

OLGA

Tuesday
February 25, 1969

The State News
Bi-weekly
Magazine

power of blackness
 liberation
 'fro Malcolm FREEDOM
 Panthers revolution Afro-American
 tiki HUEY SOUL natural
 love self-sister ghetto
 UNITY brother determination Rap
 Stokely niggah racism
 oppression mother
 violence
 Detroit whitey non-violence

We remember the last time black writers at MSU conversed with the University community through the medium of Collage. The date was April 1, 1968--the day of the death of Martin Luther King, Jr. It's been a long time between conversations.

In terms of MSU's black population, a lot has happened. (It has not, however, been enough.) We're told we comprise less than three per cent of the student body. Among that minute number is an inordinately large number of creative people. This issue serves as a forum for their ideas and for their artistry.

We'd like to take this opportunity to extend to Miss Pamela Clark, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., freshman, apologies for not running her play, "Three Cheers." The play, a literary piece of merit, isn't running as a consequence of the fact that a lot of minds haven't yet been liberated. We're waiting.

Our aim is to periodically inject some black thought into this great white conservative bastion of pseudo-intellectualism and rah rah. We're told too much newspaper space was devoted to Black (nee Negro) History Week. Quite the contrary. What folk had best realize is that every week is black history week. The Black Students' Alliance intends to keep this upper-most in the minds of the general populace. This University, this community, this country cannot afford to neglect the wealth of artistry that is black people. Black students on this campus recognize this, black people everywhere recognize this.

Read on, dig us and dig yourselves.

--F. T.



Collage thanks all those writers who responded so munificently to our last request for material. We can still use MORE short stories, poems, plays, whatnots and especially humor (though that's usually asking for trouble). The regular collage staff (noticing opportunity's knock) uses this special issue--all writing, art and editing done by black students--to encourage all students to write for Collage all the time. Don't wait for a special issue--contribute now!

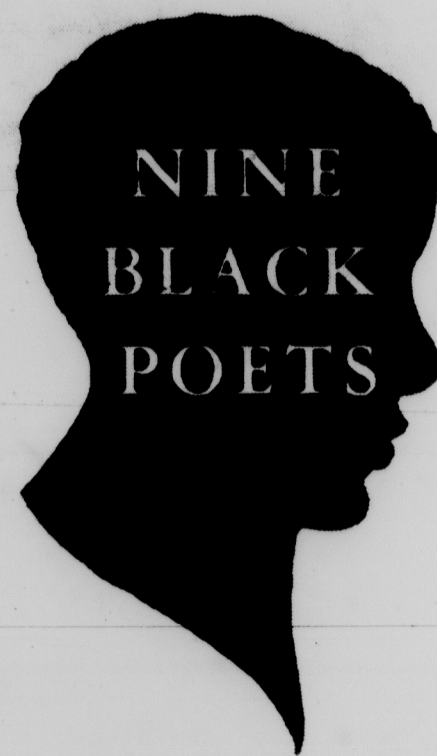
Write: Your Local Culture Cultures. Do it now.

This book, *Nine Black Poets*, is now available in East Lansing book stores. Richard W. Thomas, a student at MSU, has a large selection of his poems featured in the book. Thomas is said to be one of the finest black poets of his generation.

acknowledgments

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Functional Implications of Black History

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By RONALD BAILEY

History, especially as I have known the discipline, has always been rather narrowly defined, or at least narrowly construed. I have always seen it as that branch of knowledge that records and explains, in a systematic and chronological fashion, past events in the unfolding of human activities. Included as a major component of this recording is perhaps something of a philosophical explanation of the cause and origin of the events themselves.

It is becoming increasingly evident, in my opinion, that one is no longer to be allowed the luxury of being able to so clearly "segmentize" the various branches of knowledgeable endeavor. Traditional disciplines are overlapping, and necessarily so, and our efforts to accept, adapt, or fight this fact, as the case may be, must begin with this realization.

"History is the matrix of our very lives."¹ From it, we gain some conception of the ideas and modes of existence we must live with. History lends some continuity to life. Similarly, we are in a fashion trapped by manifestations of our civilization and culture over which we have had very little control. As we reflect on the world situation today and extend our reflections to include the world as we would want tomorrow, we must consider the facts of the past. History, therefore, enables one to better relate to the reality of things.

The study of black history has assumed a much greater proportion of my interest over the last year. It is not surprising that my increased interest seems to parallel that of the entire country. Some writers have stated "that today we are witnessing somewhat of a boom in Negro history, a boom which shows no signs of abating."² If one refers back to my definition of history above, such occurrences as the "boom" in the study of black history can not be without cause. This leads to, in a sense, another observation, albeit inexperienced, that I have made about much that is called history: a seeming preoccupation with the causes of various events, with little or no major attempts to equally treat their effects.

This may serve to introduce the purpose of this paper. Contradictions seem somewhat apparent in the rise of black history. Some scholars hold that "the current civil rights revolution has brought with it a heightened interest in the Negro's role in the American past,"³ while others seem to imply that it has rather been the "growing interest in Africa and a rediscovery of the lost African heritage launched the spread of black consciousness among young civil rights militants."⁴ Upon reflection, the two statements are not so much revealing of a contradiction as they are of a different type of relationship. That is, it can hardly be gainsaid that the study of black history and the current movement of "civil rights" are all but inextricably bound to each other. An understanding of one requires thorough consideration of the other.



SAMBAS AND THINGS

*she picked up her ticket yesterday
only the details remain
to be worked out
in samba time
or at ipanema getting a tan
squinting against too bright reflections
of little soccer suns played on sand
and brown boys
selling flowers and fruit*

*but the evening news
cancelled carnival this year
and rio just won't be the same
since those ragged people on the hill
have blown up corcovado*

--Jill Witherspoon



This has led me to consider some aspects of this interrelation rather than attempt to construct a heavily-documented, scholarly jaunt into some phase of history, which would probably, upon having been read by an historian, be considered seemingly plagiarized and rather superficial at best. My primary aim is to discuss the functional implications of the increased study of black history to our social order. Because of the current debate in the area of social inquiry, the term "function" should be clarified. **For the purposes of this paper, function can be defined as that activity which is considered useful for the achievement of certain purposes.** This definition, at best, is still rather hazy but hopefully its meaning will sharpen in the use of the concept.

By far the most fundamental notion that has struck some Americans about the topic on which I am writing is that the study of black history fulfills the very important function of aiding in the development of a strong, positive self-image among black people in America. Any discussion of this aspect really tends to be an in-group discussion for black people, but possibly others may be enlightened by listening in. Perhaps the major tenet of the current concept of Black Power is this drive toward self-development and self-respect.

