

# DIRECTIONS IN BLACK STUDIES

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LAST SPRING MR INVITED RESPONSES TO THE FOLLOWING LETTER.

*At present, as you know, there is widespread interest in Black Studies—all kinds of institutions all over the country, community colleges to Ivy League schools, are announcing their intention to study the subject or to begin some kind of program. Almost at once, it seems, problems and questions arise that many institutions and faculties, not to mention our society, are not prepared to deal with intelligently. We know that the reasons for this unpreparedness are largely inexcusable and shameful. But in the present situation merely excoriating white society for its failures might not be the most important task before the intellectual and academic community. It might be extremely useful at the present time to make available hard information that could serve as guidelines for those responsible for establishing and implementing real programs at real places. There is obviously a crying need for serious information, and discussion of precedents, readily available, authoritative, concrete, specific, concise. This information should not beg any of the hard questions that inevitably arise. I mean things like:*

- 1) *What would a sample curriculum or program look like?*
- 2) *Should the aim of every Black Studies Program be to serve*

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and transform the black community? If so, how is that aim best achieved: by, let us say, high-powered research institutes, "think-tank" centers, experimental and innovative programs that include extensive field work and relations with the black community, changing the usual degree or credential requirements, "beefing up" or ignoring traditional notions of academic soundness in black studies courses?

3) Should admission to Black Studies Programs be limited to black students? What then will likely be the effect of a recent HEW memorandum warning college officials they risk losing federal funds if they sanction such exclusion?

4) Should black teachers for programs in white institutions be recruited from southern Negro colleges? What role can and should the Negro college play?

5) What, if any, may be the role of the white scholar in such programs (in such fields, say, as race relations, or Negro history and literature, where a person has made or continues to make important contributions; or in courses that require specialists the black community may not be able to supply; or courses that don't necessarily require a black experience as part of the person's qualification)?

6) Where and how should control of the program be vested? Should there be complete autonomy within schools? Should there be specially appointed Trustees or overseers? How do state schools and private ones differ?

I am sure you can add to these questions, and I warmly invite you to do so—although it seems to me that these are the ones that most often come up.

What I am writing to you about—and to a few other black intellectuals who have been thinking a good deal about these issues—is a special section of *MR* on Black Studies that we are hoping to put together and make available by next fall. Such an issue, bringing together answers (tentative or definitive) to at least some of these pressing questions cannot fail to supply a real need and to make a great impact upon an influential segment of the academic and intellectual community. Would you be willing to write for us on this subject?

I hope you will share with me the feeling that this can be a unique, timely, and potent enterprise. I would greatly appreciate an early reply—or any suggestions you may have.

Jules Chametzky

THE SECTION THAT FOLLOWS REPRESENTS THE REPLIES.

## BLACK STUDIES: A POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE

*Mike Thelwell*

*The two things that we black folk need most  
is a lot of patience and a sense of irony.  
Junebug Jabbo Jones, Pool Hall Address,  
"Don't Let White Folks Run You Crazy,"  
Jackson, Mississippi, October 2, 1964.*

ANY ATTEMPT to discuss the question of what has come to be called "Black Studies," or "ethnic studies" as they say in California, that incubator of meaningless pop jargon, outside of a political perspective is futile. The demands on the part of black students and their activist mentors is a response to political realities in the black community. The considerations out of which these pressures come are clear, so clear in fact, that there should be no need for an essay of this kind were it not for the apparently limitless capacity for the debasement of language and the obscuring of issues demonstrated by the mass media of the society. It is true that in this enterprise, the media has enjoyed the cooperation, witting or otherwise, of any number of hastily discovered "spokesmen" for black studies whose "revolutionary" fervor and extravagant rhetoric is equalled only by their mysticism and anti-intellectualism.

As if this outpouring of definition from the left which serves, more often than not, to obscure more than it illuminates were not enough, there is an attendant motion on the right flank of the black community which is equally uninformed, short-sighted and dogmatic. This faction, which includes such established Negro intellectuals as Andrew Brimmer of the Federal Reserve Board, Sir Arthur Lewis, the West Indian economist presently at Princeton, Kenneth Clarke who recently resigned from the Board of Trustees of Antioch College after they had yielded to student demands for a black residence hall, Prof. Martin Kilson of Harvard, Bayard Rustin, Roy Wilkins of the NAACP (naturally), and a number of old guard Negro administrators from Southern Negro Colleges, seem to have become the cutting edge of the establishment backlash against the movement for Black Studies. The burden of their objections, which reflects very clearly a class position

if not their political sentiments—they seem to have no discernible common political perspective save for an acceptance of the “one society myth”—is best reflected in Sir Arthur Lewis’ comment that “black studies will not prepare a black student to be president of General Motors.” Well, neither will it prepare him to be Pope, but that hardly seems to be the issue since it is not clear that anything short of civil revolution on the one hand and divine intervention on the other will accomplish either.

Equally interesting, not to say informative, in what it reveals of the attitudes of the men currently entrusted (by white society) with the education of young blacks, is the story rather gleefully reported in a recent issue of the *New York Times*. This concerns a “joke” which circulated at a meeting of The United Negro College Fund. While most of the administrators present admitted rather sheepishly that their schools were initiating “some kind of Black Studies” programs to anticipate and forestall student militance, their attitude toward the undertaking was made graphically clear by the story reported by the *Times* as exciting great mirth among them. The essence of this story has to do with a student applying for a job and being told by a computer that his training in black studies had prepared him only to pick cotton. To quote Ralph Ellison’s nameless protagonist, “Bledsoe, you ain’t nothing but a greasy chittlin’ eater.”

That this story and the *Times*’ prominent and snide presentation of it was the greatest possible indictment of these men, the process of so-called education that produced them, and the alleged institutions of learning that they preside over at the command of racist southern legislatures was perhaps lost on them. But the Bledsoes<sup>1</sup> of this world are distinguished less for their sense of irony than by their ill-disguised contempt for the black community and its heritage and traditions.

The most substantive objections coming from the Negro right—despite a certain intemperance of expression as when he sneers at “soul courses,” a phenomenon of his own invention—comes from Rustin. His concern is that white colleges will attempt to cop out of what he sees as their responsibility to the black community by the expedient of hastily manufactured and meaningless programs designated “black studies,” taught by semi-literate dabsiki-clad demagogues with nothing to offer but a “militant black rap.” Rustin fears that white schools will accept this as an easier and less expensive alterna-

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<sup>1</sup> From Dr. Professor Bledsoe, the autocratic yet servile college president in *Invisible Man*, who cooperates with the white managers of the society in destroying the spirit and emasculating the consciousness of his students. As used here it is a generic term for all of his too numerous tribe.

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tive than providing the massive and costly programs of remedial education which are required. To be sure, there is little in the history of these institutions that would suggest that they are not capable of such a ploy. I know of very few isolated campuses where this is happening to some degree and I suspect that there are at least some others which will not be inhibited by questions of principle, morality or their own internal standards from attempting to follow suit. But the places where this can happen are not educational institutions in any but the most superficial sense and are at present educating no one, black or white. Besides which, it is inconceivable that such programs can survive, and even to exist they require the complicity of self-seeking and socially irresponsible black charlatans and careerists. Though few in number, such a type exists and their destructive potential is great. But it is the responsibility of the students and the adult black community to resist any such development in any institution where it becomes evident. It would be pointless to pretend that this danger does not exist in some small degree, but my impression of the basic good sense of this student generation, and their serious commitment and sense of responsibility to themselves and their community reassures me that this tendency will be a short-lived one.

Whatever unity is to be found in the positions of the black establishment—figures mentioned seem to reside in a thoroughly uncritical acceptance of the methods, goals and the educational practices of white America save for its traditional exclusion of black people. They are joined in this assessment by the overwhelming majority of white academics. There are other critical positions to the left of them in the black community, ranging from a nationalism impractical at this time: “The place for black students is in black schools” (Consequently the establishment of Black Studies programs on white campuses is a delusion luring black students onto white campuses “to be co-opted and corrupted by the ‘devil.’”) to militant activism: “All of whitey’s education is bullshit; all black people need to know is streetology. Black students should come on home to the streets and take *real* black studies in the areas of judo, karate, demolitions and assorted martial arts.”

The second position speaks for itself, the first is more emotionally appealing until one checks some figures—of the 400,000 black college students in the country last year, fully one half were from the North and were in white schools, many of them as a consequence of “conscience” programs of recruitment and financial aid on the part of these white schools. Few of the black southern colleges can accommodate more students than are currently enrolled even if we ignored their chronic financial problems and the educational philosophy (political control, really) within which they are forced to operate.

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At this point in history black students in increasing numbers will either have to attend white schools or no school at all. This being the case, certain problems arise: how can the almost inevitable psychological and spiritual demoralization of the small minority of blacks in an overwhelmingly white institution—which was conceived, created, structured and operated so as to service an oppressive social order—be avoided? Are the educational needs, both psychological and practical of the black student identical with the white? What elements of the society control these institutions and to what ends? What finally, when one cuts through the liberal rhetoric and the humanistic bombast, is the essential social and political function of these institutions? Is this function at all coincident with the necessities and aspirations of the black population as articulated by the growing nationalist consciousness of all elements of the community? Can anyone reasonably expect, in a situation where even the white student, the beneficiary and inheritor of the system, has begun to question its economic and political functions at home and abroad—to reject the yawning gap between its pious, self-justifying rhetoric and its viciously exploitative and murderous reality, and to question the role of the universities in this pattern—that black students who, for the most part have never been allowed the luxury of any delusions about the meaning of their relationship to this society and who are now quickening to a vision however tentative and problematic, of collective black possibility, will find it possible or desirable to make a smooth and easy adjustment to institutions with the historical record and contemporary posture of the Universities? The answer must be, in Stokely Carmichael's cryptic phrase "Hell, No."

And even if they wanted to, the attempt at emotional integration into these institutions would necessitate a process of psychological and cultural suicide. (Last spring during the "troubles" at the City College of New York an incident occurred which is significant. Black and Puerto Rican students came under attack for "vandalism" when they destroyed what was described as "a work of Art." One had to read the press reports very carefully to discover that what was destroyed was a tapestry depicting George Washington receiving the worshipful homage of a group of black slaves. A small incident, but symptomatic of a seemingly endless accumulation of gratuitous, racist affrontery.)

As the current academic year opens there is some evidence that a reaction against the concept of Black Studies is beginning to take form from another and possibly more troublesome source—the faculty and administration of the universities. The two groups need to be considered separately for their interests, although congruent, are not identical. In every case with which I am familiar, the administration has adopted a posture that can best be described as interested neutral-

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ity. That is, they take no substantive position on the *issues*, being more interested in peace-keeping operations with the parties to the action, namely the black students and their supporters and conservative elements on the faculty which see the agitation for black studies as threatening their class prerogatives and traditional jurisdictions. In every case the rhetoric coming from these pockets of resistance has been couched in terms of lofty liberal principles, and considerations of the highest academic and professional integrity, but the rhetoric barely conceals a most vulgar political and professional self-interest and occasionally an overt old-fashioned white paternalism. One canard, coming most often from the least informed members of the faculty, maintains that there is simply not sufficient material in the field to support and justify Black Studies as a major field of academic endeavor. This statement reveals more than the ignorance of its authors because were it in fact true, it would constitute the strongest possible confirmation of the covert racism and cultural chauvinism which informs the intellectual and scholarly establishment. And the patent absurdity of the "insufficient material" assertion does not really absolve the scholarly establishment because the existence of this basic research is due to the lonely and heroic efforts of past generations of black scholars and a few whites—Herbert Aptheker, Melvin J. Herskovits, Sydney Kaplan come to mind—in the face of the active opposition and indifference of the "profession." And in the case of the black scholars who had to endure the condescension, skepticism and disparagement of their efforts by white colleagues and publishers, our indebtedness is beyond expression or recompense. It is some small consolation that some of these morally courageous and dedicated pioneers, men like C. L. R. James, Sterling Brown, John H. Clarke, George Padmore, Arna Bontemps, and many more whose works are only now being "discovered" and published are present to witness the turning of the tide and the recognition and vindication of their efforts. And we have inherited from such men as W. E. B. Dubois, J. A. Rogers, E. Franklin Frazier, Alain Locke, Edward Wilmot Blyden, James Weldon Johnson, J. Carter Woodson, Kelley Miller, Leo William Hansbury both a scholarly example and the legacy of a distinguished tradition upon which to build.

Let us, for the moment, ignore this tradition and pretend, as those who make the charge of insufficient material must be doing, that these men never existed and their work had never been done. Would this in any way affect the necessity of this generation of black intellectuals to engage and demolish the racist mythology and distorted perception and interpretation of the black experience, culture and reality which constitutes the intellectual underpinnings of white racism in the society? The political struggle for liberation and cultural integrity must

be accompanied by an intellectual offensive—and this is one of the tasks of black studies. The most obvious and pressing imperative is the reexamination and rehabilitation of our cultural heritage and political history—African and American—from the intellectual colonialism that has been imposed upon it. This is merely the first responsibility. The next level of responsibility accruing to black studies is related integrally to “issues” raised by its white academic opponents and has literally to do with the decolonization of education in this country. We need to examine these objections in the context of necessities and goals of the black community. There is the procedural objection to separate, autonomous departments of black studies. It is important to note that these objections come most often from white academics in those disciplines most clearly affected by what we are about, which is to say history, the humanities and the social sciences. Frequently they come from the upper echelons of these departments and include the faculty mandarins, the men least involved in teaching, and whose reputations and prestige derive from their roles as advisors and resource personnel to the political, military and industrial managers of the society.

