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the People's Voice

Spring 1990

UC San Diego's African-American Magazine



SPIKE LEE

A Role Model For The '90s?

Black Males In The U.S.: Young And Endangered—Page 5

The People's Voice

Spring 1990 Dedicated to enlightening, educating, and entertaining

WORDS FROM THE EDITOR:

A New Decade...

It's the 1990's. A new decade, full of new experiences, challenges, innovative ideas and attitudes that perhaps overtakes us all. It's a time of economic, social, and political changes in not only our own African American culture, but also in the rest of the world. We are faced with a global awareness of the breakdown of old boundaries and alliances, and the challenges of creating new forms. The most exciting, though scary thought for our generation in the midst of this new decade of changes, is that we hold the key the future. In a brief interview, filmmaker Spike Lee, he says that African Americans must keep their identities, as well as support one another.

We are the future decision makers and political activists—even while we are in college, in our own small society of education. But when do we assume these positions, positions that allow us to make changes? At what age or status should we feel that we are capable of occupying the space of a businessperson, entrepreneur? Is it only after obtaining a college degree that we acquire the confidence to become tomorrow's leaders? Or is it the experience of being involved while in college, in political, social, or entrepreneurial activities, that molds us into the person we want to become? My experience is one that has been valuable to my growth at UCSD as well as for my personal being.

I remember the very first day I found out that I was to get The People's Voice going again. Former Royal Brotherhood of Excellence President Vanness Harris broke the news to me. He told me that this was an important task to handle and that I had to make it happen. I was flabbergasted at the thought, even though I knew nothing about how to run a publication. I was ignorant to all aspects of running an effective magazine and the time commitment this job demanded.

All I knew was that I had lucked into a position that allowed me to make a change and to be involved in my college community, and at the same time get the experience I needed. The most amazing thing at that time was that no one was running against me for the position. An overnight change had taken over me. I was now running a magazine with no plan or guidelines to follow. Yet the enthusiasm and the vision for the final result of our first issue was overwhelming. I invited the challenge, of learning how to go about getting this project off the ground. The most alarming response I received when setting out to recruit people for this opportunity was that many didn't want to be involved, or at least felt that they had no talent for being of any help on the staff.

Without the help and input from few people, we possibly would have never got this news paper on the press again especially in limited time we had to work with. But it happened. We made it happen. And that's the most cherishable, and rewarding feeling, that we had stuck to our plan and carried it out even though we weren't totally happy with the final result.

Our next step was bringing the news to you, the reader. Knowing that many suggestions, advice and even new people interested in helping would present themselves as a result of our first issue, we simply sat back and waited for the response. Unfortunately, few, if any, suggestions came to us in writing for the magazine that represents the African American population here at UCSD.

Perhaps many felt that their input wasn't needed or important. However, everyone's views are needed for the improvement of The People's Voice. We indeed grow from your input and in return you grow from us. With your involvement we will see enormous progress, and change in our cultural awareness. Most importantly, we as people will gain the experience of being involved in the college community that represents us as African Americans and use that experience in becoming the leaders of tomorrow. —C.D.



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SHOWTIME and the NCAA SHOULD COLLEGE ATHLETES BE PAID?

By KEVIN EARL

SPORTS ARE ONE OF THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY'S FASTEST GROWING BUSINESSES IN AMERICA AS MORE THAN \$5,000,000,000 IS SPENT EACH YEAR ON ITEMS RANGING FROM SPORTING EQUIPMENT TO ACTUAL EVENTS. THE NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION, THE ORGANIZATION RESPONSIBLE FOR THE "BUSINESS" OF FUNDING THE ATHLETIC DEPARTMENTS OF COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES ACROSS THIS COUNTRY, HAS BECOME A VERY POWERFUL INDUSTRY LEADER AND, JUDGING FROM RECENT REPORTS, COULD BE INCLUDED IN THE FORTUNE 500 LISTS OF SUCCESSFUL CORPORATIONS.

Consider the College Football Association (CFA), a sixty-five member entity within the NCAA, will pocket several hundreds of millions of dollars over the next 4-5 years for letting the networks televise their games. One year later, Notre Dame becomes the first school to get its own TV contract as NBC forks over \$40,000,000. CBS will pay the NCAA over \$1,000,000,000 for "exclusive" television rights for college basketball for the next 7 years.