It is all but impossible to remember the number of times I have heard both white and black Americans deprecate the past and present role of black people in this country. This was done by whites and allowed by blacks because of ignorance--an ignorance that did not know of the many riches contained in the African and Afro-American experience. The rate at which black America has been sensitized to the many atrocities and injustices she has suffered may be mainly attributed to the completeness of this ignorance. This veil of ignorance is now being lifted and "even when one acknowledges how grotesquely slow is the pace at which black people are moving on to the American stage, the knowledge of their history is still absolutely indispensable as they proceed."⁵

It is psychologically important, I think, for black children to be systematically exposed to the history of their forefathers. To ask a child to face the realities of American racism today, though often very subtle, in a state of historical amnesia is tantamount to relegating that child to a permanent second-class existence. It is both necessary and healthy that black young have at least a historical overview that will explain the existence of the hatred and fear that they will inescapably see and feel in the black community.

The implications of a strong, positive self-image rooted in a historically valid knowledge of the Afro-American existence for black self-development of other ethnic groups in America, as compared to the black minority, has been sometimes attributed to the fact that they came to America with a history and culture still intact and capable of supporting them as they weathered the storms that all ethnic groups must, to become fully incorporated into the American mainstream. For black Americans, however, attempts to re-establish this heritage and counteract the abortive effects of an almost complete separation from it are only now beginning to bear fruit. The harvest time is right, and the fruit is ripe!

While the self-image enhancement of black Americans is probably most important, the effects that the increased study of black history has had in restructuring the frame of reference used by whites to control racial relations in America is clearly a significant consideration. Without even a sketchy knowledge of black history, many conservative and, indeed, liberal whites are apt to think they are doing black America a "favor" by tokenly integrating schools, business corporations and the like. If they were aware of the "real deal" in American history, they would readily admit that the blood, sweat, and tears of black Americans have watered and enriched the soil of this country to such a great extent that black people should own a major portion of the entire country. Is it not really the black man who is doing the favor, that of allowing white America one more chance to do justice to a people graced through their toil for this country and the wrongs that an ungrateful country has visited upon him?

The second aspect of the study of black history I wish to discuss is one that is international in scope. Black history provides a needed link with the rest of the "third world"--the humiliated and oppressed, the colonized and exploited, thereby fulfilling the function of stimulating the struggle for human rights. It is not a too easily discernable fact, especially when one employs the highly developed method of selective perception as most Americans do, that the vast majority of the earth's humiliated and oppressed people in the last few centuries--have been non-white, and their humiliation has been the result of oppression by the white, mainly western world.⁶

That the role of America in this oppression has been nothing less than that of fearless lead-

(continued on page 11)

What are a few looted mansions

By PHILIP S. HART

The summer of '67 proved to be the most violent and destructive one that this country has experienced internally, and served to polarize forces even more than originally was the case. The hope for integration was rendered yet another rude blow, and on both sides (black and white) there was the increasing cognizance that hope indeed is a false illusion. And to hold integration up as a hope is an illusion, which if believed can only lead to delusion. That is, we are only fooling ourselves by holding onto integration in both theory and or practice as a panacea unless basic attitudes are changed. Whereas the disenchantment with integration has received a severe shock within the white community (which may be based upon the ethnocentric assumption of how anyone could reject white values, rather than with the ultimate worth of such a 'reality'), the black community is moving toward the zenith of rejection of such a doctrine, ergo, the arisal of black nationalism. For there has occurred "the momentous realization by many 'integrated' Negroes that, in the U.S., full integration can only mean full assimilation—a loss of racial identity."¹ This realization has served to cause a 'mental negrescence' among many blacks within many confines of society. This process of becoming 'mentally' black springs from the physical fact of blackness and the resultant rejection of such persons so characterized by the society-at-large. Talcott Parsons in *The Negro American* makes a good case, but misses the basic point when he said that "The most serious difference of all, perhaps, is not color, as such, but the fact that historically the Negro has served as the primary symbol of inferiority."² To this I would say that the fact of blackness is the reason why such an historical symbol has arisen and is perpetuated yet today. Blackness is the symbol, and inherent in this blackness is the false notion of inferiority. The black community (and the individuals comprising it) in this country are indeed highly visible physically; the real tragedy is that this physical acuteness is transcended by an invisibility of character, e.g., Ralph Ellison's stirring novel *The Invisible Man*. The individual black person is highly visible and the black collectivity (community) is also highly visible (though not from the suburbs!), and this merging of the collective and the individual that we have is a case of metaphysical individualism which is a reductionist argument. This reductionist doctrine which is seemingly indigenous to the white, American community does not allow for mental visibility and this stifles the totality of blacks in that they are regarded as invisibly-visible, historically trying to merge the mental

and physical aspects of visibility. This is why, the theme of integration was once the central doctrine, and this involved the attempt to bring the white community around to recognizing the mental black, to see beyond the physical black. History has shown that this ideal has proven to be repugnant to the white community and as Robert S. Browne pointed out, the black community also has rejected this empty doctrine as a result of the white's response.

Thus we have found ourselves upon a precipice of internal bifurcation in which not even the legal system can bring about needed change. For the law of the land, founded by a body of individuals with certain vested interests in the perpetuation of their way of life has proven to be subjective in nature, i.e., it is constructed in such a way as to discriminate against certain segments of the population. A case-in-point is the Fourteenth Amendment, which was supposed to be a contribution to human freedom but instead,

The history of the Fourteenth Amendment, prohibiting the states from depriving any person of life, liberty, or property, epitomizes the ambiguity on this score. As every educated person knows, the Fourteenth Amendment has done precious little to protect Negroes and a tremendous amount to protect corporations.³

The educated, as well as the uneducated (or perhaps I should say the uneducated and now the educated) blacks are coming to realize more and more that to rely on the structure of society to implement needed change is engaging in empty realism. The uneducated blacks have always been cognizant of their sad plight, while the educated few have not perceived their equally sad plight because they were not abstracting beyond their individual existence. These individuals were (and some still are) guilty of perpetuating the white physical and mental domination in that they were given a few, choice crumbs from the master's table and they in turn told those who were not so fortunate that things are not so bad and they are getting better. So just be patient, work hard and if you persevere, then the master will recognize and reward you. But the master needs only so many blacks and the fomenting of a black elite has served the master well. This scheme of domination however, is becoming less and less viable in that "the black masses are becoming politicized, they are developing a class consciousness, and are rejecting the existing Negro leadership."⁴ The resultant force has been in the direction of a negrescence on the part of the elite, they are joining hands with the masses in the effort to combat the structure of domination in its totality. The schizophrenic mentality of the elite

is still holding them back, and this "schizophrenia arises from the inescapable reminders of their vulnerability."⁵

Black subordination and the reaction to it has been with this country since 1619. The notion of black awareness and a break from the white structure was given roots by the expressive leader, Marcus Garvey, the Black Moses desiring to take his people back to their land of origin. The move was then to a Nation of Islam in the 30's with Master W. H. D. Fard passing his message on to Ilijah Muhammed, who in turn 'converted' the black saint, Malcolm X. So the question of a separate black

(continued on page 5)



WHEN BROTHERS FORGET

when brothers forget
 come creeds
 that send the armies marching,
 sitting down to tea
 inspires plotting
 and men clasp hands
 to give the sign
 before tomorrow's battle,
 warmth watches at the edge of the world
 waiting for them
 who have gone too far--
 mama leaning out the window
 calling her children home.