Their style is as constant as is their approach. First they trot out their liberal credentials as friends of “The Negro.” Then they proceed to the startling admission that there have been errors of omission on the part of the white scholarly and educational community. Next they demonstrate how little perception they have of the mood or aspirations of the black community by presenting an analysis and a solution based on the fallacy of an integrated society and of identical interests. Certainly, they say, black literature and history should be a part of the curriculum. (Two years ago this faction was denying that the concept of black literature or history had *any* validity. On the question of a distinctive black culture, they still are not sure.) In fact, they say, there should be courses dealing with the black experience in every relevant discipline. But, to set up an autonomous entity—be it department, program or institute—of black studies is antithetical to everything we believe. It creates a false dichotomy, smacks of separatism, not to say black racism, creates a serious problem of standards and violates the concept of academic *objectivity*. Also, what assurances will we have that what will take place within that autonomous entity will be *education* and not indoctrination? (This is said without ironic intent.) And besides that—these black instructors that you plan to bring in—what acceptable (to us) academic credentials do they have? We would not want to short-change these black students! (That this concern for the academic well-being of black students is a recent development and consequently suspect can be seen by the fact that few if any of these men ever expressed any concern at their absence from

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that institution in the past.) How will you guarantee the ideological purity of this autonomous department? All of these questions are predicated on the assumption of a culturally homogenous society, the myth of scholarly objectivity, a rejection of history, the denial of conflicting class interests within the society, and differing perceptions of necessities by the black and white community. The consequences of these objections, if followed, would simply be the perpetuation of their control over the education of black people and the imposition of their definitions of social and political reality upon the black community. This is precisely the issue, white cultural and ideological terrorism, and the right of black people to define for themselves the meaning of their past and the possibility of their future.

In order to deal with this position it is necessary to remind ourselves of some basic history. The black experience in this country is not merely one of political and cultural oppression, economic exploitation, and the expropriation of our history. It also includes the psychological and intellectual manipulation and control of blacks by the dominant majority. The liberation of blacks requires, therefore, the redress of all of these depredations. The relationship of the white community to the black has been and continues to be that of oppressor and oppressed, colonizer and colonized. To pretend anything else is merely to prolong the social agony that the society is currently experiencing.

Scholarly objectivity is a delusion that liberals (of both races) may subscribe to. Black people and perceptive whites know better. The fact is that the intellectual establishment distinguishes itself by its slavish acceptance of the role assigned to it by the power-brokers of the society. It has always been the willing servant of wealth and power, and the research done in the physical sciences, the humanities and social sciences has been, with very few honorable exceptions, in service to established power, which has, in this country, always been antithetical to the interests of black people. The goals of the research undertaken, the questions asked, the controlling assumptions governing it, and consequently, the results obtained have always fitted comfortably into a social consensus which has been, by definition, racist.

Look at two examples affecting black people in the history of the institutions of higher learning. In 1832 a young professor named Dew, at William and Mary College, published a widely-circulated and -praised pamphlet which was to propel him to the presidency of that institution. The thesis of this piece of objective scholarship was ". . . It is in the order of nature and of God that the being of superior faculties and knowledge and therefore of superior power, should control and dispose of those who are inferior. It is as much in the order of nature that men should enslave each other, as that other animals should prey upon each other."

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This example of objective scholarship and the attendant upward mobility which greeted it was not lost on a Professor named Harper at the University of South Carolina. His work published in 1838 proclaimed that "Man is born to subjection. The proclivity of natural man is to domineer or to be subservient. If there are sordid servile and laborious offices to be performed, is it not better that there should be sordid, servile and laborious beings to perform them?" Professor Harper ended his career in the office of Chancellor of his institution. Needless to say, the style as well as the issues have changed with history (witness Prof. Jensen), but has the basic dynamic of "academic objectivity"?

The "let the established departments handle it" proposal is as specious as it is fraudulent. These departments have, over the years displayed no interest in incorporating the black experience, a black perspective, or even Negro faculty-members into their operations. What should now dispose us to trust them? And even if we should, how will they, after centuries of indifference, suddenly develop the competence and sensitivity which would enable them to do an acceptable job? Will they really undertake to adjust the entire intellectual ambiance, the total perspectives from which they have operated? This is not likely, and for our purposes nothing less will do.

Such an adjustment on the part of these departments, though quite improbable, is at least conceivable. But this approach—leaving the responsibility to individual departments to proceed at their own pace and in their own unique styles—will merely institutionalize and perpetuate the fragmented, incoherent approach to the subject which has been the only approach in the past. Besides which, this would deprive the black community of any effective organ within the structure of the university which would be principally directed to the educational needs in that community. It is important that we emphasize the two equally important considerations which are basic to the concept of black studies. The first requires an autonomous interdisciplinary entity, capable of coordinating its curriculum in traditional disciplines, to ensure an historical, substantive progression and organic coherence in its offerings. The second function, which is no less crucial, requires this entity be sufficiently flexible to innovate programs which involve students in field study and social action projects in black communities.

Another issue which is frequently raised is that of the "racial" and academic qualifications of the faculty for these programs. Some groups insist that the presence of white faculty contradicts everything that black studies represents, i.e., the freeing of the black community from the tyranny of white experts and their endless definition of black reality. *The fact is, however, that there are few academics, white or black, who are qualified by their training in "traditional" white-culture-*

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*bound graduate schools to undertake the aggressively radical transformation of their fields that is the purpose of these programs. In fact, almost the reverse is true: the cultural condescension and chauvinism that has dominated graduate departments, coupled with an absence of racial consciousness and cultural nationalism on the part of most traditionally-trained black academics, makes them little more qualified than their white peers.* This means that an effective black studies faculty must be recruited from the handful of academics who have a particular radical stance towards the reevaluation of the treatment of the black experience in their disciplines, and from among the ranks of active black intellectuals with experience in the political and cultural battlefronts of this country and the Third World.

There have been attempts by affluent white schools to attempt to lure the most able and committed black scholars from southern Negro schools. The faculty in black studies programs on white campuses have the responsibility not to allow themselves to be used by white institutions to recruit blacks away from predominantly Negro colleges, and the prohibition of recruitment from this source should be a stated policy of every such program. The same conditions hold true for black schools in the Third World. The black academic community of this country must not participate in expanding the brain drain from these countries. Rather, what should take place is that exchange programs for students and professors should be established between black studies programs in this country and Third World universities. Thus will the academic community lead the way in the reaching out to the black nations of the Third World and reuniting the black community in American exile with the African and West Indian nations.

These alternatives are admittedly not a permanent solution to the problem of faculty. This lies in the establishment of institutions for the training of the kind of aggressive, culturally nationalist intellectual that is needed. Given the urgency of this need, established black studies programs should invest some resources in the creation and support of these institutes, in return for the privilege of sending their best students to these centers. An excellent start in this direction has been made by Dr. Vincent Harding of Atlanta and his associates at the Institute of the Black World.<sup>2</sup> This is a crucial and timely development and promises to be of great importance in the creation of a national network of black educational institutions.

It is not possible to over-emphasize the historical importance of this movement to control and define the quality and terms of black education in the nation at this time. It has been clear for some time

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2 See Statement of Purpose and Program following this article.

that white educational institutions are in grievous default so far as black people are concerned. What we project is nothing less than a coordinated effort to secure our just portion of the educational resources of the country and make it over in our own image. The extent to which we are able to do this will determine the form, the reality, and the role of the black community for generations to come. If the black community is able to establish here—in the intellectual center of western technology—a series of institutions devoted to the training of a generation of dedicated, proud, and culturally liberated black intellectuals and technicians whose commitment and energies are dedicated to the service—in whatever way is necessary—of the international black community, then perhaps the travail of centuries, the dues paid in America by generations of our ancestors will not have been in vain. What is at issue is the cultural survival of a nation of people, a nation without borders, without land, and without government, but nevertheless a nation with a population greater than many European countries.

The present generation of black college students is perhaps the most important generation of black people ever to live in the United States. They stand poised between two cultures, their loyalties are being besieged, they must choose between a culture and a heritage they have been taught to despise and a social establishment that, having rejected and oppressed their parents, is now making a determined bid to dissolve history and obscure reality. The vision that this generation leaves college with, the commitments they espouse, the decisions that they take, will determine not only the future of the black community in America, but will affect the nature of the struggle in the motherland and other areas of the Third World. The obstacles are formidable, the opposition great, the goal, to some, perhaps quixotic, but history is full of surprises (particularly to bourgeois historians) and while the consequences of failure are dismal, it will be an unspeakable dishonor to this generation of black intellectuals if the effort is not made. We have, quite literally, nothing to lose.

THE INSTITUTE OF THE BLACK WORLD  
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.  
MEMORIAL CENTER  
ATLANTA, GEORGIA  
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND PROGRAM  
FALL, 1969

*Introduction*

The Institute of the Black World is a community of black scholars, artists, teachers and organizers who are coming together in Atlanta under the aegis of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Center. (It is also a group of several dozen "Associates of The Institute" who are located in various parts of the hemisphere.)

The Institute of the Black World is a gathering of black intellectuals who are convinced that the gifts of their minds are meant to be fully used in the service of the black community. It is therefore an experiment with scholarship in the context of struggle.

Among our basic concerns and commitments is the determination to set our skills to a new understanding of the past, present and future condition of the peoples of African descent, wherever they may be found, with an initial emphasis on the American experience. This seems the least that history, or the present—to say nothing of our children—would demand of those persons who have lived the black experience and have developed certain gifts of analysis, creativity and communication.

*Program of Work*

In cooperating with several institutions of higher education, the Institute of the Black World has set itself to the following specific tasks in the years ahead:

1. *The definition and refining of the field now loosely called "Black Studies."* After having taken the lead in calling for a new encounter the staff of the Institute has now begun a long-range, careful analysis of the content and direction of Black Studies programs across the nation. A recently-ended summer workshop and a series of seminars with Black Studies directors over the

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next academic year (1969-70) will eventually produce a set of documents which will analyze existing programs, review and respond to the major criticisms of Black Studies, put forth a set of ideological positions concerning the field and offer certain suggestions about its future directions.

2. *The development of a new Consortium for Black Education.* This consortium will involve the Institute and a group of colleges and universities drawn primarily from the historically black institutions of higher education. During the 1969-70 academic year the Institute of the Black World will definitely share its staff, personnel and Associates with Fisk, Howard, Shaw and Wesleyan Universities and probably with Tuskegee Institute and several of the Atlanta University Center schools. IBW staff and Associates will lecture, offer seminars, engage in workshops and generally consult with students, faculty and administrators on these campuses. Students from at least one of these schools will work in Atlanta with Institute personnel in seminars and individual research.

In the course of this year our staff will also be developing new, black-saturated curriculum and course models in several areas of the Humanities and the Social Sciences. The Consortium schools will experiment with and evaluate these materials over a period of several years, beginning with the 1970-71 academic year.

3. *The encouragement of basic academic research in the experiences of the peoples of African descent.* All of the research staff will be engaged in individual projects, such as "Education and Decolonization"; "The Poetry of the Blues"; "The Self-Concepts of Black Women"; "Black American Attitudes Towards Africa in the 19th Century"; "Black Radicalism and Black Religion." Each senior staff person will offer at the Institute one seminar per semester related to his research area. (See the attached list of research staff persons.) In addition, several persons will be encouraged to relate to the Institute on a part-time basis so that their research can add to our mutual strengthening.
4. *The encouragement of black artists, especially those who are searching for an aesthetic which will contribute to the struggle for the minds and hearts of our people.* Such artists will be invited to enter the dialogue and search of the Institute, to create out of their own vision and materials, and to share their creativity with the black community off campus.
5. *The development of new materials and methods for the teaching of black children.* Several members of the Institute staff are responsible for our work with two independent, black community schools in Atlanta, the H. Rapp Brown Community School and

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the Martin Luther King, Jr. Community School. These institutions will serve as laboratories for new content and approaches, especially related to the black experience. (Some relationships to the Atlanta Public School system are also being developed.) In turn, the results of this experimentation will be fed back into the teacher training programs of the colleges and universities associated with the Institute, through workshops, seminars and new curriculum.