The burgeoning popularity of these sports, not to mention the very size of their successes, has increased the pressure to win at all costs, even if it means recruiting the unteachable and the disinterested, to recruit athletes who, for one reason or another don't belong on the court.

The excesses that make events like the Orange Bowl and the Final Four such a festival of sight and sound, the huge crowds, wall-to-wall television exposure and the millions of dollars at stake has inspired practices that have turned several universities into schools for scandal.

The "scandal" centers on the circumstances by which players are recruited, the inordinate amount of time that athletes spend pursuing that "dream" of playing in the professional ranks, such as post-season all-star games, spring football, summer basketball camps and weight training, and the tremendously low graduation rate of these "student-athletes" after 4-5 years in college.

It is time the NCAA surrender the fact that the "age-old" theory of academics and "being prepared" for life through college is lost, having been replaced with the desire to produce a winning athletic program that has long since transcended the "student-athlete" relationship, where the scholarship was the chief prize, to that of an "employer-employee" for the revenues that they generate for the NCAA.

It is for this reason that college athletes should be paid. The term "student-athlete" is meant to define an athlete in "amateur" standing, that is, not allowed to be "paid" for his seemingly professional athleticism. The trade-off for this is the awarding of the "scholarship" which pays all expenses, including room & board, tuition, and books, so that the student will be able to both attend classes and represent the school in their specific fields of athletic endeavor.

The reality of this situation is that the overwhelming majority of these athletes are teenage black males, recruited from the inner city ghettos like Philadelphia, New York, Detroit, Los Angeles, Houston and the rural areas like Florida, Alabama, Georgia and the Carolinas.

The reason for this emphasis on athletics in these black

communities is directly related to the unemployment rate among these men which is approximately 50%, and the deteriorating educational system's inability to prepare these men for college.

While these poorly-trained teens are not to blame for trying to pursue a legitimate college education, the fact that the majority of them leave without graduating, without a skill, still without hope is a fact that cannot be denied, thus, perpetuating the analogy of the "dumb jock".

Coaches and athletic directors, sometimes one and the same, are awarded tremendous salaries as a result of perpetuating a winning attitude through the endless supply of talent at their disposal. For instance; a successful football season usually results in teams playing in one of 19 bowl games which, depending on how you finish in the wire service polls, could net each participating institution anywhere from \$200,000 to \$3,000,000 dollars. In basketball, success is a little more complex.

After playing approximately 25-30 games, the regular season champ is the team with the best won-lost record in the conference; then the conferences play a tournament to see who will represent the conference in the 64-team championship tournament aptly named "March Madness", which consist of regionally played games in the "East, Southeast, Midwest, and West" parts of the country, which climaxes with the "Final Four" teams of which the National Champion is won.

Teams making it to this "party" stand to net at least \$2 million dollars for their respective institutions and /or conferences. This fact is not lost in the coaching fraternity as many have clauses written into their contracts for this specific purpose. For example: Jerry Tarkanian, head coach at University of Nevada, Las Vegas is guaranteed 10% of the money the school makes from gate and TV receipts from the tournament. He figures to make at least \$100,000 in addition to his salary as the Runnin' Rebels are the 1990 NCAA champs.

Bobby Bowden signed a lifetime contract to coach the Florida State Seminoles in football for an estimated \$400,000 a year.

Tom Penders, head basketball coach at Texas has a base salary of \$92,650; but his total financial package, including benefits, shoe contract, radio and TV show, and summer camp, is believed to be in the \$300,000 range.

According to the World Book Encyclopedia, "Professional sports", which developed when men decided to make a business of the more popular sports, are played for financial profit!

Thus, intercollegiate athletics has been in business for a long

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Continued

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This fact is not lost in the recruiting of players by assistant coaches, who are tasked with scouting these athletes, armed with (supposedly) a glowing report of what this athlete could expect if he plays for MEGA\$\$ U.

While a lot of coaches attain this within NCAA guidelines that restrict or limit visits to the athletes homes, schools, and at the same time, the athletes visit to a perspective school, several coaches use unethical inducements such as cars, money and jewelry; things that are real important to a 17 year old inner city or rural black teenager who has no chance of ever making it out of his impoverished environment. Examples of this include:

Charles Shackelford, who accepted \$65,000 in outside payments to play basketball at North Carolina State University.