--Jill Witherspoon

(continued from page 4)

nation has historic roots: thus when Stokely Carmichael speaks of Black Power, no one should be surprised. This concern with a separatist movement arises from a rejection of the blacks by the whites, and the white structure **should not** be surprised that such a question should arise. There is a sense of alienation over the land, and this sense has always been here. Only the level of awareness has changed. The Black Power Conference held in Newark in 1967 had as **one** of its areas of concern that of black separatism. Segments of the resolution advocated partitioning:

Whereas the black people in America find that their interests are in contradiction with those of white America

Whereas the black people in America are psychologically handicapped by virtue of their having no national homeland

Whereas the physical, moral, ethical, and aesthetic standards of white American society are not those of black society and indeed do violence to the self-image of the black man . . .

⋮

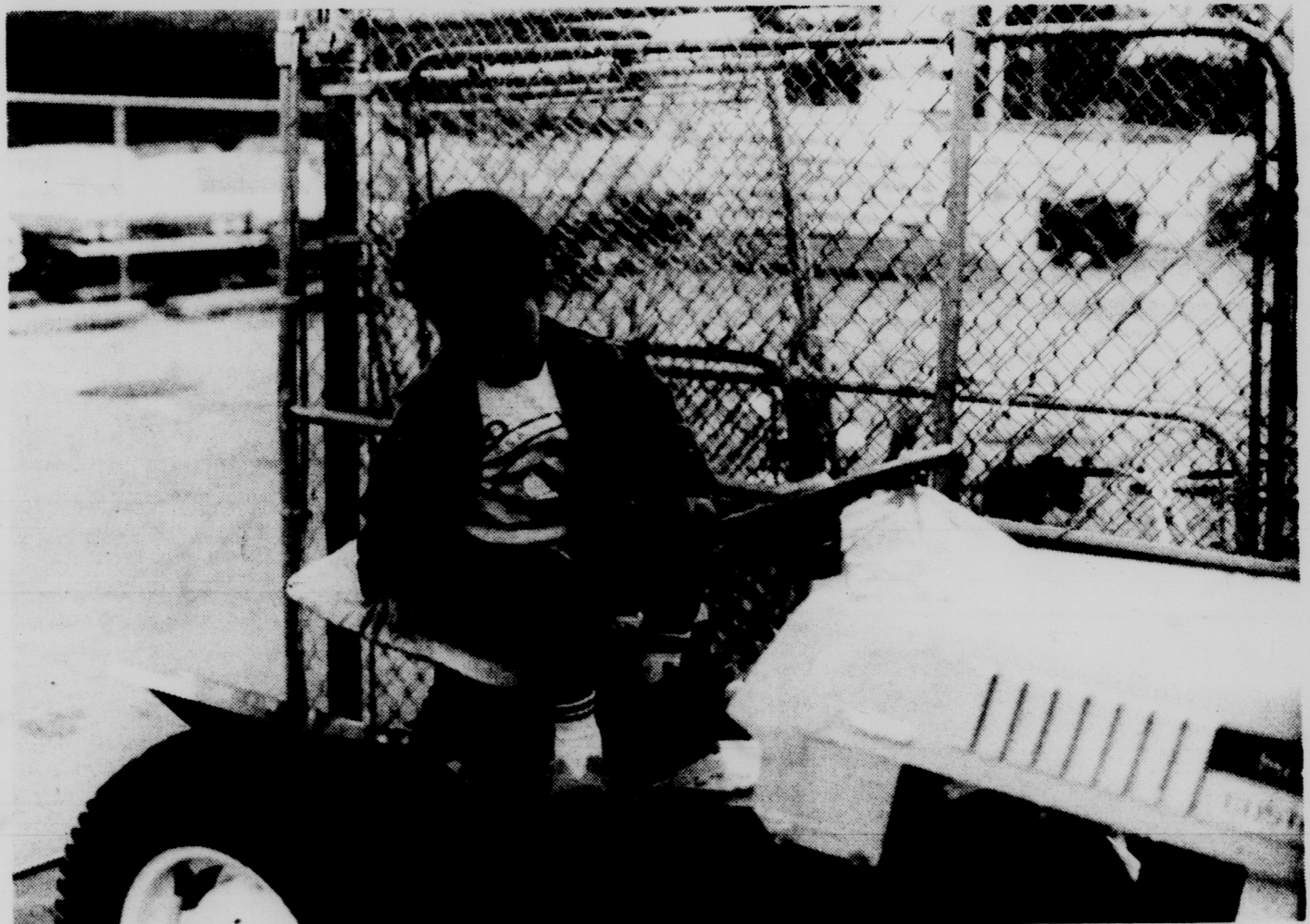


to our looted lives!

Be it resolved that the Black Power Conference initiate a national dialogue on the desirability of partitioning the U.S. into two separate and independent nations, one to be a homeland for white and the other to be a homeland for black Americans." (Taken from Browne's "The Case for Black Separatism," *Ramparts*, Dec. 1967 (Vol. 6, No. 5).

This call for a dialogue is thus a crucial move within the black community. This community is in essence saying, "The white structure denies us individual development and scars our self-image, we cannot and do not desire to be socialized into the white community because such a process is nigh impossible and if ever achieved, my identity will be forfeited." Whereas historically the black has been alienated not only from the larger society, but also from himself, he has not been accorded the right to the development of a personality. This alienative dualism has rendered the black a 'non-person' because he cannot speak to who he is, and the white structure has not, does not and cannot speak to who he is. Thus to look to the larger society for an identity is fruitless, for they will not give it to you. So you must turn within, not only within yourself, but also within your own people to attain self-esteem and a personality. Your structure must become relevant, your brothers must be accorded worth and you yourself must be accorded worth. What this entails is the construction of a structure within which you can operate and from which you can receive some measure of worth, dependent upon your place, role and function within the structure. The structure will not contain seeds of inhibition, one can make it on his own worth, which must be derived from an internal sense of value and a sense of value received from others.

There has been and is occurring among the majority of blacks a mental negrescence which has physical roots, i.e., the fact of blackness, and this is self-imposed self-esteem. That is, we no longer care what you think of us, just as long as we ourselves feel our worth. This implies that there is a move to a sub-cultural definition of self and a rejection of the larger



cultural definition. We will define ourselves and we will concomitantly disregard your definition of us because it is irrelevant.