6. *The development of a Black Policy Studies Center.* An attempt will be made to develop solid tools of social analysis focussed on the contemporary situation of the black community in America and committed totally to the struggle of that community for self-determination. Persons and organizations representing the full spectrum of ideological thought in the black community will be brought together periodically for unpublicized encounters outside of the polemical arena. It is expected that this Center will make it possible for persons who need it to find a place of creative withdrawal from the day-to-day activity of the struggle and to enter into significant dialogue with a committed community of black artists, scholars and organizers from other parts of the nation and the world. A variety of policy papers and guidelines will likely develop out of this section of the IBW. Eventually, the Institute will move to the training of community organizers whose work flows out of a rigorous and non-romantic analysis of the situation of the black community (which includes, of course, a realistic assessment of the state of the white community and its leaders). We are certain that no significant movement for justice and self-determination can continue without this level of analysis and organization.
7. *The establishment of creative links with our counterparts in other areas of the Black World.* In Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa and elsewhere black scholars, artists, educators and organizers are grappling with many issues very similar to those which engage us in North America. The Institute will continue its attempt to carry on significant dialogue and mutually agreed upon work with such persons, through individual visits, seminars, conferences and many types of exchanges.
8. *The preparation of a new cadre of men and women who are at once precisely trained in the scholarship of the black experience and fully committed to the struggles of the black world.* Through affiliation with graduate and undergraduate schools, the Institute expects eventually to be of service to persons who wish both to relate to its work and to seek degrees. (However, the IBW has no immediate plans of its own for becoming a degree-granting insti-

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tution. It prefers to serve those institutions which already have this capacity.) At the same time, the Institute will experiment with new ways to prepare non-degree educators for their role in the instruction of the black community.

9. *The sponsoring of short-term seminars and of vacation and summer workshops and conferences, both independently and in concert with one or more of the cooperating institutions.* In each of the areas of concern mentioned above, the Institute will be seeking to share its findings and to expand its own competence by meeting regularly with others who are engaged in similar concerns and commitments. Among the first of these will be a seminar for selected Black Studies Directors (November 7-9) and a Conference on "Black Studies and the Future of Negro Colleges" (December 27-29 or January 2-4).
10. *The development of a publishing program.* Such a program will make available to a broader audience much of the work and concern of the Institute and other groups and individuals working at the same tasks. Its output would include basic academic research on the black experience, policy study papers, curriculum materials and the creative productions of black artists. A newsletter of Black Studies will be one of its first periodicals. A *Dictionary of Black American Biography* is a long-range task.

### *Staff*

The work outlined above is clearly the task of a lifetime for any group of persons. We do not expect to finish it in a year or a decade, but we shall begin. With this in mind an initial research staff (limited in number only by funds) has been gathered to begin our work. A list of that staff appears below. With adequate funding, the group will likely grow by at least fifty per cent in the 1970-71 academic year, with several persons from outside the North American black community anticipated. A full-time support staff of another seven to twelve persons will also be rounded out by the end of the next academic year. In addition to the full-time persons on the staff, the Institute of the Black World has regular access to the services of several dozen "Associates of the Institute" who are teachers, artists and consultants in a variety of fields. They augment the staff in its own in-house tasks and in its work with schools, organizations and individuals.

### *Governing Board*

The immediate governing board of the Institute is called The Advisory Council and is made up of a group of black scholars, artists,

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community leaders and others. They are Walter F. Anderson, Margaret Walker Alexander, Lerone Bennett, Horace Mann Bond, Robert Browne, John Henrik Clarke, Dorothy Cotton, Ossie Davis, St. Clair Drake, Katherine Dunham, Vivian Henderson, Tobe Johnson, Julius Lester, Frances Lucas, Jesse Noel, Rene Piquion, Eleo Pomare, Pearl Primus, Benjamin Quarles, Bernice Reagon, William Strickland, Council Taylor, E. U. Essien-Udom, C. T. Vivian, Charles White, and Hosea Williams.

### *Present Research Staff and Fall Seminars, 1969*

1. Lerone Bennett, Senior Editor, *Ebony*: Visiting Professor History, Northwestern (Black Protest Movements, Reconstruction). Fall Seminar: **BLACK RECONSTRUCTION IN AMERICA**
2. Christine Coleman, Mississippi High School Teacher, Southern Education Foundation Intern
3. Chester Davis, Assistant Professor Education, Sir George Williams University, Montreal (Black Studies and the Building of Public School Curriculum; Black Studies and the Training of Teachers). Fall Seminar: **BUILDING BLACK CURRICULUM IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS**
4. Lonetta Gaines, New Haven, Connecticut, Teacher, Southern Education Foundation Intern
5. Vincent Harding, Chairman, History Department Spelman College, Director, Martin Luther King Library-Documentation Project (Black Radicalism and Black Religion).
6. Stephen Henderson, Chairman, English Department, Morehouse College (The Poetry of the Blues; Modern Black Writers), Fall Seminar: **BLUES, SOUL AND BLACK IDENTITY**
7. Joyce Ladner, Assistant Professor Sociology, University of Southern Illinois (Black Women and the Ghetto; Black Student Protest; The Black Family), Fall Seminar: **THE SOCIALIZATION OF THE BLACK CHILD**
8. Daulton Lewis, B.A. Degree Sociology, Wesleyan University, Southern Education Foundation Intern
9. William Strickland, Consultant, CBS; Lecturer, Department of History, Columbia University (Political History of Racism; Politics and the Black Urban Community), Fall Seminar: **RACISM AND AMERICAN SOCIAL ANALYSIS**
10. Sterling Stuckey, Ph.D. Candidate, Assistant Professor, Northwestern University. (The Slave Experience; Black Americans and Africa)

# ANATOMY OF THE BLACK STUDIES MOVEMENT

*Martin Kilson*

## I. *Introduction: A Lack of Perspective*

THE BLACK STUDIES MOVEMENT suffers from a grave lack of perspective. Like the founders of other fashionable movements, the advocates of the black studies movement are either ignorant of or indifferent to their precursors. Yet they definitely stand on the shoulders of other men—men of superior intellectual caliber and humanistic sensitivity. But then, it is precisely such ignorance of one's antecedents that lends fashionable movements like the black studies movement their blissful momentum.

An appreciation of one's antecedents places constraints on and gives perspective to one's desire to advance beyond them. The Negro pioneers of the systematic study of the Negro in American history and life were scholars of the first rank, and much can be learned from their activities and scholarly works.<sup>1</sup> Apart from being skilled practitioners of their scholarly disciplines, these Negro pioneers in Afro-American studies had that special quality of self-detachment which Kelley Miller, a Negro historian at Howard University in the 1920's, attributed to the late Professor Carter G. Woodson, the leading black American historian in the first-half of this century. As Miller put it: "The largest measure of our admiration is due to the Negro who

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1 Any listing of the Negro pioneers of Afro-American studies would surely include the following: Carter G. Woodson, a Harvard-trained historian and a founder of the pioneering Association for the Study of Negro Life and History and of its organ, *The Journal of Negro History*; Horace Mann Bond, a Chicago-trained sociologist and educator whose *Education of the Negro in Alabama—A Study in Cotton and Steel* (1937) is a classic in the sociology of education; Rayford Logan, a Harvard-trained historian who succeeded Professor Woodson as editor of *The Journal of Negro History* and whose *The Negro in American Life and Thought—The Nadir 1877-1901* (1954) is a unique contribution to the intellectual history of American racism; Allison Davis, a Harvard- and Chicago-trained social psychologist whose *Deep South* (1941) is a classic in the sociology of race; W. E. B. DuBois, a Harvard-trained historian and sociologist whose *The Philadelphia Negro* (1899) was a pioneering work in urban sociology; and John Hope Franklin, a Harvard-trained historian whose *The Militant South* (1956) is a major contribution to the study of the extremist ethos in Southern culture.

## *Directions in Black Studies*

can divest himself of momentary passion and prejudice, and with self-detachment devote his powers to searching out and sifting the historical facts growing out of race relationship. . . ."<sup>2</sup>

No doubt Professor Miller's statement of the proper relationship between a scholar's prejudices and his scholarship is a bit stark. In practice, self-detachment in the scholarly process is difficult and is seldom ever realized fully. But, as Kelley Miller knew well, anyone who pretends to be a scholar must recognize that self-detachment is a quality perpetually to be striven for, and though no scholar or intellectual of flesh-and-blood ever achieves it fully, it is precisely the awareness that facilitates the subordination of prejudices to the scholarly frame of mind.

Thus a sad feature of the black studies movement is the absence of perspective in regard to those special habits and norms that govern scholarly activity. The militant advocates of black studies prefer instead the explicit politicization of the organization and teaching of Afro-American studies in colleges and universities. At one extreme are those who favor all-black control of Afro-American studies programs and participation solely by Negro students. Others are less extreme on the issue of racial composition of black studies programs, but would reserve the right to define the conditions of white participation and would police such participation to ensure white conformity to black nationalist dogma. But such racist organization and isolation of black studies programs will, I daresay, doom them to failure as scholarly enterprises; and the presumed psychological security to be derived from such programs will be shortlived. Negroes can master the best skills, tools, and habits in the humanities and social sciences only through unfettered interaction with white colleagues.

### *II. Sources of the Black Studies Movement*

The sources of the black studies movement may be classified as general and specific. The general sources, familiar to any self-critical American, are those relating to the influence of white racism in the scholarly treatment of Negroes in American history and society. Any black worth his salt resents such treatment of himself and his ancestors, and as educational skills became available to Negroes the racist portrayal of the Negro was attacked and redressed. The specific sources of the black studies movement are those relating to special variants of the overall endeavor of Negroes to redress the position of

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<sup>2</sup> Kelley Miller, *An Estimate of Carter G. Woodson and His Work in Connection With the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History* (Washington, D. C., 1926).

white racism in the portrayal of the Negro. One such variant of this endeavor is associated with an intense feeling of alienation from white culture and institutions. Marcus Garvey's movement, the Universal Negro Improvement Association, originated this mode of attack by Negroes on the influence of white racism in portraying Negro history. Rather than claiming parity for Negroes in the historical record, Garvey claimed Negro superiority. It was Garvey who popularized ideas now expressed by the phrase "black is beautiful," and he pioneered the glorification of the Negro past, now a goal of many advocates of the black studies movement.<sup>3</sup>

Although the black studies movement is a direct descendant of earlier movements like the Garvey Movement, it has certain unique features. For one thing, it has greater visibility, afforded it by white college campuses which are the main arena of action for the black studies movement. The Garvey Movement of the 1920's had only Negro institutions as its arena of action; and the same was true of the New Negro Movement which was an organized effort of established Negro intellectuals in the 1920's to redress white racist appraisals of the Negro.<sup>4</sup> Thus the black studies movement appears caught in a contradiction: it is seemingly motivated by an intense sense of alienation from white culture and institutions but chooses white colleges and universities as its main arena of action.

This apparent contradiction in the black studies movement has not escaped criticism from certain of its supporters. One critic, Professor Vincent Harding of Spelman College—a predominantly Negro college—has called for a lessening of activity in behalf of black studies on white campuses in order to allow more effective growth of black studies in Negro colleges.<sup>5</sup> This criticism has a point but not a very sharp one: it amounts to little more than rearward action. Most Negroes attending college are already on white campuses (perhaps 70%) and this trend will increase rather than diminish in the future. Furthermore, the brightest Negro students are attracted to white campuses both within and outside the South; and despite forms of severe alienation and normlessness in relation to white institutions displayed by many black youth, they possess enough common sense to recognize that a superior education is more likely at Wayne State University or at Duke University than at Tougaloo College. Thus the contradiction reflected in anti-white black militants' choice of white campuses as the arena of action for black studies movement is merely another

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3 Cf. Edmund Cronon, *Black Moses* (Madison, 1955).

4 See Alain Locke, ed., *The New Negro* (New York, 1925).

5 See Vincent Harding, "New Creation or Familiar Death?" *The Negro Digest* (March, 1969).

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facet of the longstanding ambivalence underlying black-white interactions in American society: many blacks genuinely dislike or hate whites, and vice versa, yet simultaneously recognize that they need whites—and vice versa. There is simply no meaningful conception, existentially speaking, of being a black American or white American which excludes this sort of ambivalence.<sup>6</sup>

Another difference between the earlier movements to redress white racism's influence in the portrayal of Negroes and the black studies movement is the leading role of militants of lower-class backgrounds in the latter. Although middle-class students initiated the black studies movement on many white campuses in the past year and a half, students of lower-class backgrounds—whose numbers have increased markedly in the same period—have seized the leadership of the movement in many places. More important, they have stamped the movement with a style more to their liking: they virtually monopolize the criteria of legitimacy in the black studies movement.<sup>7</sup> Anyone contending for leading roles in the black studies movement must be adept at skills associated with "cultural heroes" among lower-class blacks like pimps and numbers writers. These skills concern the quick and facile manipulation of others for shortrun benefits; they include largely verbal skills which go by a variety of designations like "rapping," "conning," "put on," etc.<sup>8</sup>

Black students of lower-class backgrounds are more effective at these skills, and less self-conscious in their use, than students of middle-class rearing. But middle-class Negro students must conquer these skills if they are to hold leading roles in the black studies movement. They also must affect, if they do not genuinely possess, behavior patterns and trappings indicative of alienation from white culture and institutions. Even so, the middle-class student in the black studies movement is a dependent figure: lower-class militants dictate the style and much of the substance of the middle-class militants' role in the movement.<sup>9</sup>

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6 I am influenced in this view by Ralph Ellison, *Shadow and Act* (New York, 1964).

7 For the wider context of this development, see Martin Kilson, "The New Black Intellectuals," *Dissent* (July-August, 1969).