Chris Mills, a high school All-American out of LA had \$1,000 delivered to his father as payment for his signing a national letter-of-intent to play at Kentucky, a perennial violator of recruiting practices.

Still unproven are allegations that Mills' had cut a deal with Kentucky that would have paid him \$250,000 for 4 years. (he has since refuted these allegations and transferred to Arizona)

Despite all of this, the academic community still clings to the dream that the "student" and the "athlete" should be one and the same. That the education that they will receive will last a great deal longer than their athleticism.

I wholeheartedly agree, but the truth is that while these young men may have the desire to learn, they do not possess the skills or the time to rectify this deficiency in order to "catch up" with their peers in the college community since all of their time is consumed by the attention that must be given to the pursuit of the "business" at hand; athletics. "But we've made great strides in learning with new technology and talented teachers that are aplenty all over this nation's campuses", some say.

While this is an absolute fact, academics and the general public have to understand that universities strive to give its students the best education "money-can-buy", whether it is the best computers, facilities, or teachers so that the students can be the best that they can be. Just like recruiting in athletics, colleges also search far and wide to recruit top students, too.

Good students are attracted to MEGA\$\$ U not so much for its athletic reputation, but

also for that reputation of having the best engineering, journalism, economics, or medical schools that are in many ways directly related to the income generated by the athletic department.

For example, you can bet that UNLV's top ranked Hotel & Restaurant Management School will reap some of the rewards in retention, recruitment, and materials thanks to the Runnin' Rebels winning the National Championship.

Certainly, top teachers, department heads, and lecturers cost big money. Former government officials command anywhere from \$2,000 to \$25,000 to talk to the students for a couple of hours!

If these people can be paid to tell us something that we already know, then pay college athletes for the one thing that they "do" know; athletics!!

The NCAA, despite the scandals, has

LIGHT UP THE BORDER AN EXPERIENCE I'LL NEVER FORGET

By BRUCE JACKSON

Tonight I'm being forced to write this out of a dire need to sleep. I can't sleep until I have said something about what I've seen today, a sad day for America. Today I walked the line, the line that distinguishes America from Hitler's Germany. It happened on Dairy Mart Road, San Ysidro, California. As I marched in the counter demonstration against the "Light up the border" people—a group promoted by ex-San Diego Mayor Roger Hedgecock on his KSDO talk show. I wonder what it must have been like before six million Jews lost their lives. Could it have started from a small seed like this? Could this ex-mayor be sowing the seeds to eliminate the Mexican population as a whole?

For many Germans in the 1930s, the Jews were to blame for Germany's economic problems. In the minds of many "Light up the border" people, Mexican migrant workers are to blame for America's economic and social problems. During World War two, the Jewish culture was thought to be inferior to that of the Germans and so now do some consider the Mexican migrant workers in relationship to Americans. Jews were put into concentration camps, supposedly to await deportation elsewhere. So now are the Mexicans found here illegally put into detention centers. Now American vigilantes are perpetrating crimes against them and inflicting bodily harm against their persons. One man took the American flag out into the field about five hundred yards from the

border and planted it in the ground demonstrating that this is without a doubt American soil. I wanted to ask him if he was an American. If so, did his forefathers have a visa when they arrived?

I'm an American, and I don't feel threatened by the number of Mexicans coming into our country. I feel more threatened by the racism, and the inhumane acts perpetrated on these immigrants in the name of protecting America. Immigrants are good for America, history show this. Immigrants built this country, from the Chinese working on the railroads, to the blacks working on the countless cotton plantations. Mexican migrant workers provide a valuable work force for American farmers and companies.

The "Light up the border" people are forgetting exactly what America is all about. America has always been a haven for people escaping their nation's violations of their human rights: religious, political or economic. Migrant workers surely fall into that category; why else would they chance robbery and death to work for less than minimum wage in America? Would you take those sort of chances, risks?

Surely, we Americans can be sensitive to the needs and feelings of these desperate people. We should be fair, compassionate, and treat them as equals. We Americans believe that Freedom to choose, Freedom to act and allowing others the same rights we grant ourselves are worth fighting for. Insuring that no physical and psychological harm falls on undocumented worker is a responsibility that falls squarely in the middle of the values that Americans should have.