With the 'black is beautiful' movement, the reality of alienation from self is coming to be obsolete, i.e., a healthy 'my worth is me' feeling is arising. At this point, this is largely a notion of quasi-nationalism; however, generations to come (speaking optimistically) will exhibit and embrace this 'I am black, ergo I am beautiful' as a genuine expression. As opposed to mere lip-service, this belief will approach reality and there will no longer be a feeling of self-alienation as a reflection of the larger white structure and their values. If a resultant alteration of attitudes toward the black community does not ensue on the white side of the fence in relation to the existence of autonomous blacks to be judged on 'the con-

tent of their character,' then the rhetoric of black separatism will become more real and more pronounced and it will move beyond rhetoric to constructive action.

Footnotes

1. Robert S. Browne, "The Case for Black Separatism," *Ramparts*, Dec. 1967 (Vol. 6, No. 5).
2. Kenneth Clark and Talcott Parsons(eds.) *The Negro American*. "Introduction: 'Freedom Now, Not Yesterday?'" by Parsons, p. xxv.
3. Barrington Moore, Jr. *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, p. 149.
4. *Op. cit.*, Browne, p. 48.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 49.



The Primary Factor Behind

EDITOR'S NOTE: This article was previously published in the MSU Orient, a publication of college student personnel at MSU. Reprinted with the author's permission.

By MAXIE S. GORDON, JR.

I imagine that if one were asked the following question, namely: "What do you feel is the primary factor behind white racism in America?", many of you would indicate that economic considerations are foremost, or take precedent over everything else, etc. Others of you would readily reject this notion per se, and attempt to "justify" why the problem (obviously) lies in the area of education. Still others might reply negatively to either economic or educational considerations and request that we view this particular problem in terms of the political structure or machinery in our society. And, I am well aware, too, of responses that might be given for several other areas--although the three aforementioned ones are more often heard (time and time again) than others.

Moreover, I am certain that valid reasons might be offered in favor of any one of these three previously mentioned areas although (since approximately June of 1968) I have become more and more convinced that there is one area that really gets at the "nitty-gritty" of race relations--the point is, specifically, that neither of the other three really does that sort of thing. This one area that I am presently referring to is not often talked about or discussed openly--nearly enough or in the right manner. So I shall be discussing what I feel to be the real or major factor behind white racism in America.

One of the major cries of young people today (and a cry that is rightly so) is: "to tell it like it is." And I personally feel that the real issue behind white racism in America might be summed up in three words, namely, *psycho-sexual phenomena*; or, in just plain

old everyday talk, SEX. For somehow the notion of certain kinds of social (sexual) intimacy immediately brings to my mind much about the question of the black man's identity, status, and lot (both historically and presently) in this quite wicked society. Therefore, I urge you to try very hard to "get-with-me" and take a serious look at what might enable us to better "deal" with the reality of white racism in America.

To be sure, Langston Hughes (one of the most outstanding Black Americans that has ever lived) has most adequately summed up the message that I attempted to convey in the above paragraph. In his own words:

Within the last decade, every other angle of racism but this one has been voluminously discussed in print. But no writer I have come across except Hernton has as yet had the temerity to so frankly tackle that old bugaboo, S-E-X, as it relates to life, liberty, and the pursuit of integration.¹

The message that is generated from Hughes' quotation cannot be ignored, as its meaning is all-too-strikingly clear. In a word, he is attempting to point out to us that: the failure to look at this particular area (i.e. sex, as it pertains to racism) and all of the implications centered around inter-racism sexual concerns, is a *failure* to look reality squarely in the face. And it is a truism that "failure to look reality in the face diminishes a nation as it diminishes a person."²

James Baldwin (another truly outstanding Black American) in several of his works, points out many of the dreadfully negative or terrible things that have both caused and/or contributed to or resulted from a history of distorted, perverted, and dehumanized relationships between black and white people in America. These consequences (often linked to sexual concerns) too often were cruel, harsh, and extremely severe--especially for the black male--consequences ranging from death to castration or mutilation. As I said earlier, and especially after rereading many of Baldwin's works, I am becoming more and more convinced that we must turn our attention to this too long overlooked area--for herein lies the *crux* of what it's all about!

Why does the "man" get so "uptight" when he sees a black man with a white woman? (The answer to this question reflects much about our history.) My answer would be twofold: guilt and fear of vendetta or vengeance; that's a lot about what has the man "uptight." And specifically, in Sports Illustrated, July 15, 1968, in an article entitled "The Black Athlete," part 3, p. 32, reference was made to the fact that sex does "get at" the core or root of the racial problem in America. As the writer observed:

Harry Edwards and his staff of bereted, beaded and militant assistants swarmed all over UTEP (University of Texas at El Paso) the weekend after Dr. Martin Luther King's assassination and one of them draped himself across a chair in the Sheraton Motor Inn on Mesa Street and intoned carefully: "what it gets down to is sex, the same old story. Isn't it funny that whenever you make a thorough study of the problems of white and black together it always comes out sex."

In a word, our history has shown us that sexual factors or concerns have been major con-

siderations in race relations (pertaining to black and white people in America); and, it is quite evident that most of these were damaged or dehumanized relationships.

To return to Baldwin once more, note how he characterizes some of the dehumanizing modes of thinking and acting that somehow purport to justify the "southern way of life." For anyone to deny that psycho-sexual concerns have had a direct bearing on white racism in America and have influenced and decisively shaped the history of our inter-racial relations--and I must say, shaped them atrociously--would be a serious mistake; or perhaps I should say, would even be a lie. Let Baldwin speak for himself:

In the fall of last year, my plane hovered over the rust-red earth of Georgia. I was past thirty, and I had never seen this land before. I pressed my face against the window, watching the earth come closer; soon we were just above the tops of the trees. I could not suppress the blood that had dropped down from these trees. My mind was filled with the image of a black man, younger than I, perhaps, or my own age, hanging from a tree, while white men watched him and cut his sex from him with a knife.³

Moreover, Baldwin further notes:

And the white man must have seen his guilt written somewhere else, seen it all the time, even if his sin was merely lust, even if his sin lay in nothing but his power: in the eyes of the black men. He may not have stolen his woman, but he had certainly stolen his freedom--this black man, who had a body like his, and passions like his, and a ruder, more erotic beauty. How many times had the southern day come up to find that black man, sexless, hanging from a tree!⁴

To be sure, Baldwin has most adequately summed up the importance of sex as it pertains to what has happened to literally thousands of black men under the guise of their "wrongly" saying or doing virtually anything that might have sexual over-tones with a view toward so-called sacred white womanhood. In other words, Baldwin is attempting to point out to us that so many of the terribly negative consequences inflicted on the black male in America must (strongly) indicate that: we are going to have to deal with the reality of the "sexualization of the race problem."⁵ Unfortunately

(continued on facing page)

Pride

It is too late for death and pride
the dead live on uproariously
and pride was long since cast aside
as a yoke too long borne
tho never borne at all.

Pride

Proud men live no more
We kill the pride in man
or failing that
we kill the man.
There is no guilt in this
for killing's right
and right things should be done.