8 Cf. Charles Keil, *Urban Blues* (Chicago, 1966). Cf. also Thomas Kochman, "'Rapping' in the Black Ghetto," *Trans-Action* (February, 1969).

9 This situation stands in sharp contrast to the role of middle-class Negroes in the New Negro Movement of the 1920's. Even when this movement's activity was informed by lower-class attributes, the process of selection was controlled by middle-class blacks, and not, as currently in the black studies movement, dictated by lower-class situations. Even the Garvey Movement, though more adept at appealing to lower-class blacks than the New Negro Movement and largely lower middle class in composition, had little dependence upon the

III. *The Dynamics of the Black Studies Movement*

The influence of lower-class militants in the black studies movement on white campuses determines much of the pattern of demands in the movement. For the typical lower-class Negro on white campuses—most of whom have been recruited under special circumstances in the past two years—the rigor and discipline of academic competition are quite alien. The student's response to this situation is one of "culture shock": he feels marked estrangement and experiences a sense of emasculation. He thus becomes aggressive toward the emasculating environment or culture of the white college. Moreover, he turns to black nationalist ideologies to lend content or purpose to his aggression. But, alas, black nationalist ideologies are of limited utility to Negro students, though the students believe otherwise.

At worst, the black nationalist ideologies facilitate pseudo-solutions: they induce their adherents to assume rebellious postures in face of frustrating and confusing situations on white campuses. These postures, often millennial in form, draw upon behavioral patterns in the ghetto sub-system, including violence. But rebellious postures, however emotionally satisfying, have little relevance to a Negro student's basic needs in a university.

At best, the black nationalist ideologies are therapeutic: they allow their adherents to salve wounds stemming from dehumanizing encounters with white racism: they offer an incentive and perhaps a framework for retrieving one's self-image from white racist derision. Though a possible aid to the Negro student faced with the rigor and discipline of academic competition on the white campus, the therapeutic impact of black nationalist ideologies is no substitute for coming to grips with this competition. Unfortunately, many lower-class Negro students on the white campus consider the therapeutic impact of black nationalism as such a substitute, and thus refuse to undergo the change in attitude necessary to compete on white campuses. Much of the militant black studies movement is an expression of this refusal.<sup>10</sup>

Middle-class Negro students are increasingly as enmeshed in the maddening web of black nationalist ideologies as are lower-class students. Indeed, middle-class black students occasionally outdo their lower-class fellows in demonstrating fidelity to these ideologies. Middle-class Negroes are still looked upon with suspicion by the lower-

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Negro lower class. The lower middle class was in firm control of the Universal Negro Improvement Association and saw itself as an instrument for the uplift—moral and material—of lower-class blacks.

10 Cf. W. Arthur Lewis, "The Road to the Top is Through Higher Education—Not Black Studies," *The New York Times Magazine* (May 11, 1969).

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class Negro and are required to prove themselves. Thus for many lower-class and middle-class black students fidelity to black nationalist ideologies has become the measure of one's worth as a *man*. On white campuses, this situation is near to pathetic.

The interplay of anti-white aggression and nationalist ideologies in the behavior of Negro students on white campuses has resulted in demands or proposals for black studies programs of a sort that is of dubious value in a university and neglectful of the pressing educational needs of the typical Negro. Most of these proposals are academically shortsighted and deficient, anti-intellectual, politically bizarre, and—not the least—catharsis-prone.

A leading member of the Association of Black Collegians at Princeton University has proposed that the ideal black studies program "must create a black leadership group that readily and permanently identifies with, and is culturally proud of, other black Americans in order to counteract the negative influences produced by centuries of Uncle Tom survival tactics that still plague the race."<sup>11</sup> This conception of a black studies program introduces unacceptable features into the university. Courses in the humanities and social sciences that consciously seek to make Negro students proud of being black would, I fear, be simple-minded and one-dimensional glorifications of the black heritage. Any black studies program of this sort should be unacceptable in a first-class college or university, and I should hope even in lesser places.

The militant advocates of black studies fail to recognize that the purpose of the humanities and social sciences is, at the very least, *to teach critical methods of thought*. But this cannot be achieved in a black studies program whose ideological assumptions are ethnocentric, culturally xenophobic and authoritarian. Nor can critical methods of thought be achieved in a black studies program that denies participation to white scholars. Negro scholars certainly have a place in black studies programs—perhaps a special place. But white scholars belong there too, and any policy to the contrary is just so much black racist rot.

Other proposals for black studies programs emphasize the "relevance" of courses to the Negro community. For some who talk about "relevance," the ideal black studies programs should, it seems, be something like a glorified school of social work or social service administration. In such a program all courses, especially in the social sciences, should entail student contact with Negro communities. Such contact, it seems, should go beyond using the black community as a

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<sup>11</sup> Elliott D. Moorman, "The Benefit of Anger," *Saturday Review* (June 21, 1969).

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laboratory to develop and test social science skills; indeed, I know of no proposal for a black studies program from militant quarters that mentions this mode of contact with the black community. Rather the militant advocates of black studies prefer courses that allow students to organize pressure groups, nationalist gatherings, and community organizations of all sorts. Such organizations, it is argued, would constitute a "contribution" by black studies programs to the needs of the Negro community.

I frankly doubt the intellectual and practical value of black studies programs seeking to make "relevant contributions" to the Negro community.<sup>12</sup> Such contributions would be better made through technical or quasi-professional two-year colleges which would train nurses and other sundry technical workers. A black studies curriculum should in the main be organized and operated like other disciplines in a liberal arts college. A Negro student emphasizing economics within a black studies curriculum simply cannot afford such uses of his time that would be required in a black studies program of the "relevant" type. Mastering the mathematical techniques of economics, for example, requires the full time and attention of the brightest student—white or black. And since a sizeable number of the new crop of Negro students on white campuses are not adequately prepared when they enter, they can hardly afford to partake of the so-called "relevant" social science curriculum being demanded by militant advocates of black studies.

Alas: what much of the talk about "relevant" black studies adds up to is an easy though psychologically (and ideologically) satisfying way for many black students to demonstrate they have some worth: they are anxious about demonstrating their worth in competition with white students in the established social science curriculum. So much the worse, then, for so-called relevant courses in black studies.

#### *IV. Conclusion: A Need for Common Sense in Black Studies*

Many Negro students consider the university as insensitive to the need to reverse white racism as other American institutions. No doubt the university has not moved as quickly or as effectively as it should to help reverse white racism. But it is an error to equate the university with other institutions in this regard. Once our colleges and universities become aware of their failure in racial matters (and certainly the black militants are aiding this awareness) they are capable of becoming a major force for ridding our society of its racist ways.

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<sup>12</sup> See the account of black studies program proposed at Cornell University in Ernest Dunbar, "The Black Studies Thing," *The New York Times Magazine* (April 6, 1969).

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The establishment of black studies programs will be an important aspect of the university's contribution. But if the university is to succeed in this, the proposals for black studies emanating from Negro militants must display more common sense than they have thus far.

Little of long run value for our society can be expected of black studies programs organized on the basis of xenophobic ideological and black racist criteria. Intellectually and academically meaningful black studies programs should be organized in a manner not too different from other disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. Indeed, special care must attend the academic organization of black studies—which is an interdisciplinary subject of the first order—so as to insure that a student majoring in black studies is required to master at least one of the major disciplines in the social sciences or the humanities.<sup>13</sup> Like all interdisciplinary programs, a black studies program must ward against producing a jack-of-all-disciplines but a master of none.

Furthermore, undergraduate education is largely preparation for postgraduate and professional training. The better graduate departments in the social sciences and the humanities do not want students who lack adequate preparation in a discipline. If the Negro undergraduate concentrator in black studies is to gain admission into the better graduate schools, he must demonstrate proficiency in a discipline, in addition to his special capacity derived from a black studies program to apply that discipline to Negro history, culture, etc. In short, dilettantes, black or white, are not high on the list for admission to the good graduate schools.

Finally, white students will likely have as much interest in black studies as Negro students. The policy of barring or discouraging participation in black studies to white students—now pursued at a first-rank college like Antioch College—is a great disservice. If greater and more honest knowledge of the Negro in our history can contribute to the development of a better society, then it is folly to restrict white participation in black studies. Although a few extremists among black students have threatened violence in defense of barring white students' participation in black studies, it is better to suffer such violence than to compromise the long run goal of a society free of racism—white and black.

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13 The Harvard University Faculty committee which reported to the Faculty in January 1969 on Afro-American studies faced this squarely. In order to guard against dilettantism, the Harvard committee proposed that students majoring in Afro-American studies be required to fulfill a part major in one established discipline like economics, sociology, political science, history, etc. See Henry Rosovsky, *et al.*, *Report of the Faculty Committee on African and Afro-American Studies* (Cambridge, Mass., 1969).

## TWO FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEMS

*Harold Cruse*

. . . the prime questions you raise about the Black Studies program cannot (and should not) be answered definitively. There are, to my mind, two fundamental problems: 1. The obvious lack of qualified teachers (black or white). 2. The lack of consensus (or near consensus) on the content and method (interpretation) of the proposed black curriculum. Only a lengthy time process can deal with these basic problems. Since there is now no lack of black history materials, there exists no quantitative problem in the availability of texts. On this level there is merely the problem of distribution. The "qualitative" problem is one of interpretation plus the training of research talent. It is my opinion that even the available qualified personnel are, for the most part, prepared only to expand "Negro History Week" readings and activities into the course contexts of higher academic learning. However, I see very little evidence of any inclination towards the "theoretical" elevation of Negro History materials into a bonafide academic discipline. This might come, but it will take much time.

# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT BLACK STUDIES

*Nathan Hare*

1. *What would a sample curriculum or program of black studies look like?*

A BLACK STUDIES PROGRAM may be divided into two phases—the expressive and the pragmatic. The expressive phase refers to the effort to build in black youth a sense of pride or self, of collective destiny, a sense of pastness as a springboard in the quest for a new and better future. It also refers to the effort to deracitize white students. It revolves around such courses as black history and black art and culture but hinges on applicability (“relevance”) to the black community and its needs.

The pragmatic phase operates specifically to prepare black students to deal with their society. The student’s ultimate use of his pragmatic skills can be directed toward overcoming (or, if need be, overthrowing) his handicaps in dealing with his society. The pragmatic phase, in either case, is highly functional: courses producing socio-economic skills (black politics, black economics, black science, black communications, and so forth), extensive field work and community involvement in collaboration with classroom activities.

For instance, students in a course even so abstract and non-functional (in the conventional view) as black history would have as a requirement some participation in panel discussions for younger children in church basements or elementary and junior high schools. A class project might be the establishment of a black history club. The possibilities are even greater, of course, for such subjects as black economics, black politics, black journalism and the like, where students additionally should do apprenticeships and field work in connection with classroom discussions. Thus the student gets a more “relevant” education, testing out theories learned (in the laboratory of life against experiences and observations and experimentation in his community). As education is made more relevant to the black community and its needs, the community is, so to speak, made more relevant to (or involved in) the educational process.

The mere presence of a black college student in the black slum, tutoring black youth and engaged in course-connected activities, would provide role models for youth who ordinarily would not come into intimate contact with college students and their orientation.

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Here follows a sample black studies curriculum, already approved by the California State College Trustees and instituted at San Francisco State College. Bear in mind that these courses and their descriptions are experimental and subject to change, as in the case of any new curriculum. Also, the curriculum was influenced heavily by the current necessity for approval by liberal-moderate administrators. And yet that is no real handicap here. In any case, a revolutionary program could be written but taught by a squad of Uncle Toms and we would still wind up with a "chitlin education." The key to success resides in the professors and, accordingly, in who has the power to hire and fire them.

A student receiving the bachelor's degree in black studies would be required to take the six core courses, to choose electives (24 units) in his area of concentration within the black studies program, and nine electives from throughout the college, on advisement from the black studies department. The rest of his units, some 76 or more in most colleges, would consist of general electives.

### CORE COURSES:

*101. BLACK HISTORY* (3 units). African cultures from the Iron Age to the present; European colonization, contemporary nationalism; black cultural and scientific contributions, African and American. Political, economic, and social aspects of slavery and the contemporary black movement.

*102. BLACK MATH.* (3). Presentation of mathematics as a way of thinking, a means of communication and an instrument of problem solving, with special reference to the black community, using references from black experiences where possible for illustrative and reading-problem material. Deductive, inductive, and heuristic methods of mathematics are developed and used with special attention to application to the black community's needs.

*103. BLACK PSYCHOLOGY* (3). Introduction to the basic concepts of psychology with emphasis on their application to the life problems of black Americans. The scientific study of black behavior.

*104. BLACK SCIENCE* (3). Introduction to scientific development stressing the contributions of black scientists. Emphasis on the application of fundamental concepts and methods of science to the environment of black Americans.

*105. BLACK PHILOSOPHY.* The foundations of black philosophies as related to theories of knowledge and thought considered within the social and political context.

*106. BLACK ARTS AND HUMANITIES* (3). Introduction to, and exploration of, primary works by black artists and writers with special attention to values expressed in their works and values held by black students. Formation and development of black culture.

