

2-1-1998

# The Black Perspective February 1998

University of Dayton. Black Action Through Unity

Follow this and additional works at: [https://ecommons.udayton.edu/blk\\_perspective](https://ecommons.udayton.edu/blk_perspective)

---

## Recommended Citation

University of Dayton. Black Action Through Unity, "The Black Perspective February 1998" (1998). *The Black Perspective*. 26.  
[https://ecommons.udayton.edu/blk\\_perspective/26](https://ecommons.udayton.edu/blk_perspective/26)

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Produced Media at eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Black Perspective by an authorized administrator of eCommons. For more information, please contact [frice1@udayton.edu](mailto:frice1@udayton.edu), [mschlange1@udayton.edu](mailto:mschlange1@udayton.edu).



# THE BLACK PERSPECTIVE

THE UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON

AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDENT SERVICES

FEBRUARY 1998

## BLACK HISTORY MONTH: AN AMERICAN CELEBRATION

by Dr. Julius Amin

"Would America have been America without her Negro people," W.E.B. Du Bois had written in *The Souls of Black Folk* in 1903. America, Du Bois insisted, must be proud and thankful for the contributions of its Black citizens. The nation, he continued, received three important gifts from African Americans: "the gift of story and song, ...sweat and brawn to beat back the wilderness, [and], ...a gift of spirit." Du Bois' assertion remains true today. The history of African Americans is a testament to those significant contributions and more. It is in the spirit of those gifts that we celebrate Black History Month.

Black History Month is a celebration of culture, pride, triumphs, achievements, and community. All Americans are beneficiaries of those triple gifts outlined by Du Bois. Through the efforts of Black protest movements, America has acknowledged its diversity, stretched the limits of its democracy, and committed itself to human rights and

equality. Black protest activities have been emulated by other groups in search for recognition and inclusion. Whether it was Frederick Douglass's admonition to the nation to take decisive measures to improve humanity, or Ida B Wells's documented evidence of a national embarrassment- lynchings, or Martin Luther King's appeal for the elimination of the tyranny of poverty among America's underclass, they all acted in the spirit of making this land a great nation in all the important categories.

Advocates of improved race relations, and the creation of an all inclusive community must continue to build on the legacy of the early pioneers including A. Philip Randolph, Fannie Lou Hamer, Sojourner Truth, Malcolm X, Whitney Young, and more. Black History Month is, in part, a celebration of their life and work. It is a celebration of America's diversity, strength and courage. It is a celebration of the lives of those people whose names we may



never see in print, yet continue to work actively. Each of us may compare the things we do to one grain of sand, but that should not discourage any one, for the sum total of all those grains of sand will produce the beach. In short, each one can make a difference if he/she tries. Simultaneously, Black History Month helps us to take stock, and plan strategies to finish the job. The task to tear down the mounting wall of segregation, denounce bigotry, and eliminate the permanence of racism from society must continue.

## BLACK WALLSTREET

Submitted by Ebony L. Odoms

The date was June 1, 1921, when "Black Wallstreet," the name fittingly given to one of the most affluent all-black communities in America, was bombed from the air and burned to the ground by mobs of envious whites. In a period spanning fewer than 12 hours, a once thriving 36-black business district in northern Tulsa lay smoldering - A model community destroyed, and a major Africa-American economic movement resoundingly defused.

The night's carnage left some 3,000 African Americans dead, and over 600 successful businesses lost. Among these were 21 churches, 21 restaurants, 30 grocery stores and two movie theaters, plus a hospital, a bank, a post office, libraries, schools, law offices, a half-dozen private airplanes and even a bus system. As could be expected, the impetus behind it all was the famous Ku Klux Klan, working in consort with ranking city officials, and many other sympathizers.

In their self-published book, *Black Wallstreet: A Lost Dream*, and its companion

video documentary, *Black Wallstreet: A Black Holocaust in America*, the authors have chronicled for the very first time in the words of area historians and elderly survivors what really happened there on that fateful summer day in 1921 and why it happened. Wallace similarly explained to *Black Elegance* why this bloody event from the turn of the century seems to have had a recurring effect that is being felt in predominately Black neighborhoods even to this day.

