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# Minority Opportunity News



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VOLUME 8, NO. 2 January 15-31, 1999



CODE NAME:

ZERO

The Assassination of  
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

**Lauryn Hill lands  
10 Grammy  
Nominations**

**Judge Morris  
Overstreet Starts  
New Career**

**Timeless Classic:  
A Raisin  
In The Sun**



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.  
was one of the world's great  
communicators. His words  
taught us to grow beyond the  
limits of black and white . . .  
To create a world where our  
differences become our  
strengths. Today, in Dr. King's  
honor, we celebrate the power  
of personal communication.  
By sharing ideas, we shape our  
world to a greater vision and in  
the process, move closer to his  
dream of universal love.



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**From  
The Editor**  
Chris Pryer

# Editorial

## Yes, the Air was rare

I've been around long enough to have seen some of the finest basketball players to roam this planet. The Big Dipper (a.k.a. Wilt Chamberlain), Bill Russell, Zeke from Cabin Creek (Jerry West), the Big O (Oscar Robinson), Kareem (only one name needed), the imitable Doctor J, Magic and the Bird Man. Killer players, all. Each with their legion of die-hard fans that would swear on their children's lives that their guy was the best ever. And they'd all have pretty good arguments. But I know for whom I'll cast my vote as the best I've ever seen.

When Michael Jordan came out of Dean Smith's University of North Carolina basketball powerhouse, I don't think anyone had an inkling of how good this brother would be. Yeah, we all knew how, as a mere freshman, he had hit the buzzer-beating shot that won the Tarheels the national championship. But at that time, he was more of a supporting player for two future NBA stars, Sam Perkins and James Worthy, the Tarheels big guns. Plus, you gotta remember that Dean Smith ran a very disciplined program at Carolina—no one-on-one freelancing in his offensive scheme. Smith was the Sultan of Structure, and while it must have been difficult for some of his more talented players to knuckle under his regimented approach, he had a whole pile of victories to show for his somewhat boring, if effective, game plan.

Of course, after Perkins and Worthy left, it became clear that the Tarheels were Jordan's team—so went Michael Jordan, so went the Tarheels. And the composure, the assurance, the emotional maturity that is so rare in collegiate players was already exhibiting itself noticeably. Jordan would be a fine player it was obvious to see.

But good Lord! When this brother hit the NBA, where many a big-time college superstar has his game picked apart like the carcass of a dead wildebeest, and started dunking on people with impunity, we all took a collective breath and said, "OUCH!"

The man was a walking ad for Otis (the elevator manufacturer—get it) and man, could he penetrate or what. And had killer "D" to boot. Eventually made himself a long-range shooter, and could pass with anyone (except Magic, maybe).

But we were most captivated by his demeanor, his aplomb. He made you proud, no matter who you were.

I'll miss his HIGHness.

MON

## Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. — Let us not forget the man, his mission and his spirit

"Like anybody, I would like to live a long life; longevity has its place. But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will. And He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I've seen the promised land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight that we as a people will get to the promised land. And I'm happy tonight. I'm not worried about anything. I'm not fearing any man. Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord."

—Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

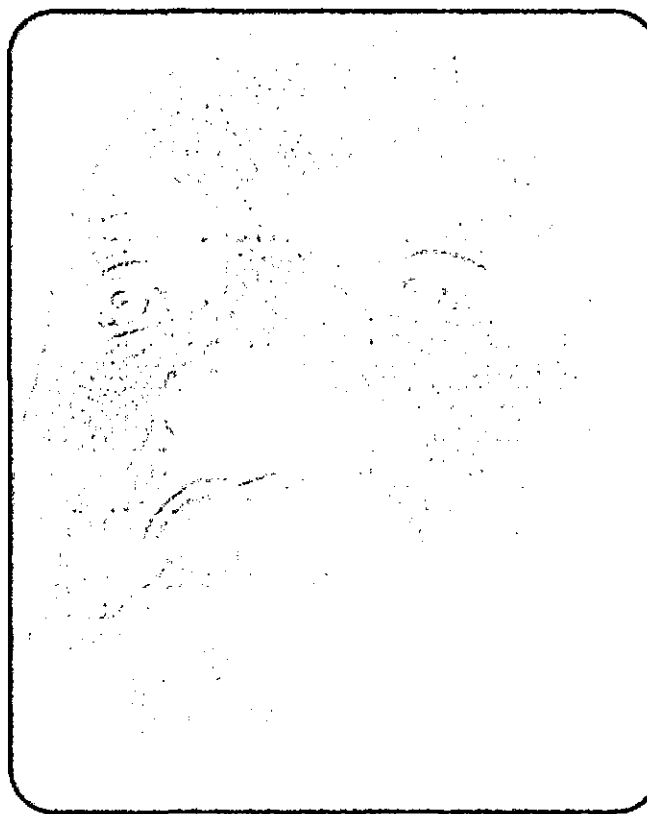
At a time when the United States Senate will begin an historic trial of President William Jefferson Clinton, it is indeed ironic that this historic trial will coincide with the national observance of Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday. On the occasion of what would have been Dr. King's 70th birthday, a nation will pay tribute to a modern day Moses, while Congress strives to honor the legislative intent of this nation's founding fathers.