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### BLACK ARTS CONCENTRATION:

107. *LITERATURE OF BLACKNESS* (3). A beginning course in the study of black literature, including methods of evaluation and analysis essential for understanding and appreciation.
108. *BLACK WRITERS' WORKSHOP* (6). Advanced composition with special reference to the portrayal of the black experience. Group discussions as well as supervision of individual projects, apprenticeships, and class project.
109. *BLACK INTELLECTUALS* (3). Major social and political thought within the black race from ancient Africa to the present. Analysis of the historical and cultural context with in-depth analysis of major black thinkers.
110. *BLACK FICTION* (3). Major contributions to black fiction, considered in relation to the development of poetic traditions and prose styles, with special reference to the history of black intellectuals. Examination of the style and techniques of representative black writers.
111. *BLACK POETRY* (3). Examination of structure, style, and techniques of representative black poets.
112. *THE PAINTING OF BLACKNESS* (3). Fundamental concepts of the black aesthetic orientation and the black experience. Work with color, light, space, and motion in relation to major styles in black painting.
113. *THE MUSIC OF BLACKNESS* (3). Analysis of styles and techniques of major traditions in black music. Fundamentals of music reading and theory applied through development of basic skills in singing, conducting, and playing black music.
114. *BLACK DRAMA*. Introduction to the art of acting, including theory and technique with emphasis upon resources, methods, characterization, stage movement and business, using the social and art influences affecting black people as a frame of reference. Individual projects in selected aspects.
115. *BLACK RADIO, TELEVISION, FILM* (6). Special problems of radio, television, and/or film production in relation to black persons and the black community. Work on various programs with direct faculty supervision.
116. *BLACK JOURNALISM* (6). The history, social role, function, and organization of the print and broadcast media in relation to black Americans. Field experience, apprenticeships, and supervised projects.
117. *BLACK ORATORY* (6). Oratory as part of the black American political, social, and intellectual history; issues, ideas, spokesmen, and method of advocacy. Supervised study and experience.
118. *BLACK CLASSICS* (3). Society, literature, thought, and art and their interrelationships in ancient and modern Africa, early and current America. Intensive humanistic study of black works in literature, the fine arts, history, philosophy, and the sciences of man.

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### BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES CONCENTRATION:

119. *SOCIOLOGY OF BLACKNESS* (6). Major features of black American society. Application of the principles and concepts of sociology and social change to analysis of movements for black parity.

120. *BLACK POLITICS* (6). The political values, structure and behavior of black Americans. Theories, problems, and issues relating to the political behavior of black Americans. Apprenticeships and supervised practicum.

121. *ECONOMICS OF THE BLACK COMMUNITY* (6). Economic and social development of the black community from the slave trade to the present. Problems and growth of black economic enterprise, with field experience and supervised practicum.

122. *GEOGRAPHY OF BLACKNESS* (3). Location and geographic distribution of black people and black political and economic activities. Relationship of physical environment, population, and social-political factors of the black community. Special attention to the urban geography of blackness.

123. *SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF BLACKNESS* (6). Applications of the concepts of social organization to black institutions and interrelationships of black organizations. The social structure of the black community covering organizational patterns, leadership, cleavage and conflict, and planning and development of the black community, with field experience, apprenticeships, and practicum.

124. *DEVELOPMENT OF BLACK LEADERSHIP* (6). Analysis the black community power structure; changing patterns of the leadership, influence, and decision-making in the black community with supervised individual and group projects.

125. *BLACK COUNSELING* (6). The counseling process and counseling problems will be considered in relation to the black child as well as the dynamics of black-white relations; issues and legal aspects of counseling the black child. Clinical practicum and experience.

126. *DEMOGRAPHY OF BLACKNESS* (3). Changes in quantity, composition, and distribution of black population throughout the world with special emphasis on the United States. The implications for the black race and its development will be stressed along with application of theory and methods of population analysis to the black race.

127. *BLACK NATIONALISM AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY* (3). Analysis of the sources of black nationalism and its nature; major concepts, nomenclature, and symbols in relation to the rise of the black race in the international arena. The effect of international relations and its effect on international relations will be explored.

128. *THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF BLACKNESS* (6). An examination of the peoples of Africa and blacks in other lands with emphasis

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upon the arts, customs, industries and social structure. Cultural origins and influences upon the western world, and the United States in particular, will be examined.

129. *BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS* (3). Analysis of the nature and trends of black consciousness through history. Intensive study of the psychology and sociology of the process and development of thinking black.

130. *BLACK STATISTICS: SURVEY AND METHOD* (6). Analysis of the pitfalls and safeguards in statistical research on matters of race. Techniques of measuring, tabulating, analyzing, and interpreting statistical data, using examples and illustrative materials from the black community. Apprenticeships and supervised projects.

131. *BLACK ECONOMIC WORKSHOP* (6). The structure, behavior and results of black economic enterprise and the policies appropriate to black social objectives. Apprenticeships and supervised projects.

132. *BLACK POLITICAL WORKSHOP* (6). Direct investigation, analysis, and evaluation of political activities of black Americans. Current developments and issues concerning basic approaches to the acquisition of political power. Individual involvement in politics through group and organizational affiliations. Field work in local government offices and community services.

2. *Should the aim of every Black Studies Program be to serve and transform the black community? If so, how is that aim best achieved: by, let us say, high-powered research institutes, "think-tank" centers, experimental and innovative programs that include extensive field work and relations with the black community, changing the usual degree or credential requirements, "beefing up" or ignoring traditional notions of academic soundness in black studies courses?*

While we have no wish to appear disdainful of research in any form, it is our considered judgment that enough research has already been done to suit our current needs. There are studies on "Negroes and Potato Growing in South Georgia," "Negroes and the Consumption of Watermelons in Maine." And yet people still maintain their ignorance of what is wrong—or even that there is really something wrong—let alone about what we need to do about it. Four major white universities this year received \$1 million from the Ford Foundation alone to study "the Negro." We believe that they have been studying the wrong man. We want \$10 million from Ford to study the white man.

Actually, the problem is one of application of the knowledge we already have. The late great W. E. B. DuBois, who was the father of the modern scientific study of the black condition, eventually came to the realization that knowledge is not enough, that people know

pretty much what needs to be done if they would only act. And so, he switched, in his own words, "from science to propaganda."

The notion that "academic soundness" would suffer is basically a racist apprehension, a feeling that any deviation on the part of blacks away from white norms and standards inevitably would dip downward. It also is based, perhaps, on the naive notion that traditional education is value-free and, because it is based on the ideology of the existing political forces, is blessed with "the end of ideology." That is, most emphatically, not the case. The whole need for black studies grows out of the current lack of true academic soundness in the educational system as we know it now. A key test of soundness for any structure is whether or not it works. Obviously our current educational system does not work for a growing number of black and oppressed "minorities" whose backgrounds and experiences have not coincided with those of white suburbia.

The matter of "qualifications" particularly is often farcical. The fact that even I.Q. tests, let alone achievement tests, too clearly fail to measure precisely what they purport to measure is now well known even among academicians. Besides, many persons eventually find success in a field outside their college field of studies. Even when they do achieve success within their own fields they are likely to be lifted out of that endeavor and made administrators over their inferiors who actually work in that field. Few public administrators are trained in public administration and few politicians or public officials have had more than the ordinary number of courses in political science. Most of what people learn in college is irrelevant to the actual performance of their specialty anyway. This observation was corroborated by the survey described in the book, *The Miseducation of American Teachers*, where a national cross-sample of teachers admitted that their courses even in the methodology of teaching had not prepared them for teaching, a skill they had to learn on the job.

Yet, despite the fact that most teachers report learning how to teach on the job, from tips culled from co-workers, most major school systems seldom honor more than five or six years of the teaching experience of teachers recruited from other cities. Recently, a black teacher from the District of Columbia applied to teach in San Francisco. Although she had been named by the Junior Chamber of Commerce previously as the Outstanding Young Educator for the District of Columbia, she was told by the personnel clerk that only persons of high quality are hired in San Francisco. She indicated that she had a master's degree plus thirty hours beyond and had taught for twelve years in such places as Chicago, the District of Columbia, Oklahoma and Virginia. She then was told she would have to pass

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the National Teachers Exam, whereupon she replied that she had passed that exam both in her special field and one other. She was informed that she would only be able to teach in San Francisco after she had taken five additional courses such as California history!

3. *Should admission to Black Studies Programs be limited to black students? What then will likely be the effect of a recent HEW memorandum warning college officials they risk losing federal funds if they sanction such exclusion?*

Admission to Black Studies in general should not be limited to black students; though, where there are not sufficient facilities to cover everybody, black students should receive priority because for them black studies are doubly therapeutic. However, a racist society cannot be healed merely by solving the problems of its black victims alone. The black condition does not exist in a vacuum; we cannot solve the problems of the black race without solving the problems of the society which produced and sustains the predicament of blacks. At the same time as we transform the black community, through course-related community activities, white students duplicating this work in their communities—predominantly—may operate to transform the white community and thus a racist American society.

White students also need educational relevance. For example, in place of foreign languages they seldom use, even when they learn them well enough, they might better be required to take courses in law along with their “civics” and English, algebra, geometry, trigonometry and the like. This would not put lawyers out of business anymore than algebra and trigonometry and French now put mathematicians and interpreters out of business. But it would seem to be more relevant to their lives as well as their performance in their various occupations. More particularly, an education which largely ignores the study of the black race and its problems, one of the gravest problems facing America, if not the entire world, is gravely irrelevant. No solution to the world’s problems can come about without a solution to the problems of color conflict. White students frequently seem to know this intuitively, even if their learned elders pretend to be ignorant of this fact. They cry to get into black studies courses, not the least because they find their traditional courses typically so empty.

Understand me, black studies is based ideally on the ideology of revolutionary nationalism; it is not based on any form of racism, black or white, though it is dedicated, of course, to the destruction of white racism. Which may be why the establishment seems so determined (chiefly by way of its mass media) to confuse black students into a search for tangential, ultra-separatist goals such as sep-

arate dormitories, chitterlings in the cafeteria, and similar diversions having little to do with changing seriously the power relations of blacks and whites, let alone the nature of education. The media rush to play up such demands as "militant," leading black students who identify with militant blackness to seek divergent ends. Once students fall into this trap, the government (through HEW) rushes in with its "opposition" to such ultra-separatist goals. This sidetracks us on to insignificant battlefields.

This is no simple game; the quest for liberation cannot be based on absolutist notions, symbolic aspirations which enslave one's strategy, nor any other reaction-formation to the methods of white oppression. Black studies is nationalistic, not separatist. All separatists in a sense are nationalists but not all nationalists are separatists. Separatism or cultural nationalism may be a first stage of revolutionary nationalism, but it tends too often to be preoccupied with molding a cultural nexus and is therefore likely to get bogged down in that effort. Revolutionary nationalism by contrast seeks to transfer power, at least a portion thereof, to an oppressed group, and in that effort is more tolerant of white radicals.

4. *Should black teachers for programs in white institutions be recruited from southern Negro colleges? What role can and should the Negro college play?*

Black students do have a deep and abiding need for black professors as role models, particularly in black studies. Where these professors come from is not so important as what kind of professors they are. We hear much these days about a so-called "brain drain on Negro colleges." Just what brains they refer to I do not know. It is conceivable that these brains have been lying dormant all this time, but it is not likely in any case that they will suddenly come alive and function in an altogether different manner just because they migrate North to a white college. It is interesting to me that many of the same persons who once said that Negro colleges should not steal or pull away potentially token blacks from white colleges now wail that white colleges should not pull blacks from Negro colleges.

Ideally, Negro colleges should play the role of devising a new black ideology and a new black ethics (had we forgotten that academic "disciplines" teach ethics?). Negro colleges should be setting the pace and providing models of scholarly excellence and inquiry into the problems of color—the "problem of the twentieth century"—comprising laboratories for experimentation in the techniques and tactics of revolutionary change. But we do not believe in miracles. The Negro college is glued to the mores of its missionary origins.

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It is located invariably in the South, cemented to the prevailing cake of conservatism, and less free politically even than the typical white college there. Rather than address itself seriously to the solution of the problems of academia, the Negro college has been more inclined to ape and compound white trivia and miseducation.

We do not have any more time for dreams that already have been contaminated by the elements of nightmare. What happens to the Negro college ultimately is a matter for history to relate. Meanwhile, we cannot be anchored in excessive, time-consuming lamentation over decaying bodies. The Negro colleges, let us not forget, were established by the southern power structure. One doubts that the motivation was revolution for blacks in the South, let alone the North.

5. *What, if any, may be the role of the white scholar in such programs (in such fields, say, as race relations, or Negro history and literature, where a person has made or continues to make important contributions; or in courses that require specialists the black community may not be able to supply; or courses that don't necessarily require a black experience as part of the person's qualification)?*

There is going to be a need for some white scholars (who can qualify emotionally and ideologically) to help teach black education to white students. They would be more attuned to the white community and better able to arrange the relevant field work experiences there for white students in the white community.

