



# GRIOT

VOLUME NO. 8

DOUBLE ISSUE—SPRING '85

## Transition Time

by Raymond Hightower

An astute person visiting the University of Illinois would immediately notice that there are few Black students enrolled here. Imagine, if you will, a time when there were even fewer Blacks here on campus. Imagine a time when Blacks were not allowed to live on or near campus. . . when Blacks could not find barbers who cut our curly hair. Such nightmares were real as recently as 1964.

The year 1964 was very important for Black history at the University. Three black professors, R. Eubanks, J.H. Smith, and D. Boney joined the faculty that year. Such news was rare at any White university, especially in the big ten. The time had come for Blacks to advance at this University; it was "Transition Time."

Professor Smith remembers the year 1964 very well. He came to the University as Assistant Professor of English and as Dean of Admissions and Records. Many of his responsibilities fell within the area of recruitment.

When Smith first went to Chicago to recruit high school students for the University, his audience greeted him with laughter. These students had heard many horror stories of Blacks who had attended school in Champaign. They went as far as to name one University student who, after buckling in to the pressure, ended up working at a Chicago post office.

The University's poor reputation was the first obstacle Smith encountered in bringing more blacks to campus. Now that he knew what he was dealing with, he prepared himself to combat that obstacle on two fronts. First, when confronted with questions on the reputation of the University, he answered them openly and honestly, while at the same time assuring students that changes were in the making. Second, he worked with other administrators to develop programs to

ease any potential academic or financial difficulties encountered by the new students.

Smith was not alone in his efforts to increase the number of Blacks on campus. Professor Dan Boney of the Education Department founded Project Upward Bound, a program which is still in existence today. It might be interesting to note that when Boney first sought the "best and brightest high school students" to participate in the program, the majority of these were Black females.

While Smith and Boney worked on the "human" side of campus, Professor Robert Eubanks worked to increase Black enrollment in the College of Engineering. Eubanks was instrumental in setting up a rotating Engineering Deanship in 1974. The position was filled by a man who was then the head of the Mechanical Engineering Department at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. The new Dean did so well in his position that he was asked to stay as a permanent part of the Dean's office. That man is none other than Dean P.E. Parker.

Eubanks was also involved in the big recruitment drive of the sixties. University administrators agreed to pay certain students to recruit Black students in Chicago, East St. Louis, and Philadelphia. Some people believe that the student-run recruitment drive came about because University officials did not think it would be successful. The effort was labeled "Project 500" because 500 students were targeted for admission that year.

If numbers are any indication of success, then "Project 500" was more than a success. About six-hundred Black students enrolled that semester, more than this University had ever seen at once. Dr. William A. Savage, of the Chancellor's office was a student at the time; in fact, he was the coordinator of the student-run recruitment drive.

The large influx of Black students led to a few problems. First, there was the question of housing. The University was prepared to

accept five-hundred students, but six-hundred showed up. A large number of students were forced to live in temporary housing; this did not go over too well with the students who expected to be welcomed with open arms. A student meeting was held in the Illini Union; the Chancellor was invited to the meeting so that he might hear some of the grievances of the students. When the chancellor did not show, some of the students got restless, and some damage did occur. Several students were arrested that evening in 1968.

Dean Clarence Shelley had just come to the University as the first director of Project 500. One of his first duties was to get the students out of jail. According to Shelley, it was not the intent of the students involved to break any rules. They merely had grievances to resolve with the administration. These grievances included issues of financial aid, housing, and Afro-American courses. The students had been arrested for staying in the Union past closing time (midnight), but there was no way they could have known about this rule since they had yet to go through orientation.

Transition time was a rough time in the sixties and the early seventies. Is the transition complete? No, it will not be complete until, in the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., people are judged "not by the color of their skin, but by the depth of their character."

*Reading this piece made me even more intrigued by the recent developments on the status of current minority recruitment and retention figures for the U of I. Ironically, at the time this story was assigned, the U of I announced plans to increase the quantity and caliber of its minority enrollment. The chancellor even went so far as to call current levels of minority enrollment 'disappointing' and pledged his commitment to improve the "color" of the campus student body. A commendable effort. TF III*



### GRIOT Staff

Eve Blackwell	Kevin McFall
Raymond Hightower	Karen Vaughn
Taylor Fuller III	Editor
Bernard Eldorado	Photographer
Richard Majors	Contributors
	Clarence Shelly

## A Second Look

"The age of the geechie is dead. . . We can't have white folks thinking we all fools. . . You got to learn the white man's language—stop thinking like a nigger. We've got to get rid of the geechie's Wilkie, one less nigger for the race to be ashamed of."

Charles Fuller: *A Solder's Story* (1984)

Congratulations! We have completed another Black History Month; in yet another year. Trust you all got a lot out of it. Personally, I kinda got tired, just plain fed up with the prevailing attitude of seeming disinterest that our students project. To put it bluntly coining a phrase from our 'dominant mirrors' (a new twist) our attitudes suck! At this being my final *Griot* issue, I felt compelled to address us, what we're about, and where we could be. I am well aware of what has been said about opinions, but that has never stopped me before. (Before I begin, let me clear something up, *Griot* is pronounced with the "t" silent, or phonetically: Gre-o. Okay?)

At first I was going to talk entirely about the situation between local blacks and U of I students, a situation that could best be described as uncoordinated—even rivalrous. Perhaps it is the theory of "coolpose" at work, or hopefully it is just *ignorance* of the implications of this type of behaviour. It has even been said that we don't want to see each other succeed, the crabs in a barrel theory, well is this what *these crabs in this barrel* are into?