The best description of Black Wallstreet, or Little Africa as it was also known, would be to liken it to a mini-Beverly Hills. It was the golden door of the Black community during the early 1900s, and it proved that African Americans had successful infrastructure. That's what Black Wallstreet was about.

The dollar circulated 36 to 1000 times, sometimes taking a year for currency to leave the community. Now in 1998, a dollar leaves the Black community in 15 minutes. As far as resources, there were Ph.D.'s residing in Little

Africa, Black attorneys and doctors. One doctor was Dr. Berry who also owned the bus system. His average income was \$500 a day, a hefty pocket of change in 1910.

During that era, physicians owned medical schools. There were also pawn shops everywhere, brothels, jewelry stores, churches, restaurants and movie theaters. It was a time when the entire state of Oklahoma had only two airports, yet six blacks owned their own planes. It was a very fascinating community.

The area encompassed over 600 businesses and 36 square blocks with a population of 15,000 African Americans. And when the lower-economic Europeans looked over and saw what the Black community created, many of them were jealous. When the average student went to school on Black Wallstreet, he wore a suit and tie because of the morals and respect they were taught at a young age.

Continued on page 3

## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

It is evident to me that a student publication is not one of the highest priorities on the minds of the African American students here at the University of Dayton. That is obvious in reading this four page Black History month edition of *The Black Perspective*. Maybe many of you have failed to realize that the editor of this paper is a graduating senior, who in addition to taking 18 credit hours also has two jobs and lives off campus. Why is this editor participating in more activities than the young and jovial students who live on campus and have many years ahead before they receive their diplomas? Well, I don't have the answer to that question but I can assure you that this graduating senior is fed up with your lacksodasical attitudes and tired of tacking up the slack. For these reasons, the February issue of *The Black Perspective* is only four pages and the next two issues may be the same in length, if any.

Black History Month should be a time of celebrating the great feats of our ancestors, past and present. It appears that in 1998, those accomplishments are being overshadowed by one's selfishness and the attitude of "getting mine." Have any of you not learned that without bonding together many of our achievements will be diminished by the mistakes of our brothers. The news is not quick to tell you the good things, only the bad. Publications such as this one make an effort to note those accomplishments but it seems that it is being done in vain (just like those ancestors who died for you!).

Instead of the many contributions *The Black Perspective* should be receiving there are complaints and criticisms. The distribution endeavors are also failing the efforts being made. Many of you may believe that the lateness is due in part to those writing the paper. Let me assure you that other channels

contribute to this lateness, i.e. printing, copying, delivery and distribution. The arrival of the January issue in February was no fault of *The Black Perspective* staff. Due to another lowness of priority as a service to the African American community, *The Black Perspective* was set aside for a week and a half in the Office of Diverse Student Populations, for reasons unknown. As a result, *The Black Perspective* will no longer be distributed via mail. Instead, they, like the *Flyer News*, will be made available in Kennedy Union and the student dorms.

I would like to thank those faithful contributors - Eric Hill, Darren Nealy, Rashad Young, Becky Ford and Danielle VanCleaf - for their efforts. I encourage the rest of you to keep this publication, your voice, alive.

Editor-in-Chief  
Ebony L. Odoms

## BLACK PERSPECTIVE

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 thought 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.

Submissions may be sent to  
**Black Perspective**  
c/o Diverse Student Populations  
101 O'Reilly Hall  
Dayton, OH 45401-0812  
odomsebl@flyernet.udayton.edu

**Editor-In-Chief**  
Ebony L. Odoms

**Contributing Authors**  
Dr. Julius Amin  
Eric Hill

## Talent/Fashion Show

Friday  
February 27, 1998  
University of Dayton  
Kennedy Union -  
Ballroom  
8:00p.m. - 10:00p.m.



Free with Conference  
Registration  
\$5.00 without  
Conference Registration  
Featuring DJ - B. Scott



Fashions brought to you by -  
McAlpin's J. Riggins  
Hip Hop Culture  
And many more!