The primary reluctance to admit white professors to the black studies program—aside from the present need for black role models on college faculties and the relative inability of white professors to operate within the framework of revolutionary-compensatory-black-nationalism—is the tendency for whites, because of their recent socio-historical conditioning, to be inclined to take over whenever they take part in black enterprises.

Still, we need not be sidetracked into the refusal to hire a single white professor, resisting the government's policy of tokenism prematurely and unnecessarily. If the white race can perpetuate white racism by hiring a black now and then, we can fight racism and mold, compensatorily, our own nationalism by adhering to the policy of tokenism as well.

6. *Where and how should control of the program be vested? Should there be complete autonomy within schools? Should there be specially appointed Trustees or overseers? How do state schools and private ones differ?*

The control of black studies programs must, of course, be vested in the black community just as the control over white education—

indeed both Negro and white education—is presently vested in the white community. Special trustees or review boards may be established if necessary, but when revolutionary black nationalists call for a department of black studies they do not mean a separate department but a distinct or autonomous one. Nay more: self-determination or ultimate authority in determining their educational destiny.

Too often of course they are given black studies programs which merely represent black carbon copies of conventional education when they are given any autonomy at all. There must be complete autonomy at least, if not clear sovereignty. Autonomy gives the right to independence from one's oppressors and his institutions, the chance to establish one's own institutions alongside his, generally leaving political power and hence control over one's autonomous institutions in his hands. Sovereignty, or self-determination, implies supreme rank or authority. We must have sovereignty because, with mere autonomy, we would not be permitted to diverge too far from the norms and practices of existing white institutions without the probability of the sovereign axe of the oppressor falling upon our heads.

Yet the oppressor's institutional norms and practices were the source of the cry for black autonomy in the first place! It is not very reasonable, anyway, to assume that the same racist institutions (self-defined as such by the Kerner report) will suddenly reverse their present course and extend freedom where before they oppressed. It would be necessary first to reverse its norms and values, its regulations, even if it could.

This goes for private colleges as well. Their relative freedom, when it does exist, is only a matter of small degree. Many persons have advocated private schools as more realistic places to begin the implementation of black studies. But realism is a matter of definition and perception. What one perceives as reality not only may differ from person to person but neither may accord with objective reality. Why have private colleges not taken the lead? Notre Dame's president contrarily took a notoriously hard line in the other direction; the liberal University of Chicago has not stood out among recent responses to student demands; nor has Northwestern.

We can only conclude that a change has got to come within colleges as a whole; that any genuine and significant change will be resisted to the death by the powers that be; and that those of us concerned with the salvation of the black race and humanity have a lot of work to do.

## THE QUEST FOR MEANINGFUL BLACK EXPERIENCE ON WHITE CAMPUSES

*William J. Wilson*

**B**LACK STUDENTS' recent efforts to enrich their experiences on white campuses have generated a number of complex issues that require serious consideration by those of us committed to bringing about needed institutional changes. Many thoughtful and sensitive persons are addressing themselves to these issues, especially those dealing with the unanticipated consequences of certain efforts by white universities to meet the demands of black students. Vincent Harding, in a passionate and thought-provoking letter to black students and faculty in the North discussed these consequences insofar as they relate to the black community.<sup>1</sup> In the process of this discussion Harding seriously challenged the legitimacy of creating special programs designed to effect a more meaningful black experience on predominantly white campuses. In Harding's own words, his letter was "written in the spirit of black ecumenical concern as we move toward a new humanity," and he encouraged those of us to whom his remarks were directed to respond. As a black professor on a predominantly white campus, and one who has been involved in the kinds of programs under attack, I would like to take this occasion to detail my reaction to Professor Harding's very provocative letter. If I understand the basic points of his argument, he maintains:

1) That white northern institutions, as a result of black student pressure, have recently discovered the need to enroll more black students, to hire more black faculty, and to establish various levels of black-oriented curricula; and in attempting to deal with this problem they have begun to exploit black schools in the South by recruiting competent black faculty, by entering "into serious competition with the southern schools for the best black students," and by pirating "some Afro-American curriculum which has not been destroyed by 'integration'."

2) That such activities are threatening the survival of black institutions because they are not in a position to compete effectively in terms of the fabulous scholarship and financial aids offered to the best

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<sup>1</sup> Vincent Harding, "New Creation or Familiar Death: An Open Letter to Black Students in the North." *Negro Digest* XXVIII (March 1969), pp. 5-14.

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black students, and the attractive salary figures, assistance for research and other inducements extended to black faculty.

3) That black students and faculty of northern institutions are participating fully in this common destruction (common in the sense that their activities circumvent the concept of the Black University and impede the development of new levels of black solidarity), not only by demanding the enrollment of more black students, the recruitment of black faculty and the establishment of black studies programs, but also by helping to raid black schools to meet their demands.

4) That serious questions can be raised about the fruitfulness of such demands and the contradictions they entail, e.g., if only a few institutes in Afro-American Studies "can live with significant integrity, where should they develop?", and would it not "make more sense to bring 50 black students to a black-oriented professor in the South than to take him away from his campus?"

5) That a program of action to deal with these problems and "make it possible for us to serve—rather than destroy—each other" includes: (a) establishing special visiting professorships "rather than raiding of black schools"; (b) creating a consortium in which one or more black and one or more white schools would pool their funds and jointly participate in the recruitment of black students and thereby provide each student the choice of spending three years at a black institution and a year at a white institution or vice versa; (c) encouraging white institutions "to make long term substantial [financial] investments in the black academic institutions"; and (d) organizing institutes to train future teachers of black studies programs at black colleges; especially those black schools having the resources to launch an institute immediately, e.g., the Atlanta University Center.

Since it is my intention to challenge Professor Harding on several points of a fundamental nature, I should like to begin with a brief statement of the no less important arguments with which I find myself in general accord. I agree with Professor Harding that the frantic search by white college administrators for black faculty, if left unchecked, will threaten the survival of black schools, and that many northern black students and faculty are either consciously or unconsciously contributing to this precarious state of affairs. Moreover, I agree that questions may be raised about the practicality of some northern students' demands and the contradictions they entail. Furthermore, I agree that a program of action is needed to correct this unfortunate situation.

My areas of disaccord pertain to a number of Harding's specific criticisms and recommendations, and, more importantly, his tendency

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to altogether ignore or to treat in a cursory fashion certain very crucial matters pertaining to the black higher education crisis.

Let me begin by amplifying this point as it specifically relates to the recruitment of black students. If those of us who are involved in increasing the enrollment of black students on northern white campuses were committed to the view that we should only search for the so-called "best" black students, Harding's arguments would have an unshakable foundation and we would be forced to seriously reappraise our efforts. Although Harding seems to confine his remarks to the elitist segment of the black student population, I do not know of any massive recruitment campaign which has been designed to enroll hundreds of black students each year that restricts itself in this manner. On the contrary, in response to, or in anticipation of, black student demands, northern colleges have developed a proliferation of programs directed toward enrolling "high risk" black students. Attempts to discourage such efforts would, in the final analysis, be catastrophic for the hundreds of thousands of denied black students who were, until recently, virtually ignored by institutions of higher learning. These were the forgotten black students from impoverished backgrounds—concentrated in northern ghettos—who did not meet the entrance requirements of nearby state colleges, or did not have the financial resources to attend open door black colleges in the South. In fact, black students who lived in the South had a greater chance of entering colleges than those living in the North. For instance, we know that in 1965 approximately 30 percent of the black high school graduates in the South enrolled in institutions of higher learning (mostly black schools).<sup>2</sup> In the North however (except in the state of California which has a large number of open door junior colleges), the situation for black students was critical.

I would like to focus briefly on the New England area, for here the critical state of black higher education throughout the North is most forcefully exemplified. In 1965-66 there were only 2,216 blacks, or 0.69 percent of the total student population, enrolled in the colleges, junior colleges and universities in New England.<sup>3</sup> Because the few black students attending New England colleges at that time represented largely the managerial and professional segments of the black population, one author was led to conclude ". . . that as far as the economically and socially depressed main body of American Negroes is concerned, it would not matter at all if New England colleges and

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2 S. A. Kendrick, "The Coming Segregation of Our Selective College," *College Board Review*, No. 66 (Winter 1967-68), pp. 6-13.

3 S. A. Kendrick, "The Coming Segregation of Our Selective College."

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universities closed their doors tomorrow.”<sup>4</sup> Black students’ demands have helped to produce stepped-up recruitment efforts, and although the figure is still pitifully low, there are more black students enrolled in colleges in the state of Massachusetts in 1968-69 (3,019) than there were in all of New England in 1965-66. And, the Massachusetts figure is expected to dramatically increase over the next few years. For example, at the University of Massachusetts we expect to have nearly a thousand black students by the fall of 1970—most of whom will come from the ghettos of Springfield and Boston. We are not recruiting students who would ordinarily go to black schools in the South but students who would have difficulty enrolling in any college. In fact, there are presently several “high risk” students on our campus who were outrightly rejected by black schools because they did not meet the conventional entrance requirements.

The emphasis on increasing the enrollment of black students is certainly not restricted to the state of Massachusetts. Large state universities and colleges in the North are conducting expansive recruitment campaigns in the ghettos, some enrolling as many as 600 black students a year. These programs, moreover, (1) assist students in getting admitted to college, (2) provide financial support needed to attend college, and (3) furnish academic assistance needed to stay in college.

In the past, denied black students were measured by the same academic criteria that were applied to other students. No recognition was given to the crippling influence of ghetto schools, and as a result these students were usually rated as academically marginal at best. However, being marginal in these respects may not be a measure of a student’s potential or intellect, it may merely indicate that he does not meet the conventional white middle-class standards of admission.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, it is incumbent upon black students and faculty in the North to continue to pressure their respective universities to abandon the system of recruiting only the “best” students (which ultimately leads them to search for students in the South). I think it is ludicrous for black recruiters from, say, Northwestern University to go all the way to Atlanta, Georgia searching for black students, when there are thousands of black students in the ghettos of nearby Chicago just itching for a chance to enroll in college.

As northern universities continue to recruit the forgotten black students of the ghetto, it is conceivable that in the very near future,

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<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>5</sup> For an interesting discussion of these points, see Bill Somerville, “Can Selective Colleges Accommodate the Disadvantaged? Berkeley Says ‘Yes,’” *College Board Review*, No. 65 (Fall, 1967), pp. 5-10.

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and unless an equally concerted effort is made in the South, a majority of black students will be concentrated in these institutions. And I would be hard pressed indeed to tell a black faculty member who was recruited expressly to satisfy the needs of these students that he should recognize his "true" obligation and teach in a black institution. As the enrollment figures of northern black students continue to mount, their needs cannot be denied. However, I do not feel that in order to satisfy the needs of increasing numbers of black students in the North, black schools in the South should suffer. It is for this reason that careful consideration should be given to Professor Harding's suggestions. I shall discuss this matter presently.

I was pleased to see Harding at least acknowledge the fact that many faculty and administrators at "predominantly Negro" colleges have been reluctant to grant "that our experience as a people was worthy of serious academic exploration." In the final analysis, this obstacle has to be overcome if Harding's suggestions are to be seriously entertained. Only a few black schools have the orientation which would permit immediate implementation of his proposals. We cannot ignore the rigid resistance to change described by Nathan Hare, Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, and others who have taught in traditionally oriented Negro colleges.<sup>6</sup> The reaction of entrenched black administrators to the recent student uprisings on these campuses is further evidence of their generally conservative atmosphere. Ironically, it is these schools that provide a good deal of the opposition to the Black University concept and to the creation of Afro-American curricula. (It is additionally ironic that the administrators of "predominantly Negro" schools have now been forced to recognize that they do indeed possess a valuable commodity in their black professor. Although they are unable to compete with rich white schools for his services, they may now find it necessary to at least give him the same rewards they have traditionally given to their white professor.) I recognize that Professor Harding did not address himself specifically to this issue, but it comes up time and time again in a critical assessment of his proposed solutions, to which I now turn.