With approximately 50 positions open in the professional ranks every year, at least five times that many will leave without a degree. It is time to pay these entertainers for their time in the limelight, for the thrills, fantastic finishes, and the unified feeling that they give us through participation in the Olympics and other games that take them to far away places. Now that's entertainment!!

YOUNG, BLACK, AND ENDANGERED

By CRAIG DAWSON

BLACK MALES ARE MORE LIKELY TO DIE BEFORE AGE TWENTY THAN THEIR WHITE MALES. IN 1985, THE LIFE EXPECTANCY OF THE BLACK MALE WAS PROJECTED TO BE SEVEN YEARS LESS THAN THE LIFE EXPECTANCY OF HIS WHITE COUNTERPART. THESE SAME STATISTICS PROJECTED THE BLACK MALE TO LIVE 65.3 YEARS AS OPPOSED TO THE WHITE MALE, PREDICTED TO LIVE 71.9 YEARS.

Waiting at the San Diego transit, I noticed a black woman sitting at the bus stop caressing her infant son and smoldering him with kisses. The love I sensed from mother to child was that of affection, knowing her child was in good health and living a normal life. I wondered what dreams and aspirations this woman had for her son: Would he grow up to become NASA's top engineer? brain surgeon? or even the next President of the United States? Where will this child's fate lead him? Will he have the opportunities and resources to excel at any endeavor he chooses to pursue? Or will he even live long enough to dream of his future possibilities. The future dreams for this black child are optimistic; Therefore, one should expect the best possible outcome for him. Yet, in reality, if this child lives past age twenty-four he will be blessed as one of the chosen few.

According to Jewell Taylor Gibbs, editor for Young, Black And Male In America, black males are endangered even before they're born, because male fetuses are more likely to spontaneously abort, this vulnerability characterizes their health and mental health for the rest of their lives, particularly during adolescence and young adulthood.

If black males survive the high infant mortality rates, which are nearly double the rate for white infants, they are still more likely to experience problems associated with low birth weight and lack of prenatal health care. The black male is also less likely to be immunized against

infectious diseases such as polio, rubella and diphtheria. They are more likely to suffer from poor nutrition and related health problems, as well.

There are many factors to be considered when speculating the cause of the black male's short life expectancy. However, one of the biggest factors of this problem can be pointed towards the conservative political climate that began with the Nixon administration in 1969, and has been strongly reinforced since. The Nixon administration's conservative political actions supported cutbacks in employment and job training programs that were aimed at serving the needs of the chronically unemployed and high school students who came from a low income families. One particular program that was implemented was the CETA program of 1973 (Comprehensive Employment and Training Act.) CETA was a job experience program that employed high school students aged 15 to 21 for 10 to 20 hours per week after school hours at minimum wages. During the summer months, the number of hours were expanded, and provided good work habits, and a sense of self-worth, but most importantly, it gave black males a sense of independence while earning wages.

According to Clark, 1965 and Glarsgow, 1981, blacks who lived in the 60's and early 70's had high expectations and increases in opportunities, but began to see their dreams of major social change gradually fade as the economy stopped expanding and more and more

people were competing for the same limited number of jobs. Shortly after the Reagan election, CETA was singled out for termination. Many political analysts interpret this growing conservatism as a backlash to the anti-poverty programs and affirmative action policies that the Lyndon Johnson and Jimmy Carter administrations set up. These politicians have shifted the emphasis from the goal of providing all citizens with a decent standard of living through federally subsidized health and welfare programs to the need to blame the poor and the disadvantaged for their perceived lack of motivation on welfare programs. In the past 20 years, politicians who support cuts in social programs such as CETA, the Job Corps, have an increasing favor with voters. Federally subsidized loans for college, and youth employment programs all have been severely cut back or eliminated.

Due to these cutbacks, the portion of black males in the labor force has declined from 84 percent in 1940 to 67 percent in 1980. This is especially dramatic among black young males 18-19 years of age. For example, in 1955, 75.5 percent of black males were active in the work force, but has dropped to 50.2 percent in 1983.

In the early 1980's unemployment reached the highest level in more than 40 years. Unemployment among minority groups was nearly double the national average, and more than half of the black male teenagers could not find jobs. This sudden impact of changes has resulted in direct negative consequences of fewer educational and employment opportunities for young black males. It has also affected their perception of opportunities and their access to the American dream of social and economic mobility. Without the aid of CETA, many black males do not have adequate job skills to keep them in demand for work, nor did they have the transportation to commute to job opportunities in other areas outside the cities that would be beneficial and also profitable.