Throughout this nation people of principle and purpose will again gather in honor of Dr. King. And with the high profile saga of the Clinton scandal, it is likely that thoughtful people will wonder if only to themselves, what Dr. King's visionary leadership would lend to a scandal that now has led to only the second presidential impeachment trial in more than 200 years of our democracy.

Our honored son of a preach-

er man stood and fought for dignity for all Americans. Our nation's system of justice teaches that no man is above the law. Perhaps Dr. King would remind us in 1999, that no man is beneath the law either.

In his own life, Dr. King was



stabbed, stoned, jailed and even had his family's home bombed. Perhaps if Dr. King could speak to our nation, his words would again prick our nation's collective conscience... he would seek to heal the hurts borne by a wife and daughter, as well as the shame felt by the world's most powerful leader.

If Dr. King could again speak in his eloquent Baptist cadence, he would no doubt return to his central themes of peace, brotherhood and love. He would beseech that august body, the United States Senate, to pursue justice, rather than political advantage.

More than anything else, Dr.

King insisted that civil rights were nothing more than human rights. His was a life that remained resolute in this belief, in spite of hostilities of varying dimensions and intensities. If he could, Dr. King would offer a unifying message that would inspire all — from the people to the politicians, from Republicans to Democrats, from 100 senate jurors to the Supreme Court Justice.

This new year is a time to remember a man whose abiding faith guided his life... whose unswerving dedication directed his every move... whose love for those who despised him, accepted them one and all as no less than a child of God.

Just as in 1963, Dr. King would observe that for America, some difficult days lie ahead. And so, he would hope that as a nation and as a people we would find the will to turn from

our fears, and remain grounded in our faith.

More than any other 20th century figure, Dr. King's life proves that what is unfair is not impossible; nor is that which is difficult necessarily defeating. Among reasonable men and women, respect for each other's humanity — warts and all — can be a bridge to understanding and justice.

We celebrate the life of Dr. Martin Luther King because he never gave up. And he never gave in.

Neither should we.

MON

## Texas Publishers Association hold seminar in Austin

By LiNea J. Stewart

Texas Publishers Assn. Wire Service

SAN ANTONIO — Affirmative action legislation, equal employment opportunities, an end to all forms of discrimination; these are but a few of the reasons African Americans armed with only their words, faith and belief in a just cause fought and died over 30 years ago. Today, that battle continues as we face new challenges and obstacles.

In order to further the awareness of this continued struggle as Martin Luther King Day approaches, the Texas Publishers Association held a seminar on Saturday, January 9 in Austin. The seminar covered several topics designed to aid African American publishers in their efforts to keep our communities informed of new opportunities for economic and educational growth. Topics included the advantages of direct deposit for the elderly, business financing, media buying and a comprehensive marketing and

advertising workshop conducted by Susan Toler of ADVOX Design & Production.

The TPA seminar also featured an in-depth panel discussion on the impact of the Hopwood v Texas decision on higher education. Panel participants



Former Lt. Gov. William P. Hobby

were representatives of the Texas Commission On A Representative Student Body (TCRSB), a committee chartered by the Texas Higher Education Coalition to address, within the parameters of Hopwood, current efforts associated with the recruitment, admission, retention and graduation of minority students at colleges and universities in Texas. The TCRSB panelists included former Lieutenant Governor William P. Hobby, Lydia Santibanez, University of Texas Chancellor Dr. William Cunningham and Texas A & M Deputy Chancellor Leo Sayavedra.