James B. Hamilton



White Racism in America



(continued from previous page)

ly, however, I am certain that most people are either unprepared or unwilling to do just that!

I often ask myself, "why has this so-called great nation of ours condoned the severely tragic and awfully inhumane things that black men have had perpetrated on them--beatings, lynchings, castrations, electrocutions, and various other mutilations--when in reality only an occasional few actually were guilty of any alleged crime for which they received these "punishments?" Time and time again I am forced to conclude that since sex (i.e. social intimacy) is a vital and all pervasive force in our lives--thereby inextricably bound with almost every facet of our being-- then by implication it must (in some way) be linked to various aspects of racism, too. Furthermore, since in our society "feelings of guilt" so often do hinge on sexual concerns, it would follow then that the racist must either give vent to these feelings or (unconsciously) repress them. Nevertheless, whichever of the two might be utilized, it can be further concluded that such feelings do play a vital part in the peculiar make-up of racist mentality and yield further implications for the sort of behavior that might ensue from such individuals.

The significance of this last point, namely, about "guilt" feelings, might become a little clearer if you reflect about the history of America in-so-far-as it (the American society) has been built on ideas and modes of life based on religious convictions. That is to say, our history has been based on religious styles of life--Calvinism, Puritanism, other modes of Protestantism, and Catholicism, etc. -- which suggests to me that the white man is (though often unconsciously) "hung up" on a Christian ethic. To be sure, the psychologists or sociologists refer to this as **cognitive dissonance**. (A position whereby the individual has two beliefs which are basically incompatible with each other.) And, to quote a former student of mine:

In short, Americans cannot escape the values represented by Christian and democratic teachings. But at the same

time these Americans have needs to maintain security, status, and material advantage.

In the area of Negro-white relations this antipathy between the ideal action and the real action of Americans causes a "moral uneasiness."

It is apparent then that a history of more than 300 years--much of which is steeply rooted in puritanical ascetism--has produced such a nightmare in America, through such dishonest or dehumanized interracial relationships that it might be impossible for black and white people (collectively) to ever have authentic or genuine relationships. In the book entitled **Sex and Racism In America** the author gives the following account in the sexual soul of the south and the nation for more than 300 years. Hernton writes:

"From all indications, our sons and daughters, and their sons and daughters in turn, will be victimized by the American sexual nightmare. The nightmare began during the era of slavery, when the first light-skinned Negro infant was born from the loins of a black woman. When the first black man was hunted down by a mob of jealously-riden white men--and the black man's genitals were torn off for "raping" a "chaste" white woman--the myth of sacred white womanhood became a reality."⁶

It is evident that from the waves of devastations, and tyranny, over the past 300 years or so sons, and daughters of black men in America have been victimized both physically and psychologically.

It is no wonder then, to return to the central thesis once more, that black people in America have been the victims of a very bad social scene. Specifically, this society that could do all the dehumanizing things that it has done to black people (historically and presently) and still purport allegiance to **God and Country** is sicker than it can ever begin to imagine. It would follow, then, that the society as a whole would be making a serious mistake if it expected us to be "healthy" individuals; for, we black Americans are, unfortunately, a product of its sickness. To quote Hernton again:

One fact is certain, this myth (i.e. the myth of sacred white womanhood) was not created by the southern white women, and it was not propounded by the black woman nor the black man. It was, as it could only have been, the southern white man, who invented it to save his own guilt. In the days of slavery this guilt stemmed primarily from his persistent, clandestine activities with Negro women. Out of his guilt grew fear--if he found it difficult to stay away from the "animal" attraction of black women, was it not possible that his wife felt that same attraction to the black "bucks"?"⁷

In a word, try and imagine what just this very thought must have done to the white man as his fear and guilt became more and more intense.

There were two psychological processes going on in the Southerner's mind: one was the deep sense of guilt arising from his cohabitation with Negro women; the second was his sense of immorality

POEM

can a slave
really
be
a man?
can liberty exist
in a racist
land?
can there be
a black
without a
white?
can there be love
if there is
no
hate?
can there,
can there,
can there be?

--Barry D. Amis

about a society founded and maintained on the principles of human slavery. Somehow the entire "southern way of life," sexual and otherwise, create a symbol, an idea of grace and purity, that would loom large in a civilization shot through with shame, bigotry, and the inhuman treatment of (at that time) nearly six million black people. Sacred white womanhood emerged in the south as an immaculate mythology to glorify an otherwise indecent south. What ensued was nothing less than fantastic.⁸

What ensued was the absurdity that we have in America today!!!!

It would be in error to suppose that we can (only) speak about overt acts of racism (individually and otherwise) that pertain just to the south. On the contrary, the sickness in America is not limited to the south; for one can immediately think of many all-white communities in the "liberal" north--communities, as you might have guessed devoid of any black residents. So, let us now reflect about what I have said thus far (in reference to sex, and how this area suggests to me the core of our racial difficulties in America) in order to see that this notion has implications on our northern perspective(s) too. For it strikes me clearly--given both our southern historical background, in general, and the fact that many millions of white people have migrated to the north from the south--what some of the thoughts are (by northern whites) as they contemplate or consider the "implications" of black men moving into their communities. In many instances, such as the aforementioned one, economically speaking, these same white people may work (side-by-side) all day long with black people; make similar salaries, etc., and (other than in rare instances) that's generally okay--okay, that is, as long as their relationship is basically confined to the job situation.

But the following question now arises: What does the "man" fear about a black man's moving into his (in most cases, previously all-white) neighborhood? One answer might be that this black man now has access to that which is most intimate to him (i.e., the white man); to be sure, his wife, his daughter, and perhaps, in some cases, his mother also. What a dreadful thought this must be as the racist seeks to push it out of his sick mind.

(continued on page 8)