Being that many middle class blacks had moved to the suburbs and rural areas, this actually took a lot of business away from the city, and money from the middle class blacks was not filtered back into the black community. These young blacks have no positive role models. There were no incentives that would act as an outlet for these black males to be productive.

As a result, this low self esteem that the black male carries has caused an increase in suicides to triple the 1960 level,

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The NCAA, despite the scandals, has

moved to the "big time". Both basketball and football have become "mega-businesses" and have taken on lives of their own outside of many institutions, in some cases actually holding the schools hostage (University of Oklahoma football '89). Even with the passing of the controversial Prop. 48 (2.0 GPA, 700 SAT, 1.5 ACT), it's already too late to stop the cheating and other irregularities that abound in the athletic community.

With approximately 50 positions open in the professional ranks every year, at least five times that many will leave without a degree. It is time to pay these entertainers for their time in the limelight, for the thrills, fantastic finishes, and the unified feeling that they give us through participation in the Olympics and other games that take them to far away places. Now that's entertainment!!

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Black Congresswoman Returns to First Love—Teaching

By WILLIE WILLIAMS

The daughter of a Barbadian seamstress and a Guyanese factory worker, Shirley Chisolm was by no means the typical contender for a Congressional seat. When she ran for the House of Representatives in New York's Twelfth Congressional District, she surprised many in her quest to become the first black Congresswoman. This former teacher immediately became the center of much media attention when her perseverance paid off and she was elected to represent the twelfth district in 1968.

Mrs. Chisolm was born on November 30, 1924, in Brooklyn's Bedford-Stuyvesant district. After spending part of her childhood in Barbados she returned to the United States to attend Brooklyn College on a full scholarship. She graduated from Brooklyn College and earned a masters in education from Columbia University.

Mrs. Chisolm went to work as a nursery school teacher and later became an educational consultant to New York's Day Care Division in 1959. She became active in community activities which led to her gradual involvement in politics. By the age of forty, Mrs. Chisolm became the second black woman to be elected to the state assembly where she established herself as an outspoken defender of educational programs. During her three terms as an assemblywoman she helped to get three important pieces of legislation through the New York legislature including funding for the SEEK Program which helped to find places for the talented underprivileged students in local colleges.

Not content with being a state legislator, the hard-working, energetic, and opinionated Mrs. Chisolm ran for a seat in the House of Representatives. After defeating a tough field of primary contenders and her Republican opponent, she attracted nation-wide attention by becoming the first black congresswoman. Soon after being elected, she was assigned by the Democratic leadership to sit on the House Committee on Committees. After taking on the House leadership single-handedly, she was appointed to the Veteran Affairs Committee. Hale Boggs, former House majority whip, says of Mrs. Chisolm, "[She is] the only person in my knowledge to have defeated the Committee on Committees. I think it impressed everybody in the House that here...a Negro woman, the first ever elected in history, who was able to take on the Speaker, the Majority Leader, the Majority Whip and everybody—and beat them."

Mrs. Chisolm continued her fight for the government funded education. In addition, she became a spokeswoman for the abortion rights for women and against the draft. In 1972, she made an unsuccessful bid for the Democratic nomination for the presidency of the United States. Now, she has retired from Capitol Hill and returned to her first love, teaching.

Rebecca Cobb Dedicated to Innovation

By MARVILA MADRID

Third College's Student Activities Coordinator, Rebecca Cobb, graciously consented to speak with *The People's Voice* about her role in the College's dedication to increase cultural awareness.

Ms. Cobb was a student here at UCSD two years ago, and worked as a Student Intern for Third College. Presently, Ms. Cobb is working with Third College one of her interests is supporting the students at this University in whatever way she can. Sometimes this may cause Ms. Cobb and her co-workers to be caught in uncomfortable positions because Third College frequently sticks its neck out for small organizations when other colleges might not be as willing to do so.

One of Ms. Cobb's inspirational role models has been Barbara Avery, Assistant Dean of Third College. Ms. Cobb told *The People's Voice* that Ms. Avery has been innovative, while at the same time taking definite risks—like bumping policy so that Orientation would not include square dancing which traditionally was not an activity for people of color.