The Myth of the Northender is what I call it. I ask you—how can we, practically speaking, distinguish ourselves along socio-economic lines? Have we forgotten that all inclusive term that has been used by our 'dominant mirrors' to categorize us, so how on earth can we be so mindless as to do so? Just remember that if you're snobbing someone, someone's bound to be snobbing you.

And while we are talking about distinctions let me just say this about Black Greeks. Petty competitions for "pub" are true signs of 'the real deal'. It's to the point that social functions are shouting matches for attention. As a member of this segment I am aware of the many positive events that are attempted and of the many contributions made. Yet, beyond this, where is the common thread of blackness? Its meaning seems to have escaped from our purpose. In their origins, these groups that divided along lines of 'complexion and texture of hair', remain divided for "pub."

If I'm a Greek and I snub other people for their "colors" what am I? I am lost in the disillusionment of my own grandeur.

If I'm in a sorority and I think of others as less than myself what am I? Fooled by my own lust for stardom.

If I can go into a social event and disrupt the whole proceedings for the cause of my honor; only to have my antics dismissed as 'just a little fun', what have I done?

Disgraced myself, my being, and my race for the quest of a commodity called pub.

When I look at our present situation I am compelled to compare it to the situation of the American Jew. Now granted the two are not equally equipped for action in this game, and seldom face the same challenges. Yet the common denominator of discrimination along racial/ethnic lines and minority status are noteworthy similarities. I have had this discussion with some of my Jewish constituent and had to remind them of the more salient differences which restrict our advancement. I also pointed out that our uprooting and subsequent propelation into the American economy without skills and more importantly capital as an important distinction. Yet along the time line, the disparity between the two groups remains substantial. What are the key differences between these groups beyond material and monetary considerations—a given?

Basically, it amounts to a difference in 'group think'; or more importantly a different set of values with the willingness to achieve them. Within the Jewish community the concept of *synergy* is applied to every day situations. In other words the Jews seem to recognize the importance of how they are perceived as a race. In that recognition they take it one step further to assist, nurture and propel the achievement of their own. The drive to succeed is shared and implanted into all of their people; you can see it at work in them too.

What must occur for us to wake up? We have been talked into abortion and out of polarization towards apathy; only one or two kids and a BMW right ladies?

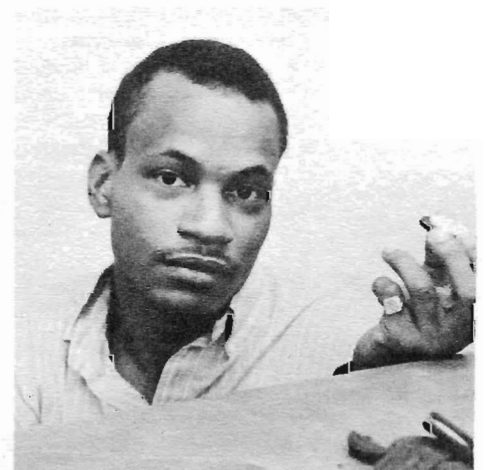
Black people, strong black people, don't play yourselves so cheaply. You are the rock upon which civilization—let along this nation was built. How ashamed the likes of Harriet Tubman or Frederick Douglass would be at this disunity. With our tendency to label one as being more desirable than another because of aesthetics; it is no wonder that the targets of this abuse are harder on us, those like themselves, before taking out their frustrations of our 'dominant mirrors'.



The conclusions some readers may make about such subjects is that they are 'deep'. (Whatever that is.) At the risk of dogmatism, this is a conclusion that I find most interesting. You see, the goal that I have had since working *Griot* has been to raise the consciousness level of our readers (some of which are not students) about life and about themselves and their relative importance to the scheme of things. (We all have a role to assume, you see, and if you're not doing your part someone else is, or it's not getting done.) Any success that I have had in the aforementioned (I like that word, and use it whenever possible) may only be attributed to that within the reader which wishes to leave its present state of dormancy. What I find so interesting about the label 'deep' being assigned to such subjects is that it suggests the proximity these issues have within your own consciousness. In other words, if you have to go so 'deep' to get to them, or find them so "deep", perhaps this then is the root of consciousness dilemma I find on campus, and in the Black community. (Let me add that after visiting both Howard University and the A-U Center in Atlanta, I find that black colleges are caught up further in a vacuum of disillusionment.)

I would like to thank the people that have been so patient with me, the staff of the AACP. I am not the easiest person in the world to work with, and their tolerance for my ups and downs has not gone unnoticed not unappreciated. Special thanks to Betty Hines and Bruce Nesbitt, the "Godfather". Realize that the prose within these pages has been generated from our own—no place else, and the tone of *Griot* has been changed a bit, I hope for the better. *Griot* is yours to do as you will, but please do something with it. Just remember throughout time that *you* have been proven as the strongest race in the world, and everybody knows that too, so why flaunt it? Many thanks for your review. But remember what happened to Sgt. Waters in "Soldier's Story"!

Taylor Fuller III



# One of Our Own: Lawrence Craig

by Eve Blackwell

Eight years ago, on a warm August day, a very frightened high school student entered the office of Professor William C. Warfield. The white walls were lined with pictures of previous concerts; and, the floors covered with acoustic tiles. As the young man took his position, he gazed into a mirror over the piano. The young man sang "Thus Sayeth the Lord" accompanied by Robert Ray, Prof. Warfield's accompanist. All the while, William Warfield sat back in his worn, burgundy leather chair. . . and watched.