Whether you are single, married, or married with children, TCRSB's findings should be of great concern to all African Americans throughout Texas. According to the commission's findings, Texas lags behind the national average and the 10 largest states in producing college graduates. Only 49 percent of all students entering Texas colleges and universities graduate. At the present, approximately 33 percent of African American students who graduate from Texas public high schools enter our State's public institutions of higher education.

To aid in the recruitment and admission of minority students, TCRSB recommends that the Texas Legislature create a \$60 million fund to provide supplementary financing for recruitment programs that meet certain standards of success and work toward the goal of personalizing the recruiting process. Furthermore, the commission recommends that incentives be created for stu-

## State Rep. Dawnna Dukes secures services of minority business expert

Austin — State Representative Dawnna Dukes (D-Austin) has secured the services of Ms. Rae C. Martel from NASA Headquarters to the Texas Legislature for a six (6) month temporary detail as a Legislative Researcher and Adviser in the area of Minority Business. Also, members of the U.S. Congress from Texas, The Honorable Sheila Jackson-Lee from Houston and Lloyd Doggett from Austin, were prominent in securing Ms. Martel's services for Texas. Their intent is to ameliorate the effects of the Hopwood Decision on the State of Texas' socioeconomic procurement program through legislative initiatives and program review. The exchange of services will enhance the State's Legislative laws and policy in the area of socioeconomic procurement and will benefit women and minority business participation with the State of Texas.

Martel has a history of helping to bring immediate improvement in those programs where she serves. When she went to NASA Headquarters in the late 80s, from her Texas home base, NASA's Small Disadvantaged Business (SDB) contracting level was 4.9 percent. When she accepted the temporary assignment to work with the representative Dukes, NASA's level of SDB contracting had almost quadrupled to 14.5 percent.

Ms. Martel was recently awarded the "NASA Exceptional Service Medal" by the NASA Administrator. NASA recognized Ms. Martel for her creation and management of several critical initia-

tives: NASA's Quarterly Aeronautics SDB Forum and its training and Development of SDBs in Advanced Technologies. Furthermore, Ms. Martel was cited for breathing life into NASA's new Mentor Protege Program, which is designed to foster long-term business relationships between SDBs and major NASA prime contractors. The NASA Program has been acknowledged as the model Mentor Protege for all federal agencies.

Dukes said, "NASA honors and respects Rae Martel for these great accomplishments and continued contribution to making NASA's SDB program preeminent in the field. Along with NASA, the SDB community has been particularly appreciative of her role in raising the consciousness of so many in the technical community as to the reason we wanted Ms. Martel's expertise in Texas."

Upon learning of Ms. Martel's new assignment with Representative Dukes, the Honorable Henry T. Wilfong Jr., a former member of the Presidential Task Force on International Private Enterprise and former associate administrator, Minority Small Business/Capital Ownership Development at the U.S. Small Business Administration, said: "The best way to rebuild is one brick at a time and that in soliciting the services of Rae Martel, State Representative Dawnna Dukes secured a master builder".

MON

dents to earn an associate's degree or participate in student transfer agreements prior to transferring to a four-year college or university. The Commission believes that such a practice will cost-effectively increase a student's chances of success. Also, the commission is recommending that the Texas Legislature appropriate \$500 million a biennium for a simple student aid program based on need, expand current work-study programs and make timely disbursements of financial aid awards. Finally, in order to retain students, the TCRSB recommends that the Legislature increase its efforts to support Texas higher education at a level that allows institutions to retain full-time professional faculty in teaching roles and supplement their teaching efforts with an adequate staff of academic advisors and programs for

at-risk students.

Some may ask, Why does this concern me? The answer is simple. The United States Census Bureau has projected that by the year 2030, Texas will become a majority-minority state, with African Americans comprising 11 percent of the population. As the job market increases its demand for individuals with specialized skills and advanced degrees, our children will be left behind to wallow in poverty if we do not encourage them to not only pursue a college education, but also stay the course and graduate.

Remember, with the new millennium just over the horizon, the fight is not over; instead, it is just beginning!