## BLACK WALLSTREET (continued from page 1)

The mainstay of the community was to educate every child. Nepotism was the one word they believed in. And that's what we need to get back to in 1998. The main thoroughfare was Greenwood Avenue, and it was intersected by Archer and Pine Streets. From the first letters in each of those names, you get G.A.P., and that's where the renowned R&B music group *The GAP Band* got its name. They're from Tulsa. Black Wallstreet was a prime example of the typical Black community in America that did business, but it was in an unusual location. You see, at the time, Oklahoma was set aside to be a Black and Indian state.

There were over 28 Black townships there. One third of the people who traveled in the terrifying "Trail of Tears" alongside the Indians between 1830 to 1842 were Black people.

The citizens of this proposed Indian and Black state chose a Black governor, a treasurer from Kansas named McDade. But the Ku Klux Klan said that if he assumed office that they would kill him within 48 hours. A lot of Blacks owned farmland, and many of them had gone into the oil business. The community was so tight and wealthy because they traded dollars hand-to-hand, and because they were dependent upon one another as a result of the Jim Crow laws.

It was not unusual that if a resident's home accidentally burned down, it could be rebuilt within a few weeks by neighbors. This was the type of scenario that was going on day-to-day on Black Wallstreet. When Blacks intermarried into the Indian culture, some of them received their promised '40 acres and a Mule,' and with that came whatever oil was later found on the properties. Just to show you how wealthy a lot of Black people were, there was a banker in a neighboring town who had a wife named California Taylor. Her father owned the largest cotton gin west of the Mississippi [River]. When California shopped, she would take a cruise to Paris every three months to have her clothes made.

There was also a man named Mason in nearby Wagner County who had the largest potato farm west of the Mississippi. When he harvested, he would fill 100 boxcars a day. Another brother not far away had the same thing with a spinach farm. The typical family then was five children or more, though the typical farm family would have 10 kids or more who made up the nucleus of the labor.

On Black Wallstreet, a lot of global business was conducted. The community flourished

from the early 1900s until June 1, 1921. That's when the largest massacre of non-military Americans in the history of this country took place, and it was led by the Ku Klux Klan. Imagine walking out of your front door and seeing 1,500 homes being burned. It must have been amazing. [The] survivors we interviewed think that the whole thing was planned because during the time that all of this was going on, white families with their children stood around on the borders of the community and watched the massacre, the looting and everything—much in the same manner they would watch a lynching. In my lectures I ask people if they understand where the word "picnic" comes from. It was typical to have a picnic on a Friday evening in Oklahoma. The word was short for "pick a nigger" to lynch. They would lynch a Black male and cut off body parts as souvenirs. This went on every weekend in this country. That's where the term really came from.

The riots weren't caused by anything Black or white. It was caused by jealousy. A lot of white folks had come back from World War I and they were poor. When they looked over into the Black communities and realized that Black men who fought in the war had come home heroes, that helped trigger the destruction. It cost the Black community everything, and not a single dime of restitution—no insurance claims have been awarded to the victims to this day. Nonetheless, they rebuilt. We estimate that 1,500 to 3,000

people were killed and we know that a lot of them were buried in mass graves all around the city. Some were thrown in the river. As a matter of fact, at 21st Street and Yale Avenue, where there now stands a Sears parking lot, that corner used to be a coal mine. They threw a lot of the bodies into the shafts.

Black Americans don't know about this story because we don't apply the word holocaust to our struggle. Jewish people use the word holocaust all the time. White people use the word holocaust. It's politically correct to use it. But when we Black folks use the word, people think we're being cry babies or that we're trying to bring up old issues. No one comes to our support.

In 1910, our forefathers and mothers owned 13 million acres of land at the height of racism in this country, so the Black Wallstreet book and videotape prove to the naysayers and revisionists that we had our act together. Our mandate now is to begin to teach our children about our own, ongoing Black holocaust. They have to know when they look at our communities today that we don't come from this.

