, I have not been too successful.

So at the end of this semester, I will be stepping down from my position as editor of this paper. If someone would like to take charge and herald this paper into the next year and a new era, I will do everything in my power to help you. In

based on. Though black Americans are forced to learn and accept white America, they are never even fully accepted as Americans. The causes for this are the dark skin they have, and the implications their dark skin fosters.

To many whites, dark skin means you are somehow inferior to the white race. Even immigrants and people who are ethnically diverse from pure-bred white Americans, but who look white, are accepted into society more quickly and easily than blacks who have been in America for generations.

Black Americans just do not fit into the white American model that those white Americans who made the rules decided they would impose on other people to determine how equal they would be in this society.

Hacker states this dilemma well when he says, "if you wish to succeed, or simply survive, adapt to the dictation and demeanor of the Anglo-American model. But even if you opt for that path, you will never

American. These "rules" Hacker talks about were determined upon something that Hacker further explains: "there persists the belief that members of the black race represent an inferior strain of the human species" (23).

YOU

In my opinion, this is so very true in many white American minds.

And why?

Hacker talks about how somewhere in the back of white minds, there is this questioning and curiosity that asks them "might there be something about the black race that suited them for slavery?" (14). This question is asked because no other race has ever been brought in bondage to another country and sold as if they were livestock. Perhaps, no other race would have been able to survive this terrible humiliation of the spirit and body, the cruelty they were forced to withstand, or the work they were forced to endure.

addition to teaching you the newspaper business inside and out, I will pay you a one-time sum of money which you will receive in May after I am satisfied that you will stay with the paper for at least another year.

It saddens my heart to see what was once a symbol of major progress for Negro University of Dayton undergrads be ignored by the African-American students of today. This paper was born out of a need for black students to be heard, recognized and acknowledged by themselves and by the general community. Do not be fooled into thinking that just because Jim Crow is dead, that need has in any way been lessened.

Maybe if there were black students who wrote for *Earthline* or *The College Republican Newsletter* or some underground black student newspaper then I could feel better about the demise of this

paper. Maybe if I wasn't the only black student writing for *Flyer News* I could understand the lack of interest. Maybe if I wasn't the only black student writing for *Campus Report* or any of the other papers put out by the Public Relations Department, including *The Black Alumni Chronicle*, then I would say the time has come for *Black Perspective* to be laid to rest. But the TIME HAS NOT COME!!!!

I could continue but if the point has not been impressed on you by now then it never will be. I leave you with my name and number and an offer that will stand until the end of the semester. I do have to be honest though when I tell you that I don't expect anyone to respond and I do believe that the next issue of this paper that you read will be the last student produced issue.

Adrian L. Morgan,
223-1637.

But teach the entire history of this to Americans?

The indications scare white Americans! For does it not imply superiority of the black

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AN OPEN LETTER TO THE BLACK COMMUNITY

by Frank H. Coleman Jr.

Do

I have a question that I'd like to address to UD's black community. It is a rather simple question, yet it doesn't seem to have a simple answer. The question is, "Why are so many of our young men continually engaged in acts of violence against each other?"

In Dayton particularly, you can't hardly turn on the local news without seeing at least a few incidents of young black men committing crimes usually against their own kind. Throughout the year there have been cases in which our youth have shot or stabbed each other over something as meaningless as a basketball game or an article of clothing.

What needs to be done to alleviate the pattern of violence that affects so many of our people? Why is there so much anger and hate among us and furthermore why is it directed toward each other?

No, blacks are not the only ones committing crimes in America. But when there are more young black men occupying the jails instead of colleges and the rate of black on black crime is steadily increasing,

one has to wonder what the problem is and why none of our so-called "leaders" have refused to address it.

We as a people can no longer say that "the man" is holding us back and he is

engaged in some type of genocide when we engage in various acts of suicide everyday.

If I seem to have an angry tone in this column it's because I am fed up. I'm fed up of seeing the endless faces of young black men and women with handcuffs on in the courtrooms awaiting their sentences.

There is a problem in Black America.

One that neither Clinton or any other facet of the government can or should handle. We as blacks should make an effort to stop this foolishness that we are currently engaged in and strive to move forward and take advantage of the opportunities that Malcolm and Martin died for.

I know this column did not really address any of the questions asked in the beginning but it wasn't meant to. These questions were meant to provoke thought, thus causing you to ask yourselves these questions. As well as determining what can be done about it.