That frightened young man was Lawrence Craig, 24, now the protegee of the reknown William C. Warfield. Lawrence is no longer frightened, but blooming under instruction. According to Ollie Davis, a fellow opera student seeking her doctorate, "Lawrence has a God-given talent—a rich baritone voice." Upon entry into the graduate program, Lawrence said he was recognized as one of the most talented students to enter the program at the University of Illinois. Lawrence finished his first semester in the graduate program with a grade point average of 5.0.

Davis also said, "Lawrence possesses the ability to be a great performer. He's a good musician. He has quite a presence about him—such a dramatic flair. Although Lawrence will continue to develop, he already has a powerful voice, that's pleasing to the ear," she said.

Lawrence said he becomes the character he is playing on stage. As he puts on his makeup and costume, he said he assumes the personality of the character which adds to his stage presence. "I feel at home when I'm on stage," said Lawrence.

Although Lawrence is a multi-talented per-

former, his main field of concentration is the Grand Opera. Lawrence said he would like to experiment with several other art forms.

A young man with the potential for a creative and challenging future, Lawrence comes from a diverse background. Lawrence's father, Rev. Dr. Lawrence L. Craig Sr., recognized as a noted author and minister in the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, was so respected within his denomination that he has been called to serve under several bishops throughout the country. Being born in Denver, Colorado, by the time Lawrence entered kindergarten, the family had moved to Washington, D.C. It was at this stage that Lawrence gave his first singing performance before an audience.

Lawrence played the lead role in the "Music Man" at his junior high school in Cleveland heights, Ohio. As a result of his activity in school, Lawrence did a tribute to Martin Luther King, Jr. on a major television station in the Cleveland Heights area, much like Chicago's WGN.

Classical jazz is one musical form that Lawrence is interested in exploring. He sang for the world renowned author and jazz musician, Dr. Billie Taylor of New York, who has proclaimed jazz as *America's* classical artform. Dr. Taylor feels that Lawrence possesses the talents to utilize European vocal technique in America's classical artform, jazz; thereby unfolding a new form of vocal interpretation that combines the two forms.

On this upbeat note, Lawrence's family moved to East St. Louis, Illinois where he entered high school. Letters of recommendation from Ohio to the Illinois Music Educators Association paved the way for

Lawrence's arrival. Clyde Williams, Lawrence's high school teacher, awaited his arrival.

During his sophomore, Lawrence sang the bass-baritone solos in the "Messiah". After this performance, word spread of Lawrence's talent. Soon, Robert Ray, Professor Warfield's accompanist, went to hear this 'new' talent. As a result, a frightened young man appeared in Warfield's office in 1977. While in high school, Lawrence traveled to the University once a month, in order to study under Professor Warfield.

Lawrence is different from other performers because of his diversity. Lawrence said he is not and has never been just a singer. He has hosted fashion shows, beauty contests and other programs. Sometimes, he even fancies himself a comedian. "I am not just a singer, but a composer," said Lawrence, "I am not just a singer and composer, but an actor—the whole bit."

Lawrence's interest in classical music began while studying in East St. Louis. During his junior high school years, some record companies showed interest in Lawrence. At this time, he mainly sang pop and soul music, but he also composed soul, jazz and now, classical music. "Music is my baby," said Lawrence, "and the piano is definitely my child."

After high school, Lawrence toured Europe. At this time, he was recognized as one of the most talented music students in America. Along with other performances, he also participated in state and national competition. For Lawrence, the trip was unforgettable as well as educational.

As travel is said to help develop personality, Lawrence is said to have a vast range of mood by those who know him. Lawrence, however, said he changes according to each situation; sometimes, to such an extent that he is only physically recognizable to some of his friends. Taylor Fuller, one of Lawrence's friends, said, "Socially, he's a very fun person to be with—talented and witty." At the same time, Fuller adds, "He is a true artist in the sense that he is very moody about his art and very involved in it." Lawrence added that he *is* very particular.

For Lawrence Craig opera is the future. Lawrence's roots are found in gospel. It seems that musical talent is woven into the Craig family. Every family member sings and plays at least one instrument. Lawrence plays the keyboards, With two older sisters and one younger brother Lawrence is the middle child.

In his spare time, Lawrence is an apprentice gourmet. According to Lawrence, he makes a 'mean lemon pie'. Lawrence is also a member of the International Music Men's honorary, Phi Mu Alpha, a professional fraternity for men in the arts.

Although Lawrence must work hard now, the future may bring the sweetness of success. According to Lawrence there are many opportunities in Europe and America. The key to success is in "You devotion to your art." said Lawrence Craig.



# The Flip Side of Athletics: The Student Athlete

by Clarence Shelley  
Dean of Students

For the past several months the campus and the community have been regularly treated to a veritable mountain of articles, reports and commentaries on some aspect of intercollegiate athletics. The subject has been written on more in the last three years than in the previous twenty-three. Most of these articles decry the evils of athletics—usually painting the coaches as immoral and evil men and women who prey on innocent and naive young people urging and forcing them to sacrifice their youth, their bodies and their intellects on the altars of mammon and fame. Most of these articles have tended to be reactions to specific events, incidents or revelations of violations and allegations of violations by coaches. The recent furor over the court-side conduct of one Big Ten Coach further illustrates the level of involvement and interest in this peculiarly American phenomena of irrational and often unmanageable interest in corporate sports.

And somewhere hidden in the applause and the noise is the too often ignored central player in all of this—the student athlete. This article is not an apology for athletes nor is it an attempt to justify or explain the bizarre, adolescent and often silly situations they put themselves in. It is rather a request and certainly an oversimplified one for more patience, and more understanding and more support for them socially, academically and emotionally. For when the tumult and the shouting die, they remain just students; just young adults who, like the rest of us, are trying to find their way through the twists and turns of the University experience.