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especially in the 15 to 24 year age group. Vital Statistics for 1970 to 1985, illustrate that within the 15 to 19 age group the increase of suicides has increased from 4.7 percent in 1970 to 8.2 percent in 1985.

Through hopelessness, helplessness and frustration, homicide rate is the leading cause death for the 15 to 24 year age group. In 1982 a year after the Ceta program was cut homicide among this age group was 7.2 percent of 100,000 population, nearly six times the rate of white males in the same age range.

Because young black males were unable to compete in the work force, many had been conditioned to know only the negative life style of their own environment: Gangs, prostitution, drug addicts etc. These young black had no other option but to turn to the underground world that the streets had to offer.

If the young black male has all of his opportunities and resources taken away, he cannot consider competing with with the same level of upward mobility while working in the labor force. Without any jobs to stimulate the feeling of upward mobility and progress, all of these black males were at the same level: poor and spending a great amount of time in the streets, many with diminished dreams, others were angry because there was no outlet for these black males to gain self confidence, and self worth.

In the past 25 years, the homicide rate has tripled among black males while the overall homicide rate declined. Their sense of self worth was and is being stolen, and the only ego that they can express is not that of productiveness in the working force, but of destruction of each other. Imagine living in a low income area, able to work and earn your own wages, and develop an independent frame of mind. However, all the resources and opportunities are taken away, leaving limited work. The competitiveness in young black males has turn to rage and anger.

As an counterargument many support the belief of the Republican administration of Nixon and Regan, that the CETA program was ineffective and did more harm than help the disadvantaged. Several national survey's and opinion polls have shown that black families strongly

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Church Gives Black Community A Sense of Unity

By MIA THOMPSON

The church, one of the oldest institutions in the black community, has historically been a place of fellowship and love. It kept the flame of freedom burning in the hearts and minds of our forefathers when all else looked hopeless. When slavery and oppression dehumanized, the church allowed the black man to stand and proclaim "I am somebody...we are all precious in His sight." It gave Blacks a sense of belonging, a sense of family and earned a high position of respect within the black community. Visualizing the white man subordinate to a supreme being who believed in truth, justice and true equality gave many blacks the strength to go on.

Religion was a unifier. Religion was a motivator. The Bible continuously told stories of people who fought against evils that seemed too great to defeat, yet with faith in God, they were delivered. Sermons were filled with the plea to gain power through God; with right and good on your side, how could you lose?

The black church also produced many of the great role models and leaders for Black people including singers, educators, politicians, civil rights and community leaders. Anyone who gained their inspirations through the church were given respect. The influence of the black church was great.

The black church proved to be a major motivating and unifying force for blacks during the movements of the 1950's and 60's. According to Chalmers Johnson, religion and ethnicity are the two most powerful bases for effective ideology for any form of revolution.

Professor Henry Louis Gates' Goal: Cultural Studies

By CRAIG DAWSON

Henry Louis Gates, professor in the Duke University English Department, is a man with his eyes on the prize. His determination is focused on the goal of incorporating multi-cultural studies into all college curricula. During 1989, Gates' dedication to multi-cultural studies resulted in proposals at 49 colleges for a multi-cultural linguistics program. However, there was meager response from those colleges.

Gates is widely recognized as one of the more powerful public speakers and personalities dealing with this issue. With eloquent delivery, he draws a vivid picture of the ignorance of our historical knowledge. "We should expand our linguistics studies to gain knowledge of our other languages: Yoruba, Hebrew, Arabic." Multi-cultural studies is much too important to be neglected in the future.

Gates feels that rather than try to avoid the controversy that will arise with the creation of a more diverse linguistics program, we should confront it. "By dealing with the issue head-on, we have a chance to gain even more knowledge of our reality." Although this may mean drastic changes in the structure of college linguistics, Gates argues that colleges should never be too old to change.

As one of the positive images of the nineties, Henry Louis Gates is awakening many to the importance of cultural studies.

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feel that they are worse off economically and politically in the 80's than they were in the 1970's. With CETA creating opportunities for the disadvantaged black males were able to be productive, hard working and optimistic about their future.

Another counterargument would be that CETA cost too much money.

This is the reason why it's so important to fund such a program that works toward helping young black male that can be so productive working if given a chance.