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C P V S

# The End of an Era

*Texas' first African American judge of the Court of Criminal Appeals steps down, begins new career*

By Akwasi Evans

*Publisher, Nokoa-The Observer*

When the Republicans swept the statewide elections last November, a funny thing happened in Texas politics. Most Democratic officeholders left their posts early to allow their Republican replacements to familiarize themselves with their new positions. One of the ones who didn't was Judge Morris Overstreet.

When we visited his office on December 31 of last year, Overstreet was at his desk shredding old files and letters. The always-courteous Amarillo native invited me into his office after introducing me to members of his staff. As he sat for what was likely his final time in the plush burgundy leather chair used by judges on the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, the phone rang.

"I'll be out by the end of the day," the judge stated politely to the caller on the other end. Smiling at me as he hung up the phone, Overstreet said that the caller was the incoming judge who won the seat Overstreet vacated to run for state attorney general. "The new judges are anxious to move in, but you all elected me to serve a full term and I intend to serve a full term. It's been eight years to the day. I came in here on January 1, 1991, and I'm leaving on December 31, 1998."

Shortly after the new year began, the first and only African American ever to be elected to statewide office in Texas was off to Washington, D.C. for training.

He and his nephew Brian, who just graduated from law school, have started a sports agency. Following the two-day training session, Overstreet plans to register with the Secretary of State as a certified contractor for sports. Judge Overstreet is now an official sports agent. Why? Because he sees what he calls "a definite need for ethical sports agents to represent some of these African American football players who are getting shorted," by some of the agents currently negotiating on their behalf. What this long, tall Texan—he stands about 6'5"—intends to do is establish relationships with the players' families. He also wants to create a mentoring program for young men entering the National Football League. If things go according to plan, the future Houston resident expects to expand to professional baseball and basketball.

Beginning next summer, Agent Overstreet will become Professor Overstreet. In June he begins teaching at the Texas Southern University Thurgood Marshall School of Law. He's looking forward to it. He said he is "going to trade the courtroom for the classroom."

Like most professionals, Overstreet understands that there are stages to a career. Before being appointed, and then

elected, to the Court of Criminal Appeals, Overstreet was a judge in Amarillo. Prior to that he was a prosecutor and a defense lawyer. Eventually he hopes to be a college president, a position from which he feels he can "have a serious impact on students."

Looking back, this political pioneer

can judges who he believes could have won a seat on the bench. Still, he said, the Governor has the change to appoint an African American to an opening on the State Supreme Court. In the same breath, he applauds Gov. George W. Bush for appointing Michael Williams to the Texas Railroad Commission.

Williams assumed his duties on January 4, becoming the first Black person to serve on that distinguished board.

Overstreet views the current court with trepidation. "The court was already conservative," he said. "Instead of taking a path of moderation, the court is taking an activist agenda in favor of the state instead of taking an activist role in favor of the accused. It's the citizens who have the rights, not the state," he exclaimed.

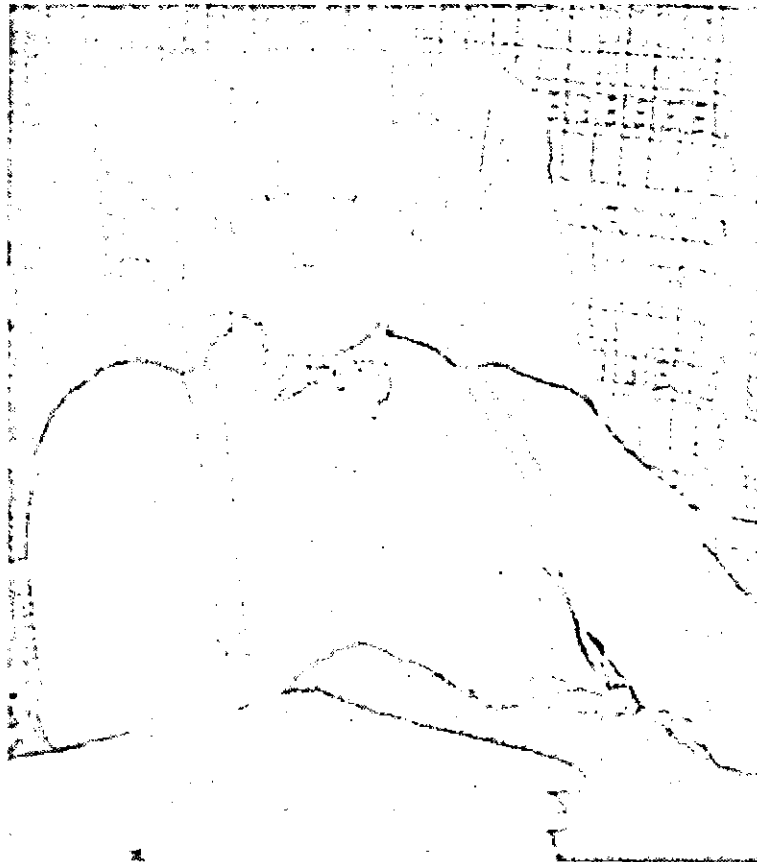
Referring to the Bill of Rights in the U.S. Constitution, Overstreet said, "The government doesn't worship. The government doesn't have speech, citizens do!"