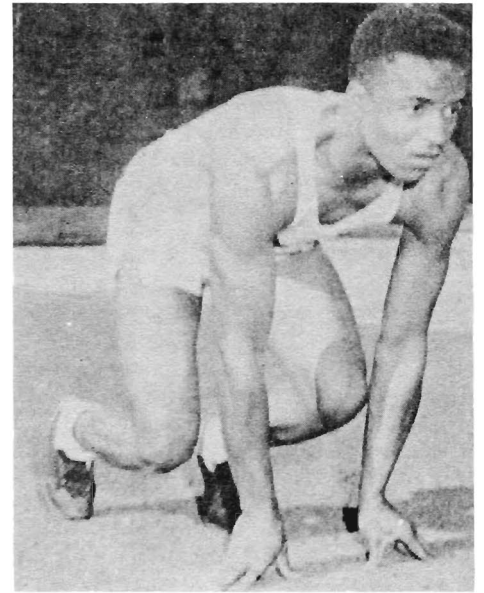
Granted, some athletes act as if they are God's ultimate gift to the campus or that they descended from Mt. Olympus in a blaze of light; and others confuse an accident of physiology and genetics that made them larger, stronger and more agile than the rest of us who couldn't hit the floor with a basketball or run across the street without collapsing. But student athletes are just students with a special talent as are dancers, painters, poets, tuba players and computer experts. The differences are many. No one that I know would pay eight dollars to sit in the rain and watch the Cleveland Ballet or listen to the Chicago Symphony. (Well, perhaps a few of us would).

We have indeed, made sports into theatre and stars of young people who aren't always ready for stardom. I am suggesting or pleading for a more reasonable attitude toward and response to student athletes—less adoration and more respect.

On this campus we have an even more insidious phenomena. I refer here to those among faculty, staff, and students who cannot hide their contempt and disdain for athletes. Those among us who, whenever they can, ridicule, abuse and insult student athletes. Those among us who in their super-

cilious arrogance blame athletes and athletics for every problem from the national debt to the disruption of the American Family. I have heard faculty insult their students who are athletes—referring to them as “oversized mutations”, “dullards” and “mental defectives”. Such people should be called to account for these statements, and reminded that their responsibility to student athletes is no less than their responsibility to James Scholars and Bronze Tablets—that being, to teach, to nurture—and to support. Be informed, that our student athletes have as high a grade point average and graduation rate as the entire student body and that ‘ain't too shabby.’ These young people give much to our campus and to our lives. They spend long hours perfecting their skills which are no less demanding than the ballerina or the sculptor.

They deserve our respect and our support; a smile and a sincere hello wouldn't hurt either.



## The Effects of “Cool Pose” What Being Cool Means: Cool Pose

by Richard Majors

*Richard Majors is a fellow of the American Psychological Association and a PhD candidate in Educational Psychology. The development of his “Cool Pose” theory has come from work on his dissertation entitled: “A Psychological Analysis of “Cool Pose””. An Ethos of the Black Male—A Case Study,” which he expects to complete in August. The “Cool Pose” theory was introduced in 1983 by Majors and Dr. Arthur Nikelly in an article entitled: “Serving the Black Minority: A New Direction for Psychotherapy,” and published in the Journal on Non-White Concerns in Personnel and Guidance. His theory has also been cited in the American Psychologist. Richard is a native of New York, New York. My thanks to him for his diligence in the condensation of this very important material. He is of a rare breed. —TF III*

“Cool Pose” is a term that defines an attitude that acts as a well established ritual, through the uses of roles, performances, facades, and shields. These behaviors manifest and express themselves in the form of defenses and coping strategies, seeking competence and survival as the immediate goal.

Historically, our American society, as governed and maintained by a white race, has inflicted all sorts of harsh socio-politico-economic sanctions and injustices, on Black males, with regard to unemployment, circumstances arising from this axis and hostile white society in which we live, Black males have had to endure various types of stressors in reaction to such mistreatment.

Simply, then, Black men have become isolated and alienated in this country, due to these circumstances, and as a result, Black men have become frustrated, impatient, angry, and embittered. To cope, Black men have taken to alcoholism, drugs, homicide,

and suicide, to help ease the tension, conflict, worry, and pain associated with these conditions. Furthermore, because of conditions from such a society, Black men have learned to mistrust the words and actions of white people. Because of this mistrust, Black males have learned to make great use of particular “postures” and “poses” in their lives (e.g., in their walk, speech, clothes, and hairstyles) to enhance their control, and efficacy in their lives. In addition to these “postures” and “poses,” Black males have learned to make great use of other well defined “postures” and “poses.” These “postures” and “poses” have become known in the literature as the “Expressive life style.” The “Expressive life style” is a way that the Black male can “posture” or “pose” (that is, act “cool”) by using his creative abilities. The Black athletes, with their stylish dunking of the basketball, the spontaneous dancing in the end zone, and the different styles of handshakes (e.g., “High fives”) and the Black entertainers with the various choreographed “cool” dance steps, are just a few examples of individuals in their professions that epitomize this creative expression.

For many Black males, then, the ever present “pose” of being calm, emotionless, fearless, “macho,” aloof, detached, tough, and secure, arises out of the mistrust that the Black males feels toward the white race. Thus, these various forms of behaviors symbolize and represent the epitome of being “cool.” Ergo, the coined expression “Cool Pose” (Majors (1983) & Majors and (Niiselly) Kelly (1983)).