RACE RETREAT

ADDRESSING
ISSUES OF RACE
WITHIN OUR COMMUNITIES
WITHIN OURSELVES

NOV. 12-13
CAMP JOY

FACULTY, STUDENTS
AND STAFF ARE
ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND

THERE IS NO FEE TO PARTICIPATE

THINK?

THE UMOJA ARTICLES

Martin Luther King Jr. "A Champion For Non-Violence"

by Leroy White Jr.

Martin Luther King Jr. was born January 15, 1929, in Atlanta, Georgia. Martin Luther was actually born Michael Luther. When Martin was 6 years old, his father changed both of their names to Martin in honor of the German religious leader Martin Luther.

Dr. King was a graduate of Morehouse College. He also studied at Crozier Theological Seminary and Boston College. Martin became an ordained minister in 1947. In 1953, he married Coretta Scott. King and became pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama in 1954.

Martin Luther King Jr. was a champion for civil rights. His Christian background had instilled in him that all men are created equal and shall be treated as such. Dr. King believed that civil rights could be achieved through non-violence. He was a man that believed that two wrongs don't make a right.

I believe in today's society we need to follow Dr. King's belief in turning the other cheek when we can and working towards more non-violent means of coping with our problems. In viewing movies like *Boyz-N-the-Hood* and *Menace to Society*, we see first hand how violence can destroy our community.

We as people need to realize that killing one another is not the answer to any problem.

Martin Luther King Jr. was a man who meant a lot to me. Although I never saw or met him in person, I have read about him, and heard his speeches many times growing up. I can truly say that I know the meaning of "His spirit lives on..."

Many times in my life when I was confronted with situations in which my temper was trying to get the best of me, I would remember Martin Luther King Jr. leading a non-violent march, and no matter how bad things got, he kept his cool. When I first saw this great demonstration of love, I thought to myself how hard that must have been for him, until I heard his "I Have A Dream" speech.

It was then that I realized it was his determination to make the dream a reality that enabled him to take the blows from the police and get sprayed by firehoses. So when I am confronted with unfavorable situations I try to relate to what made him so strong, and am able to hold on to his dream.

As I got older, I began to have dreams also, dreams of walking the streets of non-violence, dreams of economic development and growth, that include harmony and unity among all people, where young Afro-Americans can reach their full potential.

This article is dedicated in loving memory to Shane Curry and all others who have been killed due to senseless violence.

UD'S OWN AUGUST WILSON

Continued from page 1

Nevertheless, Lewis is hopeful and does plan on sticking it out for at least the duration of the year. He would like to be the first to bring an all-black cast to Dayton and encourages all African-American students on campus who may be the slightest bit interested to contact him at 294-1735 and help be a part of this history making endeavor.

GUEST COLUMN

Continued from page 3

race, that they were able to handle the atrocities imposed upon them as if they were animals with no feelings? For the black race to be able to survive this, does it not show their spirit and mind can easily supersede any white person's? This is the fear in American whites.

The fact of the matter is that whites would be the first to support the United States as a multicultural society which is not racist, but Blacks see and feel the reality of their oppression everyday.

They are forced to be aware of their white surroundings constantly without thought of reciprocation to their culture. They are segregated, sometimes by choice, but many times because the system holds them down and does not allow them opportunities to advance. They are feared by many that "if allowed to come closer they will somehow contaminate the rest of society" (14).

This fear is a direct result of white Americans' lack of knowledge about the black race. It is such a vicious cycle! Because if white Americans were not so afraid of the implications that teaching black history would cause, they would be more informed and hopefully have a better understanding of the black culture. This

would help put an end to the prejudiced stereotypes that people have about the black race. But white Americans are afraid to do this. Why? Because of their ignorance! When will the cycle end? When will people break out of their fears—enough to learn, enough to stop being fearful? Will it ever stop? Can it?

Personally, I think the cycle will continue turning around and around, not ever really being solved. So many people already have such strong convictions in their minds about the quality of others who have different backgrounds and cultures. I don't think it is ever possible to ever rid these people of their prejudices. But although I don't feel the cycle will ever stop, I do think that it has potential to eventually turn a little less rapidly.

Perhaps, in many years, these white people will be able to overcome some of their fears long enough to learn about black people and to realize that blacks aren't less equal to whites at all; but because of their diverse cultural background, they have a unique set of opinions and experiences to contribute to white Americans awareness.

ATTN DISCUVRES: Your piece has been printed virtually unedited. Pen names are fine but we will need your real name as well in order to print anything further.