When we finished our conversation, Judge Overstreet escorted me out. He smiled, patted me on the shoulder, and said, "I am

also going to do some pro bono work. I am going to start by volunteering to help Lachresha Murray."

MON

*Editor's note: Lachresha Murray, a Black child from Austin, was sentenced to a 25-year term in the death of two-year-old Jayla Belton, on circumstantial evidence.*



Former Court of Criminal Appeals Judge Morris Overstreet.

is most proud of "helping to build a coalition for moderation [i]n the court." The only thing he regrets is that after he opened the door to statewide office for African Americans in the Juneteenth State "no one else was willing to run." He wasn't talking about Democrats. Overstreet quickly ran off the names of three or four African American Republi-

one of the most historic racial discrimination settlements in the history of the country. The members of the Congressional Black Caucus are to be commended for putting this issue on the forefront of our agenda during the 105th Congress. All those who supported fairness in this matter indeed had the high road and truth on their side: Years of discrimination of Black farmers was well-documented, loans to them were denied or given in amounts less than white farmers and their claims of discrimination were virtually ignored by our government. However, this settlement is not only beneficial for Black farmers...it is also good for our country," Congresswoman Johnson stated.

MON

## Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson, CBC colleagues discuss Black farmers settlement

WASHINGTON — Congresswoman Johnson joined her colleagues of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) in the House Press Gallery to discuss the agreement requiring the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to pay Black farmers who were denied loans and assistance because of their race. As former Second Vice-Chair, and now First Vice-Chair of the CBC, Congresswoman Johnson worked with her colleagues and other concerned Members of Congress to ensure that this agreement would come into fruition.

Congresswoman Johnson commended the farmers for their perseverance and patience in enduring through a history of racism and government deliberation on this matter. In addition, she thanked her colleagues in the CBC for putting this issue on their agenda early in the 105th Congress.

"The determination, resolve and perseverance shown by Black farmers throughout the country is a great example to all those who may grow weary and disenchanted on the long road to fairness. That determination has led to

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**The Struggle Continues**  
Thomas Muhammad

Founded in 1989, the Connectional Alliance has been a constant avenue for action, progress and empowerment within the boundaries where their members are organized. The Alliance is an umbrella for 25 neighborhood associations. The presidents/leaders of these associations usually attend the Alliance meetings. The associations represent hundreds of residents in the South Dallas, Fair Park, Pleasant Grove and East Oak Cliff communities. The Alliance meets the first Tuesday of each month. Meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. in the Diane Ragsdale Training Room, which is located in the Martin Luther King Jr. Child Care Center. Their sole purpose is to gain or maintain control of the direction of their communities.

Alliance members generally discuss problems that association members are facing in their neighborhoods at the time and possible solutions. Many times Alliance members will talk

An example of one of the recent "covenant" has been with Enterprise Rent-A-Car. The covenant includes an agreement to hire local neighborhood residents, to make charitable contributions to community programs and to use African American advertising agencies.

issues through, followed by the creation of an action plan. Once the plan has been tried, whether successful or not, the results are shared at the next Alliance meeting. If the plan was successful, it is used within other communities who may be facing the same problem. If not, it's back to the drawing board in and more meetings to analyze what went wrong. However, the Alliance never gives up until some solution is found. The Alliance takes the position that they are not going anywhere, so therefore the problem/enemy will lose.