Furthermore, for these Black males the attitude of this “posture” or “pose” is that “Nothing bothers me; I can take it all” (“and if I am hurting you’ll be the last one to know, white man”). That is a way of saying loud and clear to the white establishment “I am strong; I am a survivor and I don't take

no mess.” Or better yet, to use this cliché probably sums up the feelings more clearly: “I might laugh and joke but I don’t play.” Accordingly, then, any failures to the real world become the Black man’s secret.

Hence, “Cool,” as illustrated in its various forms (i.e., the flexibility and creativity of these “cool” behaviors), becomes a very powerful and necessary tool in the attempt for control and efficiency in the Black man’s constant fight for survival, as alluded to earlier. Thus, these various uses of “cool” fall nothing short of an “aesthetic art form.”

It would be fair to say, then, that the various “postures” of cool, guard, preserve, and protect one’s self-esteem via the use of one’s pride, dignity and respect from others is held at such high premium to the Black male that they would be willing to risk and sacrifice anything for it (even death).

Even prison officials who work with inmates on a daily basis, will tell you that of all the ethnic groups in prison the Black male’s “spirits” (that is, one’s character, principles, and manhood) are the most difficult to break. Consequently, then, in regard to this particular point of view, many Black males feel that the white man has made their lives difficult, and admit that “the man” does control their social and economic lives, and that because of this, Black men feel very

strongly about their pride and dignity, and guard it accordingly. One Black man illustrates this point well, “The white man may control everything about me except my pride and dignity; and that they can’t have; that is mine, and mine along.” “Cool Pose” (or being “cool”) then, is a unique adaptation to these adverse socio-political-economic conditions.

The positive aspects of “Cool Pose,” as the above speaks to, then, helps to provide one with *control, inner strength, balance, stability, confidence and security*, as devices to deal with these adverse environments.

On the other hand, the negative aspects of “Cool Pose,” simply, is that the Black males have failed to *discriminate* the appropriate uses of “Cool Pose” (or being “cool”). What I mean, here, is that many Black men will act “cool” much of the time, without regard to the situation. This condition, needless to say, may cause severe problems. We as Black men have become so conditioned to keeping up our guard with white people, that it literally has become next to impossible to let our guard down for people that we care about, or people that may care about us (e.g., girl/women friend, wife, mother, father, or “good” friends). Of course, there are times that it’s alright to let our guard down and release our feelings and emotions to these kinds of people.

Other negative aspects of being “cool” are the harsh values and “norms” that we have conditioned ourselves to live up to. For example, we as Black men have learned to feel in many cases that if we are “real men,” we aren’t supposed to get involved with anyone, or anything that isn’t “cool.” In addition, we as Black men haven’t been “down to earth” with each other; we simply have to be “cool” especially around the “fellas”) or act in a particular way to be accepted. If we do not act in these prescribed ways, we are quick to ostracize, criticize and label those particular individuals as “corny” and “square.” Without a doubt! Sometimes, we are much more critical and difficult on ourselves (Black people), than the white man could ever be. Even if it is only for the reason that we won’t let the enemy, closest to us, to do any damage.

When the art of being “cool” is used like this, not only does it isolate us, separate us, and breaks us up, it literally kills us, as a people, because we many times will not hesitate to put being “cool” ahead of particular “needs.” The resultant condition is aggression in many of these Black males (because of the tendency to repress things). This condition undoubtedly causes frustration, which is taken out on those individuals closest to him—their Black brothers. Unfortunately, then, these negative aspects of “cool” may contribute to one of the biggest problems upon us today, Black on Black crime, for many of the reasons stated throughout this article.

As Black people, we will continue to endure and be survivors. We are very much a peaceful and harmonious race, living with a “live and let live” nature, which reminds of the ole’ Langston Hughes poem, *motto*:

I play it cool  
And Dig all jive,  
That’s the reason  
I stay alive.  
My motto as I live and learn  
is: Dig and be dug in return.

What being “cool” represents, then, is a *dialect* or paradox because the same element (of “cool”) that allows for survival (in the white man’s world), are the same elements that ultimately can destroy our Black race.

## Being Greek

Alpha history is filled with many great men. Why not use our minds to the fullest, and excel just like them?

Kappa men dress just right, and some say that they’re cool. But can all of that help me graduate from this school?

No frat is perfect, and that is no lie. So why call the Sigmas names just because they try?

D—S—T  
A—K—A  
and—  
Z Phi B

Sorority women are the cream of the crop. But why pledge a lady and then make her drop?

Don’t act like you’re too pretty, and don’t turn your heads, Maybe that’s

why men correlate you just with their beds.

Women have equality, in rights and in blame, so let’s work together to rekindle the flame.

Black greeks can become a powerful tool. We can become student leaders or mere partying fools.

We can help each other, cooperate and unite, or stay isolated, mad and continue to fight.

Each greek at O State has a big choice to make—study versus party, flunk out or graduate.

Help out others, be cool or just forget it—“Cuz I’m a Black Greek and I Know that I’m WITH IT.

—Anonymous

*From the Ohio State University Newsletter Dimen-sion, December 1984.*

## One of Our Own: Dr. Ann E. Smith

### A Step in the Right Direction

by Karen Y. Vaughn

On November 6, 1984 Dr. Ann E. Smith was elected to the Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois. She is the first black woman to hold this position. Recently, Dr. Smith was the guest speaker for the Annual Founder’s Day Celebration at Bethel A.M.E. Church in Champaign. In this, her first public speaking engagement since her election, Dr. Smith addressed the issue of “Looking Back in Order to Move Forward”. She stresses the importance of learning about our Black history, our leaders, artists,

writers, churches, and struggles. She also urged those in attendance to take an active interest in issues that have special significance for Black people, especially education, affirmative action, and struggle for equal opportunity.