To order a copy of Black Wallstreet, contact:

Duralon Entertainment, Inc.  
PO Box 2702

Tulsa, Oklahoma 74149  
or call 1-800-682-7975

*Black Wallstreet: A lost Dream* \$21.95  
ISBN 1-882465-00-8



# GARCIA AND KEATON DESPERATELY FIGHT OFF COMPETITION AT THE BOX OFFICE

by Eric Hill

## Desperate Measures (Rated R)

**Brief Synopsis:** Andy Garcia (Hoodlum, Jennifer 8, Internal Affairs, etc.) is a San Franciscan cop who lives in constant fear of his son's life as his son is dying from a rare form of leukemia. Unable to find a possible matched link, he covertly examines police records and stumbles upon a convicted psychopath (Michael Keaton- The first two Batman installments, Beetlejuice, Multiplicity, Pacific Heights, etc.) as a possible donor candidate for his ailing son. Keaton resists for such measures, unless in return, is granted freedom from his prison sentence. Garcia can't negotiate to those terms, but he agrees to award Keaton certain privileges that Keaton wants instead. With these "key" Privileges, Keaton find the necessary tools to escape the hospital while interrupting the initial bone marrow transplant. From there on, Garcia and Keaton play the typical cat and mouse game in the hospital, DieHard style. Garcia fighting for his son's sake for the bone marrow, Keaton is seeking escape.

### Plot and Character Analysis

**Strengths:** In fair honesty, what drew me into the movie was essentially to see two good actors at their best. Preferably, Keaton did a good job portraying the villain. I was marveled to see Keaton act so vile, just like in Pacific Heights. He is so versatile with his roles; he can play comedic roles (Beetlejuice, Johnny Dangerously, and Mr. Mom) to serious, determined roles (Batman Franchise, One Good Cop, and The Paper).

Hoping not to spoil the ending, there is a twist that was clever in the development of the story, which essentially helped the storyline stand out a little. (Oops!! I said too much)

**Weaknesses:** However, in this particular film, the weaknesses outweigh the strengths. First off, the predictability in the story. Within the first twenty to thirty minutes of the movie, you the audience member will pretty much predict that Keaton will try to escape. You don't need Dionne Warwick's psychic hotline to figure that out! Secondly, the characters involved with the storyline moved statically, with the exception of Keaton. Static characterization refers to a character not changing his or her feelings, and the inability to develop such feelings, but staying the same. Keaton was the opposite, dynamic, meaning that a character experiences changes in feelings, meanings, etc. in the development of one's character. He had one mission, escape, but later in the movie as he confronts Garcia's sickly son; he changes a little, seemly caring about the child. Later, he sways back to his heartless sentiments. Basically, Keaton's sheer talent saves the movie. Last, the plot was rather limited; it just focused on the attention of the struggle of



Garcia and Keaton in the hospital playing opposite ends.

This brings me to the famous...

**Eric's Exuberant Rating.** Every time I rate movies, I try to be different. This time by the common scale 1 to 10. 10 being excellent to 1 being down right awful.

**Acting: 7 out of 10,** Keaton saves the movie with his ability to play honest, caring individuals to heartless, vile creeps. Only one word to say **VERSATILITY.** Garcia quietly does well too, but is overshadowed by Keaton's presence.

**Story/Plot: 5 out of 10.** Again the story was predictable, except the ending. Plot too limited.

**Overall: 6 out of 10.** Movie had potential, but failed at the halfway point of the movie.

Without Keaton and Garcia, this movie could have been worse. Unfortunately, Desperate Measures is going against some pretty formidable competition at the box office.

**Eric's Exclamation Point:** If you want to see this movie, make sure you (1) See it at a matinee for a cheaper price or (2) Possibly wait for Blockbuster to have it as a rental. If you admire Keaton's work, the price is worth admission.

**Other interesting tidbits:** Michael Keaton's real name is Michael Douglas; he didn't want Hollywood to be confused with his identity and his counterpart, the other Michael Douglas. Stage names work wonders, eh?

*Colors of Leadership Conference*  
**"The New Millenium -  
What's In It For Me?"**

**Register Today!!!**

Office of Diverse Student Populations  
101 O'Rielly Hall  
229-3634