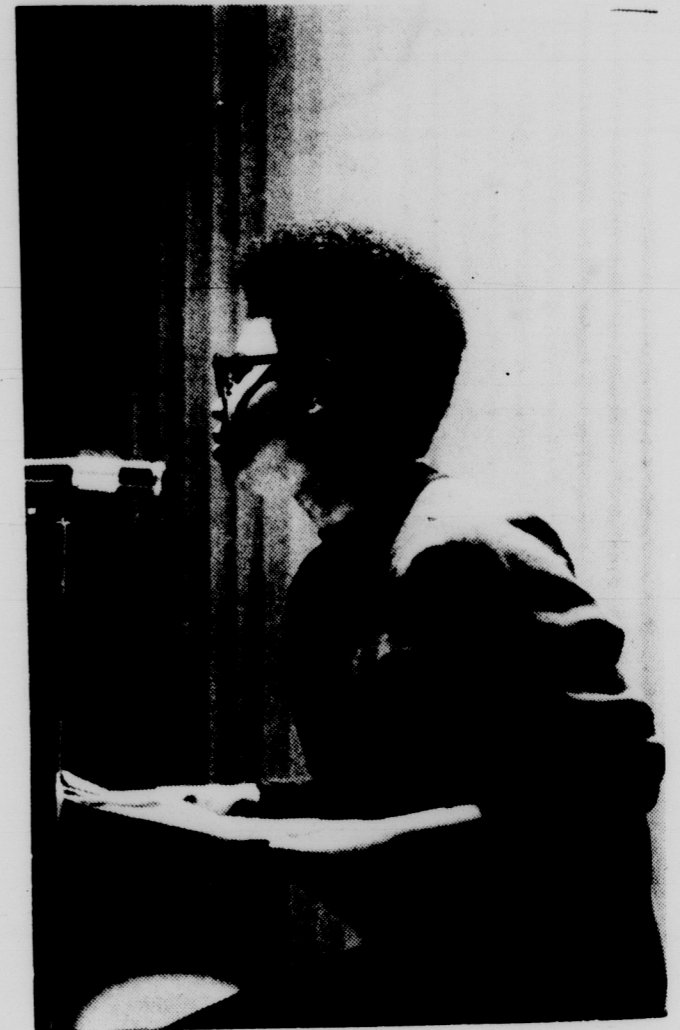
Family Breakdown

My mother 57, and a Negro
 My father is 63, and a Negro
 My sister is 19, and can you believe a Negro
 I'm me, 18, and Afro-American
 The place where I rest my head
 is becoming like Hell for me
 I talk black they talk semi-black
 (brown, colored)

I talk myself blue in the face
 trying to convert them black
 Wake up mother, wake up father, please
 wake up sister, before it's too late.
 They think me insane because I say white must go. to Hell
 We must go Forward
 Can you believe because I worship a black truth

How can one family so close together now be divided
 If I thought that I could mend it back together I would.
 So I guess I must leave them, leave them waiting on God (to deliver them)
 I'm also waiting on my God to deliver me into the black war so that
 I can deliver my people into freedom.

--shirley echols



Sex and White Racism

(continued from page 7)

I am certain that (by now) you are somewhat aware of the fact that our history does point out to us that much of the racial difficulty in America stems from sexual overtones. I am certain also that you are aware of the fact that many authors--like Hernton, Farber, and Baldwin--would (in one way or another) confirm or substantiate most of my suspicions about sex and racism in America. But, at this point let the names of two black men in America that have had tragic circumstances befall them suffice to demonstrate those "deep-seated" sexual concerns: Mack Charles Parker and Emmett Till.

The actual and potential list of atrocities committed by white men against black men in the name of "so-called" justice is unbelievably long--and it continues to grow! For example--in 1952, Mack Charles Parker, a black man, was dissected at each of his body joints, covered with tar and feathers and then set on fire. Why? He was accused of looking into the garage apartment window of a white woman's home while she undressed. Where else can such punishment be perpetrated against a man even though he might have been guilty of the accused crime of voyeurism? How tragic, how ironic, how shameful, how stupid and absurd that a former soldier who had fought in a previous war had to come home and die like this.

Emmett Till, a 12-year-old black youngster from Chicago, went south to Mississippi to visit

his grandmother for the summer. Shortly after he arrived at his grandmother's he was lynched, chained to an iron weight and thrown into the Mississippi River. Why? His alleged crime was that he tried to be "friendly" with a white female clerk in a department store. For this act of social (sexual) intimacy a young boy paid the ultimate price.

The list goes on. For example, only yesterday did I reread an excerpt from a newspaper of October 4, 1968, that gave an account of the death of George Hayes. He was castrated, severely beaten, lacerated in several areas of his body and killed. So, only approximately four months ago, Mississippi again shows her true colors. Moreover, only two months ago another black man was killed in Prichard, Alabama. He was hung to the town's general store.

How long will these dreadfully inhumane things continue to plague black men in America? Obviously, we aren't going to take this nonsense much longer. The castrations, the mutilations, and the lynchings, etc. must not, and cannot continue. All of these notions, however, do strongly suggest that the reality of sex and racism in America must be viewed in its true light. For if that does not happen, then we (as a society) do not have even the slightest chance of ever reconciling our racial differences.

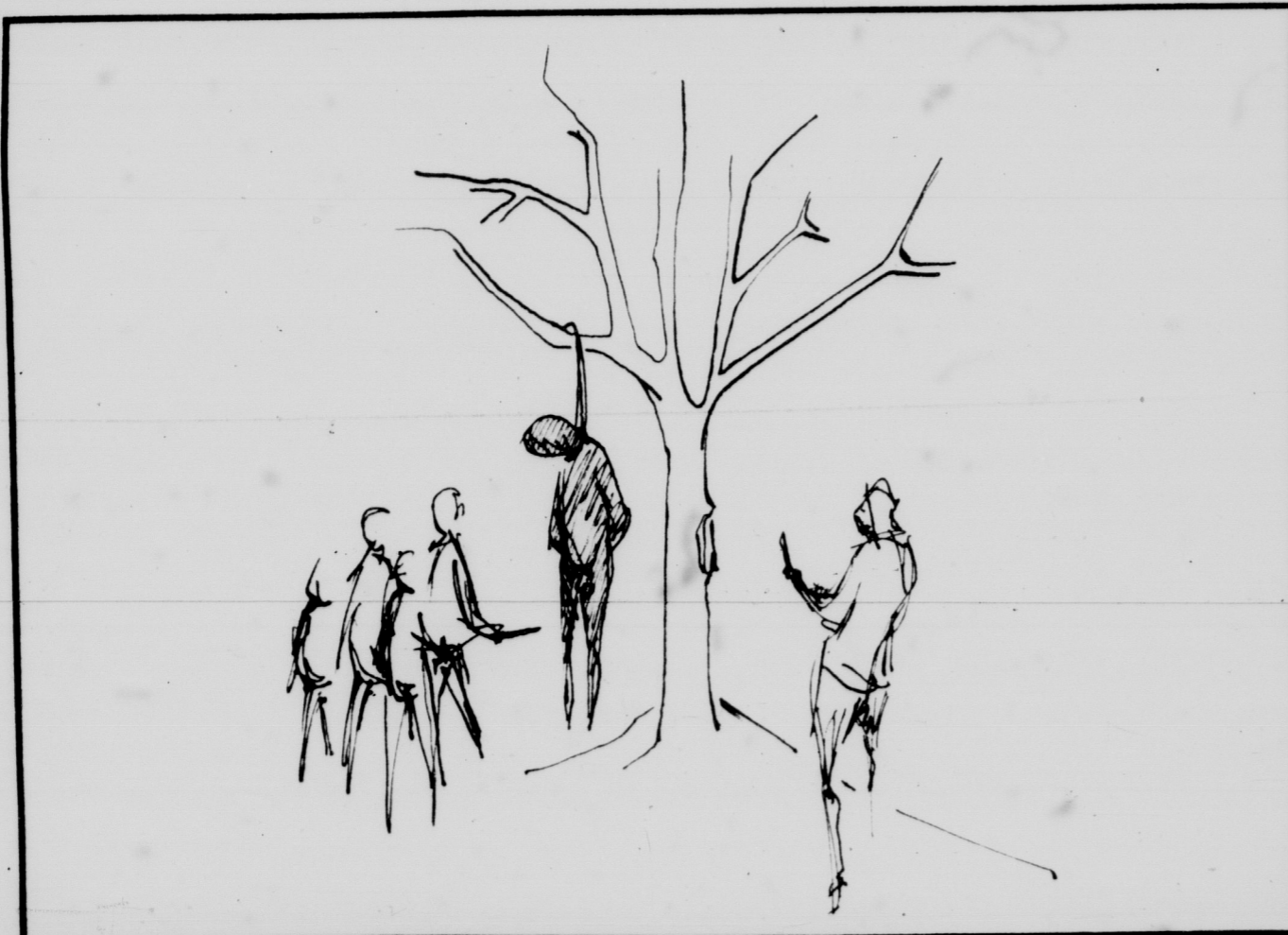
Why are white men so fearful of integrated communities? In other words, why are so