As a Black educator Dr. Smith recognizes that with the declining number of Blacks attending graduate schools, and consequently entering the teaching fields, there is a shortage of Black leadership in our colleges and universities. This situation is just another

thorn in the side of Black students who already find these institutions alienating and culturally lacking.

Dr. Smith is a third generation educator. She devoted 16 years to teaching and administering at Eastern and Northeastern Illinois Universities.

She has earned a bachelor’s degree from Lincoln University in her native state, Missouri, as well as a Master of Arts degree from the University of Iowa. She advanced *continued on page 6*



continued from page 5

her studies in Higher Education Administration at Loyola University and received her Doctorate from the Union Graduate School in Ohio.

Following her career as an educator, Dr. Smith went on to enter the business world. She has to her credit four prestigious performance awards from the Prudential Insurance Company, including the Associate Agent of the Year Award. Dr. Smith is the co-founder of an insurance consulting firm called Endow, Inc. Presently she is the Director of Marketing for Cook, Stratton, & Company, a nationally regarded insurance brokerage firm.

Dr. Ann Smith brings all of this experience and know-how to her position as Trustee. She is an educator, a successful businesswoman, a consultant and a lecturer. But, most noteworthy is her concern for young people and their access to quality education, now and in future years.

## The Exiled and the Effervescent

by Kevin Walter McFall

What a glorious encounter it proved to be, mild mannered, yet exuberant it appeared to me

From amidst the new crowd emerged a bubble, very circular, non-conforming, and without much trouble

Its flight unperturbed, undaunted, to say the least, when it landed, I approached it with grace unlike many beasts.

My faith had endowed me with the will to pursue, a bubble so Effervescent and overwhelmingly true.

Yet defeated in faith I now had become, because of my gestures and goodwill to some. Shortly the Exiled because my only name. . . . the new crowd the old crowd, all just the same, in my mind a memory wrapped up in cellophane.

The bubble remaining Effervescent, and now filled with care, appeared naive as to the entire crowd's air.

They had cast out their receiver, the delighter, the faithful, their friend, for he had taken on the one thing that allowed him to win.

## Tom Brown: He Runs Registration

by Karen Y. Vaughn

Most of us are familiar with the utter mayhem of On-Campus Registration—the long lines, the noise, the frustration, and, of course, all those forms with all those little bubbles to fill in. Indeed, registration can be viewed as a rather painstaking experience. But, upon closer examination one would have to admit that it is a remarkably well-run administrative system that provides students with one last stab at course scheduling. For students, registration comes but once a semester. But, at a university of this size getting people registered is a full-time job. At the University of Illinois the man behind registration is Thomas H. Brown.

Mr. Brown is a University of Illinois graduate and has worked for the University for the last six years. He began with a degree in urban planning as a staff associate and he is now the Deputy Registrar and an Admissions Officer II for the Department of Personnel Services. When asked what exactly his job entailed, Tom explained that once spring registration is finally over, preparations must begin for advance enrollment in April. Simultaneously the registration process for both Intercession and summer school begin. And, just when you think that it's over. . . it's time for On-Campus Registration for the

Fall semester. Tom oversees all these preparations from the paper work to the physical of setting up the armory.

Tom also reflected back to his school days at the University when there was no such thing as Registration-by-Mail. Actually this process was instituted until the Fall of 1979. Prior to that time every student flocked to the Armory to try to enroll himself into his classes. Now it is difficult to imagine where we would be without the On-Campus Registration process.

The organization and foresight it takes to put registration together and see it through with the minimal degree of complications can be a tremendous pressure. But, Tom seems to have things all under control. He combines administrative skill, knowledge, dedication, and leadership to make the enrollment process as convenient and efficient as possible, which makes it better for all of us in the long run. But, perhaps what makes Tom stand out more as an administrator is that he truly enjoys his work and the entire University atmosphere. This kind of vitality, along with efficiency, is a rare combination and one that is truly noteworthy. Tom is a dedicated professional who takes his work seriously and performs it well. So, "Hat's off to you, Tom". We're proud to say that you are

## Blacks At White Campuses—A Comparison

by Calvin Barksdale

What advantages are there to being a Black student at a Black institution as opposed to a Black studying at a predominately white institution?

According to two Fisk University graduates, there are certain advantages to being a member of a majority on a university campus.

"It's all communication," said James Thomas, graduate student at the University of Illinois. "We had great communication between students at Fisk. The attitude there was completely different. We talked about real issues that affected all of us.

"We were unified because we all were willing to talk," said Thomas. "Students at the University of Illinois, for the most part, are into themselves. If they get by then everything's all right. I think this comes from being isolated at a white university."

Imani Bezzell, a graduate of Fisk who now works as a Resident Director at Lincoln Residence Hall, believes that Blacks are more vocal and active if they are part of the student majority.

"When I was at Fisk I was involved in a lot of things," said Bezzell. "I was involved in political rallies and a court case fighting for student rights. Blacks at this university must realize that they don't own this place. The University of Illinois never was and never will be run by Blacks. I think this makes our

Black students feel powerless," Bezzell added.

"I remember going to the President of Fisk University and having private meetings," Bezzell said. "How many Black students can do that here?"

Bezzell asserts that Blacks at Black institutions realize that they own the institution. This gives Black students a sense of pride that a Black student at a White institution may not share.