## The Connectional Alliance: Connecting neighborhoods around issues

The Alliance invites agency representatives to attend meetings to provide company presentations, updates on community programs, announcements, and to recruit association members support for programs. Alliance meetings have drawn some of Dallas' most prominent leaders to its forums. Mayor Ron Kirk made an appearance during his first run for office. So did State Representative Terry Hodge. City Council and School Board candidates have found their way to the Alliance door. Representatives of the Minyard chain made appearances, as did reps from Walgreen, DART, the Dallas Plan, Allstate, Nations Bank, Friends of Fair Park, ICDC, Clean South Dallas/Fair Park, the South Dallas/Fair Park Trust Fund, Chief Ben Click, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, Deputy Chief Shirley Grey, County Commissioner John Wiley Price, Dallas NAACP president Lee Alcorn and a host of others.

The Alliance community forum has produced a number of workable policies that have changed the way many city, county, state and federal agencies perform their tasks in the neighborhoods. Some of the policies the Alliance has played a role in creating or improving are: Reduced the time it takes to get city code enforcement actions; getting hard zoning cases resolved more quickly; and creating a "covenant" plan that works with new/relocating businesses as they enter the community. An example of one of the recent "covenant" has been with Enterprise Rent-A-Car. The covenant includes an agreement to hire local neighborhood residents, to make charitable contributions to community programs and to use African American advertising agencies.

Alliance members have played major roles in community redevelopment projects that have transformed the look of their respective neighborhoods for the better. In the Queen City Neighbors In Action area, an annual Home & Garden Show is sponsored each year along with companies like Allstate; several city of Dallas departments; Black Art groups; and alarm, mortgage, landscape, masonry and a variety of other companies. The event draws hundreds to the community. A few new homes recently built in the area have been purchased after some

show participants attended. A housing development partnership between Alliance members Queen City, Innercity Community Development Corporation and NationsBank has built nearly 20 new homes in the area.

Speaking of new homes. A few other Alliance members have begun to get into the art of home building as well. The Ideal Neighborhood community broke ground on their first home earlier this month, with a schedule of five homes to be completed by the end of the year and plans to build a multi-purpose center, too.

The Phyllis Wheatley Neighborhood recently added three new homes at the corner of the newly named Malcolm X Avenue and Burger Street area. Then there is the Fair Park community, where throughout the neighborhood several homes have been either built or refurbished. That community is also the area where a number of housing and economic development projects are about to happen once the Fair Park Gateway Program begins.

been designated as "historical" and can at times cause development to be hampered by red tape making work in the areas pretty sticky, and creating one of the main distractions for outside land opportunists and speculators. But, that doesn't seem to bother the Alliance members, because it has always been their wish to preserve the communities as they once were. They have only sought to fill in the housing and business gaps in order to save and improve the areas.

According to a number of Alliance leaders, by far the most difficult task has been around the subject of non-intrusive area public transportation. In a nutshell, DART. DART leaders have consistently tried to run a DART rail line down Robert B. Cullum Avenue. The Alliance members have consistently asked DART to use the old Trunk Avenue rails. So far the Alliance members have won out, but I'm told that DART has not dropped Cullum from its drawing board. It looks like a major fight is brewing. With a track record as impressive as the Alliance's, you know who my money is riding on!

Until then, the struggle continues...  
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Many of the Alliance areas have

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## Mayor Kirk, City Council recognize Community Investment Fund

Mayor Ron Kirk and the Dallas City Council gave special recognition to the Southern Dallas Development Corporation for winning an intensive national competition two years in a row. SDDC has been awarded a \$450,000 grant and a \$400,000 loan from the Community Development Financial Investment fund (CDFI) to carry out its loan programs. The Mayor and Council also recognized the four banks for providing matching funds. The CDFI fund, which is administered by the U.S. Department of the Treasury, made awards to only one of four applicants competing for the fund in 1998.