many white individuals in our society preoccupied with keeping black men at a "safe distance" from white women. Racism, or the fact that these individuals are racist, is apparent. We must, then, try to deal with the reality of this racism.

Conclusion

What white America had better realize--soon, if it is not too late already--is that black people in America aren't going to take the abuses, scorn, degradation and injustices, etc., any longer. In a word, though abused and scorned, our goal now, more than ever before is FREEDOM. Thus the society can "wake up" and attempt to make the black man her asset; or perhaps I should say: start doing enough "positive" sorts of things that might reasonably insure peaceful co-existence between the races. Otherwise, in my mind, the alternative of violent revolution may be the only cogent (viable) method of dealing with the "man" that is left.

Maxie S. Gordon, Jr., received his BA in Philosophy from MSU and is currently completing the requirements for a doctorate in Philosophy at MSU. An active student leader during his student career, he is past-president of the MSU Chapter of the NAACP.



1Calvin C. Hernton, *Sex and Racism In America*, (New York: Grove Press, 1966) Back Cover

2James Baldwin, *Nobody Knows My Name*, (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc. 1968), p. 99

3Ibid., p. 87

4Ibid., p. 94

5Hernton, *loc. cit.*, p. 5

6Hernton, *loc. cit.*, p. 15

7Hernton, *loc. cit.*

8Hernton, *loc. cit.*, pl 16

Sun
shines brightly.
Faces
pale
try hard
to be
what
they
deny.
Beauty is in darkness . . .
a deep wood
a teddy bear
an African prince
a licorice stick.
A drop of black oil on the sidewalk
when struck by the Sun,
reveals every color and hue.
Beauty is in darkness . . .
when shadows walk
and breezes cool
when supper is ready
and stars appear;
Sunset.
the enmity of morning,
the extortionist dynamiting the heavens with
Color and all its hues revealing
harmony
totality
Beauty
becoming serene with
night
Blackness:
the combination of all color,
the synthesis of man.

--toni eubanks

how can i ? "

how can i write
of sun-jeweled oceans,
of the orient pregnant
with yellow intrigue,
or of the short black
aborigine, who
like a finger from
the past tickles
the australian's conscious.
i don't know these.
i know only of
the tired athlete, who
after leaving his
gilded ring,
is driven back into
the invisible chains
of Niggerness.

--op davis

POEM

Hungry people receive gifts of steel
right in their
fat
bloated

bellies.
(Oh, gee.)
as men with constipated brains
intellectualize suffering;
verbalize
the maggot infested, puss filled,
scab decorated agony
of unhappy
people.

Splintered glass shatters the minds
of sane men
lost in reflections
of mirror societies
not seeing
life.

Life
panting, gasping, wrenching, puking
from its cancer.
as Madison Avenue happiness marches
boldly through our
TV minds
in a wonderful world of color;
not knowing
that the tube blew out.

Empty tin cans become the new aesthetic.
Money the new god.

Did the garbage man come today
and carry all the rubbish away?

--Barry D. Amis

message to a black brother
from a gaining sister

The grave is sunken deep
in the nerve of his flower; his
blood
flows through her veins; his
body needs companionship; his
cold needs warmth; his
soul needs soul; his
glare is sought by her ways as she
knows the rays of his thoughts.
Silence need not be told; his enemy
need not know the secrets of others.
Their souls will be heard; eventually
through crowded eyes; Quietly
the way is seen; by false pretense
Their minds vacillate through the same blood stream
Through different veins reaching the same end

too
LATE.

--shirley echols



FOR MY FRIENDS AT THE BOYS TRAINING SCHOOL

their hearts pump kool-aid
and between their drooling smiles
of phony sympathy
missionary complexes
and guilt
they deal death
and if we die from being helped
to helplessness
or because food
stamps
get caught in our throats
they'll chat about our fate over coffee
case closed (pass the sugar)

but maybe "therapy"
for some "hostile" kid
won't work
and he will lead
us stabbing them with their own ink pens
and finishing them off with mirrors
as we escape from all the
agencies
programs
cells
offices
locking them inside
and peering back
into the cages
shouting
"NO DEAL!"

--Jill Witherspoon
11/21/68

Calendar of Events: Feb. 25-March 10



Tuesday, Feb. 25
 "The Torch Bearers" (PAC, Fairchild, through March 2)
 Basketball, MSU vs. Purdue
 Spartan Roundtable

Wednesday, Feb. 26
 "Genesis 1" (7 & 9:30, Conrad)

Thursday, Feb. 27
 "Mickey One" (7 & 9, 109 Anthony)
 "The Cincinnati Kid" (7 & 9, Brody)
 "Genesis 1" (7 & 9:30, Conrad)
 Union Board Spring Fashion Show

Friday, Feb. 28
 "Rebel Without a Cause" (7 & 9, 104 Wells)
 "The Comedians" (7 & 9, 108 Wells)
 "Children of Paradise" (7:30, 109 Anthony)
 "The Cincinnati Kid" (7 & 9, Wilson)
 "Genesis 1" (7 & 9:30, 158 Natural Resources)
 Wrestling, Big 10 Championship
 Hockey, MSU vs. Michigan Tech

Saturday, March 1
 "Children of Paradise" (7:30, 109 Anthony)
 "The Comedians" (7 & 9, 108 Wells)
 "Rebel Without a Cause" (7 & 9, 104 Wells)
 "Genesis 1" (7 & 9:30, 158 Natural Resources)
 "The Cincinnati Kid" (7 & 9, Conrad)
 Fencing, Big 10 Championships
 Basketball, MSU vs. Ohio State
 Wrestling, Big 10 Championships
 Hockey, MSU vs. Michigan Tech
 International Club Nationality Night