"At some point in their life a person needs to feel like he/she is part of the majority," Bezzell said. "A Black student can derive confidence at a Black institution."

Both Thomas and Bezzell stress the need for unity and organization. Bezzell is concerned that Blacks at predominately white institutions, such as the U of I, do not utilize their support structures. These include fraternal and community organizations.

Thomas said that his greatest shock came when he realized that the black community in the Nashville area was willing to help, and more importantly, could help. "I was shocked to find out that I could exist without white people," Thomas said. "I realized that even I had been *brainwashed*, because I was nervous about having a black doctor. I had never experienced that type of atmosphere before and it made me feel good about myself and Blacks in general."

## Reflections on Jazz

by Calvin Barksdale

February is Black History Month, and at this time every year Blacks observe past progress and future aspirations. As a whole, Blacks have made significant contributions to American society. One of the most prominent is jazz music.

Jazz fully expresses the concept which underlies American society. In its highest form it represents complete freedom. But more importantly, jazz represents a unique American art form that along with the other diversions of American art has made American culture the most pervasive in the world.

It is not questioned by those who listen to jazz music that it is a significant art form. A consensus of American's who don't regularly listen to jazz would probably associate the style of music with enculturation at its highest level.

What is questioned is who is responsible for the invention and introduction of this significant form of art into the American way of life. Let us dispel all rumors. Blacks are primarily responsible for the phenomenon called jazz.

That is not to say that white Americans have not contributed to jazz music. One has only to point to Benny Goodman and Tommy Dorsey to discredit that theory. No, the issue here is the genesis of jazz.

Where did it start? Who started the feel? And who refined it long before it was accepted by the mainstream of American society. For the answers to these questions one would be complete remiss to ignore the founding fathers: Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Coleman Hawkins, and the incredibly long list of black jazz artists who molded their expression into music.

"There is no question that Blacks started jazz. It was purely our creation," says Pete Bridgewater of WDWS Radio in Champaign. "Jazz music has its roots in Africa, and it evolved into the rhythms that we associate with jazz music."

"What's most important to remember about jazz is that it takes an innate feel to play it," Bridgewater says. "Without that 'soul', you ain't going to get too far playing jazz. Blacks have that feel."

Bridgewater, who has an extensive collection of jazz albums, believes that it is important for blacks to realize that the phenomenon that took Europe by storm in the 1920s and 30s was a wave created by Blacks.

"Young Blacks have lost their sense of tradition," he says. "Jazz music is traditionally black and young people should realize this."

"The young of today have been sold that version of commercial jazz which makes money," Bridgewater says. "That all started when whites seriously entered the scene. Before that, way back, like when Louis Armstrong was playing in New Orleans, that was real jazz."

Because of this constricted viewpoint, young blacks may have misconceptions about what jazz music really meant to blacks in the early 20th century.

"It was a means of expression that you played from the heart," Bridgewater says. "You certainly weren't playing for money. As a rule, black jazz artists didn't make much money at all. You played because that was how you felt," he says. "And the magic was that others could share the feeling with you at the same time that you were experiencing it."

"What happened in the 1940s and 50s was that jazz started to be profitable, so more and more attention was placed on it. The men of that era weren't the kings of jazz, it was entirely artists who were the kings," Bridgewater says.

Bridgewater, who played in and orchestrated his own band, speaks about jazz with knowledgeable insight. Some may equate jazz music with an era in human history that is fast fading, but to Pete Bridgewater it is still relevant.

"As a means of expression you can't beat it. Erskine Hawkins and Count Basie still can communicate today," he says. "It's all in the way you play it, like this. . . . you see, isn't that easy. Just like that."

In the month of observation we must make sure we do not miss the contribution of jazz

music. As Mr. Bridgewater put it: "Think about where we would be without jazz. Everything you hear today has a little jazz in it. Just think about it for a minute. . . . real boring right. Right!"

## In Review

It's been a long time since a film like this has been made—and the quality of this film makes seeing it an added bonus. "The Brother From Another Planet", is a film that combines a humorous look at reality, with a poignant storyline about Harlem life. Director John Sayles has provided the viewer with an interesting look into the prospect of extraterrestrial beings with a twist, the "E.T." is a "Brother" on the run from alien slave catchers. His physical appearance can only be vertically directed toenails. As the Brother mingles in with the regular brothers, we see the savagery of our own lives through his 'removeable eye'. The film starts Joe Morton, who demonstrates his acting prowess in this effort. There is also a healthy bit of strictly "black life" anecdotes and a deeprooted message from a Jamaican that in itself is worth the price of admission. Don't let this film be wasted on those that will laugh at its humor, while leaving its message largely unappreciated. I am only reminded of the "chemistry" of most "Soldier's Story" audiences. At the Co-Ed.

## What Ever Happened to Dr. Donald Clay?

by Taylor Fuller III

Several months ago a man came to speak to the University of Illinois students about what he called "networking." That man was Dr. Donald Clay, an acquaintance of Professor Fontenot of the U of I English Department. Dr. Clay's message left students buzzing for weeks about his educational incentive plans. Yet, as mid-semester draws near, the true situation about this man or his incentive plan remains a mystery.

Dolan Hubbard, a PhD candidate in English, met Dr. Clay and described him as 'a very eloquent speaker.' "All I know is what he said," Dolan continued, "and he said he had in the neighborhood of \$10 million to use in this program. Since he was from Illinois, (Chicago) he wanted to use the U of I as a test market for a potentially national operation—to work out the bugs."