"Considering our sadly limited resources," Harding states, "can there be more than a few really excellent programs or institutes of Afro-American Studies?" No doubt many of the premature black studies programs will fail if for no other reasons than a lack of qualified personnel to staff them and a lack of commitment on the part

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6 See Nathan Hare, "Final Relections On A 'Negro' College." *Negro Digest* XXVII (March 1968), pp. 40-46 and 70-76; and Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, "Rural Black College," *Negro Digest* XXVIII (March 1969), pp. 59-65.

of white administrators to keep them in operation. It is thus imperative that a Black Studies Department have the kind of instructional personnel that would provide it with at least the same status as the very best departments on campus. If strong efforts are not made to enhance the quality of black studies programs on white campuses, they will have marginal status, and be subject to constant invidious academic distinctions. We cannot dismiss this problem as irrelevant. A marginal program will not attract qualified personnel regardless of their availability, and it will certainly experience difficulty in receiving budgetary supports, including research and planning grants from outside agencies. Such a situation in turn is bound to increase frustrations among black students. They may be able to improve matters momentarily by applying pressure, but the application of pressure resources is time and energy consuming. And as soon as the pressure is relaxed, the students will lose their leverage and the program may fail to progress as rapidly as necessary to eliminate the stigma of inferiority. These are serious problems that demand a thoughtful and creative formula. We may quickly dismiss, therefore, Harding's rhetorical suggestion that it might "make more sense to bring 50 black students to a black-oriented professor in the South than to take him away from his campus." If institutions in the North continue to enroll thousands of black students, it would be physically impossible to ship all or even a majority of them to the South, considering the limited space and resources of southern black schools. Only a small percentage of the total number of black students in the North would be able to take advantage of this opportunity, thereby creating a most unfortunate situation for those who are forced to remain. Moreover, unless the receiving southern institutions are "black oriented" we would be exposing the already "up-tight" northern black students to the traditionally oriented Negro colleges which, as I emphasized above, have yet to acknowledge the legitimacy of black studies programs. However, Professor Harding's suggestion of visiting professorships for southern black teachers in northern institutions is a feasible temporary solution to this problem. I emphasized the word 'temporary' because I am convinced that even with such visiting professorships the demand for black professors far exceeds the available supply. And the gap will rapidly widen. It cannot be denied, however, that this suggestion would provide a way of alleviating the pressure on white administrators and lessen their frantic search for permanent black professors. As a stop-gap solution then, the visiting professorship program should be immediately implemented. An arrangement could be made with white institutions to hold a moratorium on the recruitment of permanent black faculty from the South in favor of visiting black pro-

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fessorships (with the proviso that these institutions be permitted to hire as permanent faculty those black professors who personally initiate such an appointment). I should think that, if assured of the participation of black faculty in this regard, white administrators would be willing to cooperate. In this connection, Harding's recommendation that white institutions "make long term substantial [financial] investments in the black institutions" can be realistically entertained. More specifically, our historic experiences in this society should certainly make us aware of the fact that when men have to choose between protecting their own interests or preserving the interests of others, they almost invariably decide in favor of themselves. Altruism, regardless of how justified, rarely plays a major role in *important* decisions.<sup>7</sup> Black people, in their interactions with whites, have painfully found this proposition to be universally true. Accordingly, in order to assure long term commitment, white institutions must be made to recognize that they have a vested interest in financially supporting various endeavors in black institutions. For example, in return for an agreement to financially support research programs in certain black institutions, white institutions might receive the cooperation of black professors in accepting visiting professorships to staff their black studies departments. Such an arrangement would be healthier from the black colleges' point of view since it would eliminate the patronizing and condescension which invariably accompanies unilateral white donations or gifts.

Although the above suggestions would help preserve the black institutions and reduce some of the pressure on white institutions to recruit permanent black faculty, the long-range problem of the shortage of black faculty still remains. Therefore we should take a critical look at Professor Harding's suggestion that Afro-American institutes to train future teachers of black studies programs should be organized on black campuses.

Harding is correct in asserting that the Atlanta University Center has the potential manpower and resources to become the model for such a training institute. Colleges and foundations around the country would be well advised to make substantial financial investments in helping to organize and fully staff an institute which is designed to provide a significant percentage of the future teachers of black studies. However, I seriously question whether or not more than a handful of black institutions could launch an institute that would even remotely approximate the Atlanta Center model.

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<sup>7</sup> For an excellent discussion of this argument, see Gerhard Lenski, *Power and Privilege: A Theory of Social Stratification* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966), Chapter II.

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Since an overwhelming majority of major colleges or universities (and also a significant number of minor ones, including junior colleges) are establishing or contemplating the establishment of black studies programs, the demand for black faculty will reach extreme proportions. I am not convinced that the concentration of good graduate programs on a few well-equipped (in terms of staff, library resources, etc.) black campuses will ultimately satisfy this demand. We need only consider the fact that even with hundreds of graduate training programs in other disciplines, e.g., Sociology, English, etc., the supply of college teachers is still limited. It is therefore inevitable, if a black studies program is to become a permanent fixture in our academic curricula, that graduate training centers also be organized at appropriate white institutions. I acknowledge that we run the risk of jeopardizing the integrity of black studies graduate departments by establishing them on white campuses, but I think that there are ways of reducing such risks. The most appropriate way would be to press that a black professor head each of these graduate institutes to insure that the black experience is meaningfully incorporated. He would, among other things, organize the curricula and screen out those professors, white or black, who do not have a proper orientation. Let me amplify this point.

I do not think we can ignore the fact that a black studies program, be it graduate or undergraduate, calls for teachers who are sensitive to the complex forces of race in our society and who have the psychological, sociological and historical imagination which would permit the most comprehensive interpretation and analysis of materials related to black experience. Moreover, I do not think that teachers who possess these qualities are solely or necessarily black. No doubt many white professors (and a great many black professors as well) do not have the orientation, training and experience needed to offer a meaningful course in black studies. But to assume that all white professors fall into this category is to go beyond the depths of reason. In view of our sadly limited resources, black studies programs would be jeopardized if competent, sensitive, in short "together," white professors, who could impart useful knowledge to black students, were excluded. But, to repeat, there are risks involved in choosing white professors, and it would have to be the responsibility of the black professor heading one of these training institutes to carefully select teachers who could make meaningful and significant contributions. It is obvious then that a number of key black professors would have to play major roles in organizing graduate training institutes on white campuses. I acknowledge that this suggestion further complicates the already acute shortage of black professors and might in-

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crease the black brain drain from southern colleges, but we could still retain the idea of the visiting professorship for non-headship positions in these graduate training institutes and recruit black professors from northern institutions for the headship positions.

Finally, in regard to the recruitment of black students, Harding's proposal of a consortium is a good one. However, certain qualifications should be introduced. Considering the fact that tens of thousands of black students in the North will be attending college as a result of the accelerating recruitment campaign, the consortium model could not be instituted across the board. If all black students were confronted with the consortium proposal and a substantial percentage decided to spend three of their four years at a black institution, where could we conceivably find the space to accommodate them? This question is very appropriately applied to the massive recruitment efforts of some large state universities that could enroll, say, 500 black students with little or no difficulty. It might be wise, therefore, to restrict the consortium idea to small white private schools and black colleges. For example, a school such as Morehouse in cooperation with Amherst College could accept fifty students who decide to spend three years on the Morehouse campus, but it would not have the space to accommodate the 700 black students to be enrolled in the fall of 1969 at San Fernando Valley State College in California. Moreover, recruitment programs organized by state institutions are generally based on state funds and their use and distribution have certain built-in limitations; northern private colleges, on the other hand, could easily use their funds to finance a student's three-year stay at a black institution. Furthermore, it would appear that the most successful programs of this nature would be those that involved southern schools with a black orientation and white schools with Afro-American curricula. In short, the consortium idea, although a good one, has limited application.

One last consideration. There is some indication that black students at a few white institutions are pressing for the establishment of separate branches of their respective institutions in the black community. These divisions, they argue, should be designed to meet the needs of the black community, organized and controlled by black students and financed by their white institution. If such developments should take place, scholar-oriented black studies programs will likely have as their major role the education of white students. On the other hand, black students will move beyond mere cultural and intellectual development in black studies and will spend a significant portion of their academic career in a Black University. As Fuller describes it, "the Black University will seek to involve the total black com-

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munity and its institutions in a system of interrelated and interlocking 'schools' and programs of study which are designed to serve the black community in its reach toward unity, self-determination, the acquisition of political and economic power, and the protection of the freedom of the human spirit."<sup>8</sup> As the push for the concept of the Black University proceeds, it is very likely that the needs of black students on white campuses will be redefined and a gradual dissatisfaction with a black studies program that is not in some way directly and significantly involved with the black community will emerge. It could very well be, then, that the next chapter in our tense struggle will be a move from the scholar-oriented black studies program on white campuses to a community-oriented Black University. Accordingly, rather than undermining the concept of the Black University, as Harding suggests, it is quite possible that the proliferation of black studies programs could, in the long run, contribute to its ultimate realization.

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<sup>8</sup> Hoyt W. Fuller, "Editor's Note," *Negro Digest* XXVIII (March 1969), pp. 4 and 95.

# CONTOURS OF BLACK STUDIES: THE DIMENSION OF AFRICAN AND AFRO- AMERICAN RELATIONSHIPS\*

*Sterling Stuckey*

PERHAPS THE STORY is apocryphal but it is reported that Melville Herskovits, who did so much to advance African and Afro-American studies, and E. Franklin Frazier, the distinguished black sociologist, actually came to blows over the issue of African influences among Afro-Americans. If they did not come to blows, we do know that they had heated confrontations, and *that* consideration alone is a measure of the intense emotion and anger which that issue generated among some of the leading authorities on the black experience in America.

Differences over this question were not always quite so unsettling. Robert E. Park and Lorenzo Turner, while teaching at Fisk, argued frequently but genteely over the extent to which black people in this country had retained ties with African cultures. Turner and Park simply conducted in a lower key the debate which raged among a number of scholars, especially during the 1940's. Subsequent efforts of scholars were to demonstrate that Herskovits and Turner knew far more than their antagonists about the subject under discussion. Thus, not only Herskovits and Turner but DuBois and Carter Woodson, first among trained American historians to contend that Afro-American culture was significantly influenced by Africa, have in large measure been vindicated.

DuBois and Woodson won a significant battle but lost the war: American historians have displayed a pronounced ignorance of the scholarship on African influences in Afro-American culture. Despite the studies which have been conducted since the 1940's, historians have been, with very few exceptions, oblivious to the work of those who have addressed themselves to issues raised by DuBois, Woodson, Herskovits, and Turner. It is quite possible that the notion of Afro-

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American cultural deprivation, which has long influenced the thinking of most Americans toward black people, militates against historians using findings from those disciplines which affirm an African presence among Afro-Americans. This trend is not confined to the issue of African influences, but extends beyond it, covering as it does a reluctance to deal with a wide range of African and Afro-American relationships. Consequently, such ignorance among historians has had a very deleterious effect upon their work, making far more difficult their efforts to understand the black experience in America from its beginnings to the present time.

The field of African and Afro-American relationships has been neglected for so long by the academic establishment that, despite some outstanding work completed in this area, a whole host of possible topics remains to be researched. It should be asserted at the outset that many of these problems cannot be researched without taking into consideration another dimension of the interaction between Africans and Afro-Americans: the ways in which West Indian blacks have influenced Africans and Afro-Americans—and in turn been influenced. The role of West Indians in this system of relationships would carry us beyond the scope of this paper but the researcher should keep this wider setting in mind.

The initial task of the American historian who would explore the issue of contact between black Americans and Africans is not one of engaging in original research as such—rather, it is to study what has already been done on the topic, asking his own questions all along the line. If he is to understand Afro-American personality and cultural developments, and how these relate to Africa, he must first go back to the slave era and seek to understand, through work done in other disciplines, how Africanisms were used to help enable slaves to endure in American slavery. In this case, the historian must attempt to reconstruct the slave ethos. Since historians have not yet begun to deal with the slave as artistic protagonist (as the creator of the largest and most original body of American folklore), their failure to be concerned with the cultural findings of other disciplines ceases to be a conundrum. Historians must understand something of the methods and materials of anthropology, folklore, ethnomusicology, musicology and linguistics. Otherwise, much will continue to escape them. Similarly, the anthropologist, the political scientist, the psychologist, and the student of art and literature will have much to learn from the historian. It is clear that the complexity and the comprehensiveness of the research problems before us will demand a reciprocity of scholarship and a multidisciplinary view.

Historians have recently begun to give appreciable attention to

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comparative studies of slavery, and it is evident that considerably more research into slavery, involving scholars from several disciplines, is required. The far-reaching questions of the strategy and psychology of resistance and oppression under slavery and colonialism demand much more attention. The realm of African and Afro-American relationships appears to be as good a field of inquiry as any in which to seek this broader view. As Ralph Ellison has suggested, we simply need to know much more about how people under various forms of oppression in different parts of the world cope with adversity. In addition, more knowledge of how different kinds of oppressors manipulate others for purposes of effective control and exploitation would deepen our understanding of the corrosive acids which oppression releases upon the personalities of oppressor and oppressed alike. Whether examining the overlord or his victim, great care must be exercised in employing social psychological theory in order to avoid vulgar stereotypes of the Stanley Elkins variety.

Cross-cultural studies of the responses of Afro-Americans in slavery and of Africans under colonialism should teach us much. In undertaking such studies we must now allow our research to become arrested at the point of comparative analysis of structural similarities or dissimilarities of systems of slavery and colonialism. To be satisfied by such a survey would be to blunt our insight into the deeper significances of the situations of both oppressor and oppressed. Studies of slavery in the Americas and colonialism in Africa may prove an especially fruitful area for research insofar as we are able to investigate on these situations affective and cognitive aspects of relations between black and white. The range of possible focuses for such studies is broad. One might treat forms of physical resistance to slavery and colonialism. Another might cover more covert methods of resistance, that is, those ranging from work slowdowns and feigning illness to varied forms of subtle sabotage. Pivotal to such investigations is the need to know more about informal organization among slaves and colonial subjects. We do know that a man of religion frequently emerged as the underground leader on plantations in the South, commanding respect and allegiance from a significant number of his fellows. Can an analogue to the Afro-American slave exhorter be found in Colonial West Africa? If so, to what extent were these informal leaders the carriers and representatives of the cultural traditions of their people? How did their power compare qualitatively with that of the overlord and with that of the established authority in their societies?