Sunday, March 2
 MSU Concert Band
 "Genesis 1" (7 & 9:30, 158 Natural Resources)
 Last Day: "Eight Michigan Artists" (Kresge Art Gallery)

Monday, March 3
 "Genesis 1" (7 & 9:30, 158 Natural Resources)
 Moscow State Symphony (8:15, Auditorium)

Tuesday, March 4
 "In Like Flint" (MHA-WIC, through Saturday)
 Honors College Concert

Wednesday, March 5
 Rita Streich, soprano (8:15, Auditorium)

Thursday, March 6
 "Girl With the Green Eyes" (7:30, Auditorium)

Friday, March 7
 "Green Pastures" (PAC Film, 109 Anthony)
 Chamber Orchestra Concert
 "The Mouse that Roared" (7 & 9, 108 Wells)
 "Girl With the Green Eyes" (7:30, Auditorium)

Saturday, March 8
 "The Mouse that Roared" (7 & 9, 108 Wells)
 "South Seas Saga" (8:00, Auditorium)

Sunday, March 9
 Commencement
 Soft Sculpture Exhibit (Kresge Art Gallery, through March 30)

Monday, March 10
 Exams Begin
 Spring Early Registration Begins

Functional Implications of Black History

(continued from page 3)

er makes it "obvious that one of America's most critical blind areas is in the realm of understanding the oppressed, the wretched of the earth."⁷ Harding draws several very thought-provoking implications from this observation, the broadest and perhaps the most relevant at the present moment being: "If there is any real concern among the American people to understand why men are determined to fight bombers with rifles and curses, why revolutions seem to grow wherever America's footprints mark the earth, then the Afro-American story is essential reading."⁸

Indeed, America is perhaps fortunate to have in her midst the one source that may very well prove to be her salvation because of the link to the "alienated, humiliated and rebellious non-white world" that black America could serve. Harding pushes his point further by asserting that by failing to fully explore this link, America might continue to be puzzled at the world's disbelief concerning our "sudden devotion to the rights of self-determination for the non-white masses of Vietnam." Along this line there is one thing I am sure of: many black Americans are damn puzzled.

Fragmentary Commentary

Half-way-up-the-hip-length skirts
bare nothing
and everything
yet cause an inner voice to sing
a song of sallying forth so zestly
as to indicate their worth
in times like these
when no one's out to please
any but themselves.

--James B. Hamilton

But the careful reading of black history must also serve to remind black Americans that they, too, are the children of oppressed and humiliated and stand in solidarity with others all over the world. In fact, black America, because of their unique juxtaposition in white America, must serve as a vanguard for the "Third World." Black history and the lesson to be learned from its study must cause black Americans to reaffirm their belief in its own humanity and rededicate themselves to the removal of oppression from the face of the earth.

In my opinion, black history serves the function of providing America with a touchstone for the purpose of judging the genuineness of its own history, indeed, of its very existence. It cannot be gainsaid that the history of America--and the black man's contribution to it--has not occurred in a segregated manner. The black man's contribution to this country was made as an American--and should be recorded and recognized as such. Black history has not been and is not a thing apart. It is rather a thread, a very dominant one among many threads, that are now inextricably woven into the fabric of American society. This realization, though much too recent, is leading to a thorough re-evaluation of American history, and a re-assessment of the whole American experience that it purports to record.

The parallels between this re-evaluation and reassessment of history and a similar process occurring in a re-examination of America in general is aptly expressed by the contention "that an American history which cannot contain the full story of the black pilgrimage is no more worthy of life than an American society that cannot bear the full and troublesome black presence in its midst."⁹ This quote is a most suitable point of departure as we discuss the last aspect of black history's functions.

A last function, fundamental to the existence of any ordered state, is served by the study of black history. This is the providing of a factual basis with which the past can be studied, the present understood, and more importantly, on which the future can be erected. The parameters of racial relations in America today and the entire contextual framework of society are shaped by many complexities. These complexities are rooted in the past and manifested in the present, making for a host of situations that can easily escape even the

most scrutinizing analysis of an untrained eye. It is my contention that every American citizen should be armed with those tools that enable him to unravel the intricacies of American racial relations today, regardless of how small they may appear, so that he, too, may contribute meaningfully to the alleviation of the problems we now face. Black history stands today as that most important tool!



Not very much can be expected when we ask someone who is not too well informed of the past and its relationship to the present, to direct our course for the future. The implications of the importance of black American history in the shaping of the present was probably best demonstrated by the fact the U.S. Riot Commission spent over a full day of testimony and devotes an entire chapter of their report to an historical sketch of the black man's experiences on the American scene. This represents, in my opinion, a recognition of reality at the level of policy making where it counts. Hopefully, it is but one initial sign of a widening consciousness that will engulf all of America.



In the final analysis, whether or not an activity is judged functional depends on whether it tends to contribute to the maintenance of American society. It is much too early for such an assessment of the study of black history to occur. However, indications are that, especially for the black people of America and oppressed people of the world, the accelerated interest in black history will be of great benefit. But perhaps the study of black history and the lessons learned from it will not yield the fruits of progress but rather those of hatred and utter indignation. Maybe black history will be "that final spark needed to ignite the entire world in a battle of the 'haves' and the 'have nots,' the oppressed and oppressors.

Whatever may be the possibilities, black Americans owe no guarantees to anyone that only good will come from the study of black history. Hopefully truth will come--a truth that will provide a sounder foundation for our future than the one on which our past is built. Anyway, white America has had her chance!

Footnotes

1. Prof. Arthur Adams, *Introductory Remarks to History 100-II* (Fall 1967). Michigan State University, E. Lansing, Mich.
2. Benjamin Quarles, "The Future of the Negro Past," *Negro Digest*, February 1968, p. 34.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 35.
4. John Herrick Clarke, "The Search for Africa," *Negro Digest*, February 1968, p. 88.
5. Vincent Harding, "The Uses of the Afro-American Past," *Negro Digest*, February 1968, p. 6.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.*, p. 81.

Who am I?

Iturn

Brothers against brother,
who had once loved each other.

Iturn

Nations against nations,
and will someday destroy
God's creation.

Faceless am I

But you know that I am there
in your heart and everywhere.

--Caroline Adams



*I am in my eighteenth year
My womanhood lies soft and untouched
Waiting
Like an apple tree
Whose fruit grows ever mellow
Unpicked
Ever fearing the thought of
Unpicked fruit
Lying rotten on the ground*

*I am hesitant to hurry him
For the thought of green apples turns the stomach
Likewise
The thought of fruit
Ripe yet not yet mellow*

*Saddens.
But there again is the picture of
The fallen fruit
Touched by no human hand
My eighteenth year struggles within me
And snarls out at all who pass unnoticed
Because
They dare pass
They dare ignore the miracle of my
Leaves
The sullen beauty of my
Wet black bark
Of my almost red apples*

--June Manning