In case some of you were not familiar with Dr. Clay's proposal here is a brief synopsis of his plan. Student A would be given a stipend that would pay all of his fixed expenses; (ie. tuition and fees and room and board) in addition student A would be given an additional stipend for "spending money". The theory behind this was based on the principle that if minority students didn't have to work to support themselves that they might do better in school. As all this is indeed a noble undertaking, but that "too good to be true" label has sparked hope, skepticism and controversy.

One student remarked, "If I didn't have to work I know I could do better, this is just what I needed!"; her comments were consistent with most students who heard Dr. Clay. However, what was latent skepticism began to grow when Dr. Clay came back a second time, later in the

fall, and still did not have his plan ready for students. "That's when I got suspicious," said one administrator, "because he said that he would have it (the plan) ready when he came back."

Another student had another type of encounter with Dr. Clay. Jasper Brewster, senior in LAS said that Dr. Clay asked him to use his personal credit card. "Earlier that day, I was to go and cash a check with him that he received from the University for speaking; I think it was around \$250. Well, it was Sunday, and he could not cash the check, so I wrote some personal checks at places I have accounts after he endorsed the check over to me. It was then that he (Dr. Clay) saw and remarked that I had quite a lot of credit cards. He later asked me to borrow my Visa and I refused; later that day I discovered the card missing." Brewster reported the event to police who found the card on Dr. Clay in Chicago. "He said that I had dropped it (the card) and he picked it up and forgot to give it back to me," Brewster explained.

All of this has left an even bigger question in the minds of everyone involved, including Prof. Fontenot, Clay's initial U of I contact. "Clay told me that he was coming to speak to black students about grad schools, and help them devise a plan in that area, on his own. At that time no mention of money was made. When the students went on their own from the BPC (Black Programming Committee), that's when the problems began. Professor Fontenot informed this writer that this situation would be best 'left alone' at my initial inquiry."

No one had seen or heard from Dr. Clay since November.



# GRIOT

COPYRIGHT 1976, JAMAA PRODUCTIONS  
THE COMMUNICATIONS WORKSHOP OF  
THE AFRO-AMERICAN CULTURAL PROGRAM.  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.  
PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE AFRO-AMERICAN  
CULTURAL PROGRAM AND THE AFRO-AMERICAN  
STUDIES PROGRAM, 708 S. MATHEWS OR  
1205 W. OREGON, URBANA, ILLINOIS 61801

**AACP**  
BRUCE NE SBITT, DIRECTOR  
NATE BANKS, ASS'T. DIRECTOR  
LORETHA HARMON, ASS'T. DIRECTOR  
BETTY HINES, RECEPTIONIST

**AASP**  
MARVIN LEWIS, DIRECTOR

NON PROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 75  
Urbana, IL 61801

**BLACK MOMS DAY PROGRAM** sponsored by the Afro-American Cultural Program will take place on the week-end of April 26th/27. The program format will be as follows:

**Friday evening, April 26th**—A Drama presentation by the Theatre 199, Blackheart Players, at the Armory Theatre. (2) Showings at 7 p.m. and at 9 p.m., limited seating. A Free event

**Saturday Morning, April 27**—Parent/Student Coffee and meeting with Black Faculty and Staff personnel. . . 10 a.m.—11:30 a.m., at the Allen Hall Lounge, 1005 W. Gregory Drive, Urbana, IL 61801. Lunch (optional)

**Saturday Afternoon, 1:00 p.m.**, Academic Awards Presentation by the E.O.P. Program Staff for achievers at the Lincoln Hall Theatre

**2:00 p.m.**—Alpha Phi Alpha Organization Awards Presentation at the same location, immediately following E.O.P.

**3:00 p.m.**—Black Moms Day Fashion Show at Lincoln Hall Theatre. Coordinated by Ms. Adrienne Green, Senior student.

**8:00 p.m.**—The University of Illinois Black Chorus is in concert at the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, Great Hall Theatre. Tickets are \$1.00 for Students, \$2.00 for the General Public and can be purchased at the ticket office of Krannert and on the evening of the event. Tickets go on sale a week prior to the event.

## Black Mom of the Year Award

Submissions for this annual award are now being accepted by the Afro-American Cultural Program for judging until the 22nd day of March, 1985. For those who may be unaware of the presentation of this program entity, it is an opportunity for enrolled students to express why they think that their mother is that person, deserving such an award, on this day set aside for them.

We are requesting that each interested student submit a two page letter as to why they think their Mom should receive the "Black Mom of the Year Award, which would include for certain:

- 1) Characteristics and qualities which demonstrate leadership, unselfishness, and a clear ability to share her expertise to others that they may also grow, other than the immediate family
- 2) Characteristics and qualities which demonstrate that she is involved or committed in community and civic activities in her hometown, beyond employment responsibilities
- 3) Any adversities or obstacles she had to overcome to insure the best for you to continue your education and become an achiever
- 4) How her influence and positive attributes manifested themselves in you as the student and what have you contributed to the student body as a result of that motherly carry-over

### ALL LETTERS SHOULD BE TYPEWRITTEN

To insure complete objectivity for the judge's review we request that you *do not* put your name or your parent's name on the essay. These essays will be numbered instead. Put them on a cover sheet with the following information:

- Your name/ Address and local phone number
- Your mother's name/Home Address

Letters will be accepted at the Cultural House, 708 S. Mathews-U between 8:30 a.m.—5:00 p.m. in the Secretary's Office, Rm. 100A

We urge your maximum participation and it provides an opportunity for your Mom to know how much you appreciate her efforts and care.

You don't have it? GET IT!



For \$ .20 a day, its yours! call CABLEVISION 384-2500