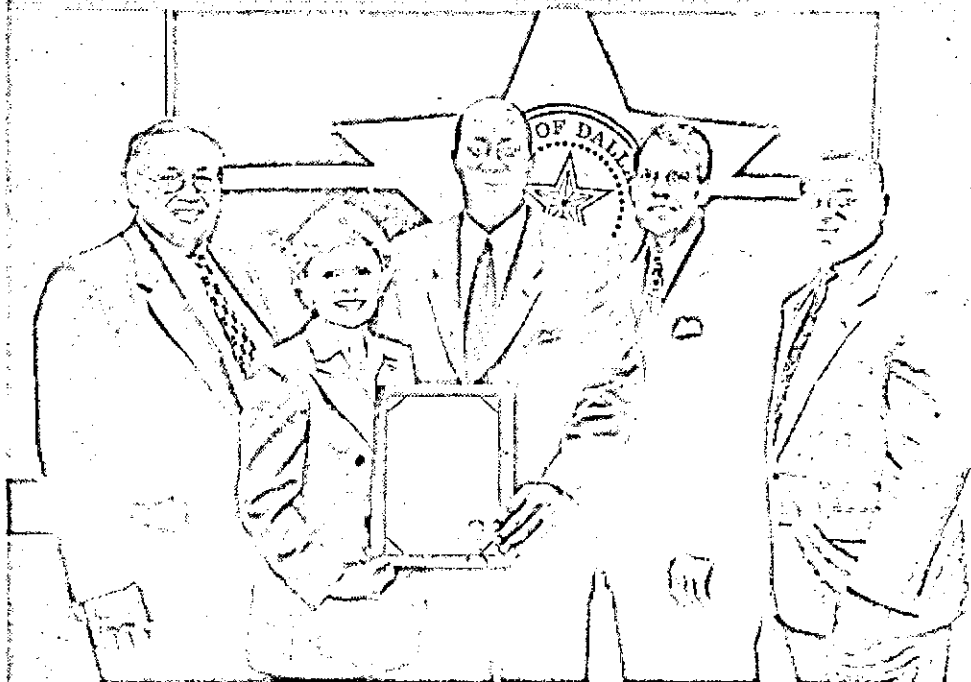
"We appreciate the aggressiveness of SDDC in winning this competition and

Bank One, Chase Bank of Texas, Comerica and Bank America for the willingness to provide matching funds," said Mayor Kirk.

The \$450,000 grant to SDDC will be matched by a \$200,000 grant from Bank One, a \$200,000 grant from Chase Bank and a \$50,000 grant from Comerica. The \$400,000 low interest loan provided to SDDC will be matched by a low interest loan from Bank America.

"Based on our past experience, the \$1.7 million in loan funds will enable SDDC to assist businesses in creating 226 jobs," said Jim Reid president of SDDC.

For more information on this award, call Jim Reid at 214-428-7332 ext. 11.



(l-r) Tim Reid, SDDC; Pearl Smith, Comerica; Mayor Ron Kirk; Norman Bagwell, Bank One; Henry Nelson, Chase Bank

## Chase Texas Announces Officer Promotion

The Board of Directors of Chase Bank of Texas, N.A. recently approved the promotion of John Eric Joe to vice president for credit administration. one of the largest U.S. banking organizations with more than \$300 billion in assets.

Joe is currently a statewide manager for the Associate and Analyst training program in Dallas, where his responsibilities include managing, career coaching, and development of 40 Associate and Analyst trainees. Joe earned a BBA from Baylor University and a MBA from the University of Texas at Arlington. He began his career with Chase Bank of Texas in 1994.

Joe is an active member of the Arlington Chamber of Commerce, serving on the Small Business Resource Council.

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John Eric Joe, Chase Bank of Texas

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**Pen Notes**

**Cheryl Smith**



The turnout at the African American Museum, to honor Clarice Tinsley-Giles was overwhelming as citizens, elected officials, journalists, friends and family members came out in full force. The National Council of Negro Women and the Dallas-Fort Worth Association of Black Communicators hosted the event, celebrating Clarice's 20 years at KDFW-TV.

A number of communicators showed up for the event, including Karla Winfrey, Bud Gillett, Kathy Saunders, Mike Goosman, Lyria Howland, Sandra Daniels, Calvin Hughes, Roland Martin, Eva Gray, Carmen Pagano, Mollie and James Belt, Valerie Burton and Sherelyn Roberts. Thanks to DFW/ABC members who were on the host committee: WFAA-TV anchor John McCaa, Arlington Morning News religion editor Valerie Fields, *Arlington Morning News* managing editor Lawrence Young, *Dallas Morning News* columnist Norma Adams-Wade, KRLD and Primedia's Eva Gray, *Dallas Examiner* publisher Mollie Belt and attorney James Belt, *The Weekly* publisher/editor James A. Washington, KTVT-TV anchor Rene' Syler and media exec husband James "Buff" Parham and *Minority Opportunity News* columnist Thomas Muhammad. Other DFW/ABC supporters include: Mothers Against Teen Violence founder Joyce Strickland, attorney DeMetris Sampson and Mothers (Fathers) for the Advancement of Social Systems Joyce Ann Brown. High school student Aki-lah Robertson wrote a poem especially