Studies of the effects of paternalism on the personality development of the Afro-American and African during and following slavery

and colonialism should reveal much about the limitations of black political and intellectual leadership. In this regard, a comparative study of Belgian paternalism in the Congo with the paternalism of the slave south might prove especially fruitful. There is, however, a much greater need for studies of the effects of slavery and colonialism on the personality development of the slavemaster and the colonial overlord. Special attention needs to be given to ways in which racism affected the institutions, the ethos and personalities of those who ruled in slavery and colonialism. We particularly need studies which will reveal more about manifestations of psychopathology in ruling groups. More specifically, we must be prepared to test the thesis that excessive power in the hands of oppressors very likely stretched the sense of self-esteem of many to dangerous, even hallucinatory proportions.

One way of increasing our knowledge of aberrations within oppressor groups would be by examining and comparing at critical points the lore of the overlords in slavery and segregation together with the lore of colonialists. For instance, there is reason to believe that the sexual views of whites in Rhodesia and the United States, as they relate to oppressed blacks, are very similar indeed. Are there other related stereotypes about blacks which these overlords entertain? Is there a tendency among oppressor groups in slave, segregated and colonial societies to rationalize their behavior by creating myths which are similar or very closely related? How great a role has race played in creating and maintaining stereotypes during and following oppression?

We can expect to see, before long, comparative treatments of various forms of segregation in Africa and the United States. Cross-cultural studies of the emergence and impact of segregationist thought and practices in Rhodesia, South Africa and the United States should substantially increase our knowledge of the subject. In particular we need to know in which areas parallel behavioral traits and rationales can be found, and how segregation, apartheid and the rhetoric of partnership are used in different parts of the world. Thanks to first-rate work done on segregation practices in both South Africa and the United States, we know enough to begin to do comparative work in this field.

Scholars in America and Africa need to initiate research on a problem about which little or nothing has been done—what are the differences and similarities in the ways in which Africans and Afro-Americans have perceived the workings of the color line? Though the role of color has not been the same throughout Africa, it is likely that there is a general pattern of responses to racism there which can be compared and contrasted with its counterpart in America. The writings of intellectuals and politicians would be of considerable value

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in such a study, though other approaches would doubtless be worth pursuing. While recent or current attitudes on this question would logically fall more within the purview of the sociologist or social psychologist, an examination of the views taken on this subject over time would be firmly within the bounds of the historian.

Comparative studies of segregation in cities, say, Johannesburg and Birmingham, Salisbury and Montgomery, Dakar and New York might be undertaken. Small cities or areas should not be ignored by those researching racial practices and theories. Already we are beginning to get comparative studies of closed societies in the United States and Africa. Though political scientists are pioneering in this research, it is likely that historians, necessarily more concerned with the evolution of such societies, will turn increasingly to this line of investigation, benefiting from the work which has been done. Comparative institutional studies ranging over such subject areas as legal systems, schools, churches, police, labor unions, and political organizations should tell us much about the relationships between racist ideologies and their impact upon the development of institutions.

Several studies of Afro-American thought on Africa are now underway. At least one scholar is covering the period from 1880 to 1919, and a study of emigration movements between 1890 and 1910 was recently completed. But there is need for an overall history of Afro-American thought on Africa extending from roughly the last quarter of the 18th century to the 1950's. Afro-American newspapers and church journals, together with the records of the Negro convention movement, are among the indispensable sources for the 19th century, where the materials tend generally to be more fugitive. Researching Afro-American thought on Africa in the 20th century will be much easier, for the sources are much more abundant. Research on the manifestations of African consciousness and Back-To-Africa movements prior to and following the Civil War needs to be done. An examination of evidences of African consciousness among Afro-Americans during the 1850's, and of how this consciousness related to the desire of many to emigrate to Central America, must be initiated. A full-length study of Martin Robinson Delany's attitudes toward and activities in Africa is long overdue, as is a comprehensive study of Alexander Crummell's ideas on Africa. Fortunately, at least two historians are now working on Crummell's vision of Africa and activities there. Another great but neglected black missionary, William Henry Shepperd, merits thorough treatment. A biography of Bishop Henry M. Turner, perhaps the most outstanding proponent of African consciousness of the nineteenth century, should tell us much about the nature of white oppression and black disaffection in America.

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Whenever possible, the researcher must attempt to discern the African response to various Afro-American expressions of interest in Africa. A focus for research might be the images of Afro-Americans which Africans have entertained over a period of several generations, especially during that period extending from the mid-nineteenth century down to the emergence and decline of Marcus Garvey.

The separatist church movement of South Africa, which Bishop Turner did so much to inspire, might fruitfully be compared with religious separatist movements in the United States. A study of nativist religious movements in Africa generally might reveal certain common denominators with their counterparts in the United States. Though creditable studies have been done on Elijah Muhammed's Nation of Islam, a more thorough exploration of the religious views of this movement should be undertaken, one which, among other things, would compare it with African Islamic groups. But quite apart from the Nation of Islam, reinterpretations of black religion in America must be completed before comparative studies with black religions in Africa are undertaken. Again, research on Negro American folklore should be of considerable help in making the necessary reassessments as well as comparisons.

A comparative study of D. D. T. Jabavu and Booker T. Washington would be a valuable contribution to our understanding of the manner in which Afro-American and African moderates have sought to wield influence. One scholar is now working on this topic. In addition, the deep concern which Afro-American interest and activity in Africa caused in South, East, Central, and West Africa during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries needs to be researched. The excellent treatment which Professors Shepperson and Price gave to the Nyasaland native uprising in 1915 might serve as a model for scholarly works treating this dimension of Afro-American and African relationships.

A careful study of the history of Pan-Africanism has yet to be written. We need a work which will place this important movement in proper perspective, that is, against the backdrop of nineteenth century Pan-Negroism. In addition, the more traditional approach to Pan-Africanism—treating it almost exclusively in political terms—should be set aside in favor of a more imaginative one: a serious effort to show how Pan-Africanism relates to theories of Negritude and African personality. The thoughts on Africa of the chief architect of Pan-Africanism, W. E. B. DuBois, have thus far not been adequately treated by any of his biographers or critics. We very much need a study of DuBois' political, historical, economic, and cultural views on Africa. In fact, we are still waiting for a biographer capable

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of catching the spirit of this phenomenal figure. The DuBois papers, which are not yet available to scholars, probably will reveal much concerning his attitudes on a great variety of subjects relating to Africa. A study of DuBois' cultural views on Africa might disclose that he was easily the most sophisticated proponent of Negritude until the advent of Césaire and Senghor. Such a study should seek, among other things, to determine how the DuBois variant of Negritude differed from that projected by the Harlem Renaissance writers.

Though we already have one creditable study of Marcus Garvey, there is certainly room for additional ones, especially one which will seek to give proper emphasis to the role which Mrs. Amy Garvey played in her husband's movement. The Garvey brand of black nationalism together with the nationalist thought of DuBois and Booker T. Washington are in need of reassessment, perhaps in a single work. A substantial contribution to our understanding of black nationalism and the place of Africa in the thought of the three most important black nationalists of this century would result from a first-rate study of this type. Though not as well known for their interest in Africa as the big three, an investigation of the views on Africa of John Edward Bruce, Bishop Alexander Walters, Benjamin Brawley, William H. Ferris, and James Weldon Johnson, as professor Shepperson has suggested, would add much to our knowledge of what important members of the black intelligentsia thought of Africa. Carter Woodson's attitudes toward and influences on Africans and their history merit special attention.

For the students of history who possess the requisite literary insights, a study of the place and meaning of Africa in the New Negro movement would fill a gap in our knowledge. It would be important for the scholar to consider, among other things, the relationship of images of Africa and Africans projected by Harlem Renaissance writers to the social, economic and political milieu in which these men were writing. While we know that the poetry of Sterling Brown and Langston Hughes influenced Leopold Senghor, we know all too little about the manner in which Afro-Americans and Africans from French possessions related to each other. Work on this topic should answer important literary as well as historical questions.

The impact of the emergence of independent African states upon Afro-American thought, though already examined by Harold Isaacs, is surely in need of further exploration. There is not only great need for a study of the thoughts of grass roots blacks on Africa but also need for a careful examination of the views of ordinary middle-class blacks. With respect to the treatment of prominent blacks we need a study which will identify those being interviewed—the only reason-

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ably certain way of guaranteeing that the views being presented are not recklessly advanced, and that they represent people who actually exist.

A number of men who rose to prominence during or following the 1920's merit attention in studies which might treat them individually or in clusters: Ralph Bunche, Alpheus Hunton, William Leo Hansberry, Paul Robeson, and Malcolm X. Robeson and Malcolm easily merit individual treatment. A study of Robeson may well reveal that this man played a far more important role in furthering African independence than is usually known or imagined. As with DuBois, the biographer of Robeson must himself be a man of no mean gifts. A monograph on Malcolm X's thoughts on and experiences in Africa will be necessary before students of Africa are prepared to treat adequately those black leaders who followed him there—Robert Moses, John Lewis, James Farmer, Floyd McKissick, Wilfred Ussery, and more than a score of other civil rights activists, many of whom were from the deep South. Interviews as well as newspaper and personal accounts will be useful for pursuing this research. How Malcolm's experiences in Africa affected his vision of racial conditions in America would be an important aspect of any study of his African experience. In this vein, the relationship between Malcolm X and the current widespread interest in Africa and things African among black people suggests itself for investigation.

We also need a thorough investigation of that contact between Afro-Americans and African students in the United States who later became leaders in various African countries. Research covering the experiences in America of African students as a whole should help settle the controversy generated several years ago over how Africans relate to Afro-Americans and white Americans. The use of questionnaires and techniques of interviewing would be especially helpful in this type of study. Indeed, interaction between Afro-Americans and Africans in a number of world capitals needs to be examined. We still do not know enough about the extent to which, for instance, Jomo Kenyatta and Paul Robeson affected each other during their long years of association in London. Moreover, this line of inquiry should be complemented by one which treats the experiences of African dignitaries in this country and Afro-American expatriates living in Africa. Key questions in these researches would be: what expectations are brought to the new situation and what changes take place when blacks, separated by centuries, rendezvous in distant lands?

Eventually studies of attitudes and positions taken toward Africa and Africans by organizations and groups such as the American Society on African Culture (AMSAC), the Phelps-Stokes Founda-

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tion and the American Negro Leadership Council on Africa might be profitably undertaken. Similarly, an examination of the positions taken on Africa by the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), and other civil rights groups, national and local, should repay effort. A word of caution is in order: more time must elapse before scholars can with confidence gauge and interpret recent manifestations of interest in Africa. There is, however, little doubt that this interest promises to be of long standing and of wide influence. To be sure, before long the historian must ask new questions of the influence which Africa has for centuries exercised over large numbers of black Americans. Not only are our judgments relative to slave personality and experience likely to be in for some revision, but it may well be that we will discover that African consciousness, though heightened by crises, has been so persistent and powerful a force in the lives of so many black Americans as to merit consideration as a relatively normal rather than aberrant or occasional state of mind.

I want now to suggest that the value of further research, especially that of a cross-cultural and multidisciplinary nature, may well be to move us closer to knowing whether the situation of black people in America can best be analyzed from the traditional perspective of viewing blacks, since slavery, as second-class citizens, or from a perspective which places them in the context of people caught up in a situation that is essentially colonial or worse. Only time will help us answer this and other questions. In fact, owing to the relative paucity of research which has been conducted in this field as a whole, it would be unwise to project more topics than past and present needs seem clearly to call for. New research problems will doubtless grow out of accumulating research in the field together with the continued interplay of Africans and Afro-Americans.

Meanwhile, black students across the North are calling for black instructors to teach courses in Afro-American and African history, areas of study in which there are not many qualified scholars white or black. The request of the students is legitimate: there are very few black teachers of any kind in Northern Universities and practically none working in African history. This situation is compounded by the alarmingly small number of black students in graduate schools, a state of affairs which is directly linked to the failure of the racist American educational system to educate well more than a relatively small number of black people. Numerous universities, attempting to compensate for past indifference, are now feverishly recruiting black undergraduate students. But it will take a long time before even successful recruiting campaigns can produce a significantly larger proportion of

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black teachers and some time before they can be expected to make important scholarly contributions in the field. Whatever happens with regard to recruitment and development, one thing is certain: scholarship in American and African history will not come into its own until black scholars emerge to play leading roles as interpreters of the history of their people in America and Africa.

One crucial aspect of the current interest in Africa is the demand for Afro-American or Black Studies programs in which African history and cultures would occupy places of prominence. Black student organizations in many parts of the country are also calling for cross-cultural courses in which people of African descent in the New World as well as Africa would be studied. These students are requesting a broader focus, one which, hopefully, will help them understand what the experiences of people of African ancestry have been over the centuries. In a word, they would like to see the kind of scholarly treatment of Afro-Americans and Africans which pioneers in the field, DuBois, Woodson, Turner, and Herskovits, projected decades ago. It is likely that, in the better programs, they will be accommodated—not simply owing to pressures applied, but, more importantly, because our return to first principles is long overdue.

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