As alternative causes of the low life expectancy of the black child, one could look at some illnesses that apply to the black population alone such as sickle-cell anemia, the genetic disorder which begins in early childhood. Poor nutrition was also cited, and 26 percent of 15-24 year old black males fell below the median hemoglobin level of white youth.

What does the future have in store for the black male, especially this beautiful ebony child that smirks at me in his mother's arm's? Staring at this ebony child at the bus stop, I couldn't help but appreciate his pure innocence. This is only one example of the millions of other black males just like him, that will hopefully provide our future generations with important achievements and contributions.

The American economy is inextricably tied to the fate of young black males. Keep hope alive!

A Letter To The Reader

• In listening to your responses and your voice, the editorial staff appreciate your views on the format and content of the (Dear Ester) Advice column. We sincerely apologize to those the column offended. We are in the process of experimenting with content and format, and are always willing to make those changes the respond to the reader's interests or concerns. Only with your response and input can *People's Voice* really excel to its fullest potential. We invite your advice suggestions and perspective and look forward to hearing from you.

• The last issue of *The People's Voice* a story was labeled as "Violence at the Border" the headline should have read "Migrant Workers: the New Target."

PRESIDENTS' CORNER:

NATIONAL SOCIETY OF BLACK ENGINEERS (NSBE)

NEW OFFICERS FOR THE 1990-1991 ACADEMIC SCHOOL YEAR

CO-CHAIRPERSONS.....DeShawn Burton and Colandra Jolly
 SECRETARY.....DeAnna
 TREASURER.....Eric Payne
 ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR.....Kim Holmes
 OUTREACH DIRECTOR.....Newton Armstrong
 ADVISOR.....Bobby Gray

From the Co- Chairpersons:

First, we would like to thank everyone who voted for us and supported us in

our running for the office of co-chairpersons. Thank you.

Second, I, DeShawn Burton, believe NSBE does not presently have the respect or support that is possible and NSBE has been viewed only as an organization under the umbrella of AASU, because we are African American Students, yet we do not support them as much as we could. I plan to change that.

I would like for everyone to understand that as Engineering majors we have our own special interests and problems, but we are also African American students and should support AASU. NSBE is not just an

organization made up by some African American Students, but one of over 150 chapters at different Colleges and Universities. And our 40 members (active and inactive) represent a small percentage of the over 6,000 students that make NSBE one of the nation's largest student-managed organizations. Also, NSBE does not only support students majoring in the field of Engineering but our chapter also comprises Math, Physics Chemistry and Cognitive Science Majors.

For more information and membership call:

NSBE Office at 534-7167

African-American Student Union

On behalf of the newly elected 1990-91 AASU executive board, I would like to say thank you for believing in all of us. This summer will be a summer of planning for the new board. We would like to inform everyone that we encourage participation in this planning. If you have some ideas or you have some free time that you would like to turn in to productive time, please let us know. If we all work together we can have a good year. Live the dream and it will come true.

Phillip Harris
AASU, President

COMMENTARY

Don't Deny Your Freedom of Choice

BY MARVILA MADRID

To all the women who believe that the most beautiful thing about a black man is when he is with a black woman:

"Open your eyes and minds. You are merely fooling yourselves in thinking it is your place to tell any black male what kind of person he should be involved with, whether it is a friendly relationship or a more intimate one.

We are fortunate to dwell in a more educated atmosphere than many others. Here at UCSD, we have the opportunity to educate and be educated; to involve and be involved; to discover, to achieve, and ultimately to

move forward.

Those who deny this freedom of choice are falling fatefully backward—backwards into an arena of blinded individuals, all struggling with the concern that non-black women are taking away yet another eligible black man—another black man who might create a new "mixed" child.

Be cautioned that not only is integration coming to the forefront of societal awareness, but interracial relationships are, too. These relationships are few, but growing in number.

Realizing this, then, it would be wise for people who have difficulty with these relationships to re-evaluate their attitudes, because feeling this way

means you are prejudiced.

As to the concern of retaining the black population, there will always be black men who prefer relationships with black women. This is perfectly acceptable and even beautiful, but the choice is theirs.

Further, it is wise to stay out of their business and not expect them to change who they want to be involved with, because you so desire or suggest.

As Janet Jackson says, In complete darkness we are all the same. It is only our knowledge and wisdom that separate us. Don't let your eyes deceive you. Is it really their "wisdom" that separates them, Janet? I think not.