for Clarice, the Friendship West Praise Dancers performed and Sandra McGee-Horton sang a song in tribute to Clarice. Ester Davis, a contributing writer for the *Minority Opportunity News*, coordinated the evening's program. Clarice's husband, Stephen Giles, her mother-in-law, and son were also in attendance. (Clarice also recently signed a new contract with KDFW and that is good)...Congratulations to Dorothy Gentry of Howland PR, who became engaged over the holidays. The wedding date is set for May 1999. In fact, she and fellow communicator Valerie Fields have chosen the same date. Valerie will marry *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* sports writer Clarence Harris. Roland Martin, managing editor of *The Weekly* is moving to Houston. He will become the managing editor of the *Houston Defender*...Former DFW/ABC member and president Rochelle Riley has announced that she is seeking the office of vice president-print for the National Association of Black Journalists. It should be really interesting in Seattle this summer. Many journalists are still undecided about going to Seattle. Surely you remember that the state of Washington supported an anti-affirmative action initiative that passed in November. Although Black journalists are to join Hispanic, Asian and Native Americans for Unity 99, many NABJers are disappointed that the other journalist groups did not support moving the convention. The debate lasted for months and still it continues...The Society of African American Communicators will hold a two-day forum at SMU on February 3-4. Veteran journalist Carole Simpson is the keynoter. NABJ national student representative Cindy George will be in attendance and the

theme is "In Living Color: Changing the Future of Media." Emily Blue is the president of the chapter. She says they would like to "give students exposure to multi-cultural people in the field of communications." Kenna Parker, formerly of Kroger Foods, debuted her new business venture at For Sisters Only. Be on the lookout for Parker Originals!!! Janiqua Jiles celebrated her birthday recently at the new club, Diamonds. Janiqua, a graduate of Prairie View A&M, works for the Dallas CAN Academy...We're glad Eva Gray is doing well. She was on medical leave after surgery. We're also glad to see WFAA-TV's Gina Redmond back at work. Gina's doing well and looking great...Sage was absent from the airwaves for a while after she left KKDA, but now you can hear her once again. Just tune in to Magic 102.1...Welcome to Dallas to Janette Smith, the new host of *Good Morning Texas*. There are also a lot of new faces around the metroplex. Our own Laquenda Medford returned home and Deanna Dewberry joins her over at TXCN, the new cable news station...Business is booming for PR guru Denise Sharpton. She has now expanded her business to open an office in New York...Tamera Jenkins, formerly of Moroch and Associates, has joined PGC Advertising as an account supervisor...Yvette Blair recently left the staff of *Good Morning Texas* to work for Hadeler White Public Relations....Another blushing bride in 1999 will be Rose Gafford, of Events Logistics. On Thanksgiving Day, she got more than a turkey. She got a ring!!! Congratulations are also in order for Beletra Thomas. The former DFW/ABC journalism workshop participant recently graduated from the

University of Texas at Arlington...I recently visited Paula McClure's Mood Spa. It's located right at the corner of McKinney and Worthington. Easy to find and worth the trip. Yes, it is a wonderful experience and the rates are reasonable and affordable. Stop by and get pampered, or pay for someone you love (like me) to get pampered. ..Don't forget the DFW/ABC Urban Journalism Workshop. It begins on Saturday, January 23, 9 a.m. at Lincoln High School...Then there is the scholarship program. If you need an application, call 214-376-9525...Also, folks are already signing up for the 5th annual "Don't Believe the Hype" Celebrity Bowl-a-thon. Stay tuned for more information. It's scheduled for Saturday, June 26, and the bowler to beat is K104's Skip Murphy. Yes, the brother really can bowl!!! The top bowler will receive a cool grand. That's right. \$1,000!!! In the meantime, and until we meet again, remember justice and power because, without either, we will have no peace.

MON

*Cheryl Smith is president of the Dallas/Fort Worth Association of Black Communicators and the host of Reporters Roundtable on KKDA-AM (730). Tune in on Sunday morning at 8:00, immediately following Minister Louis Farrakhan's address.*

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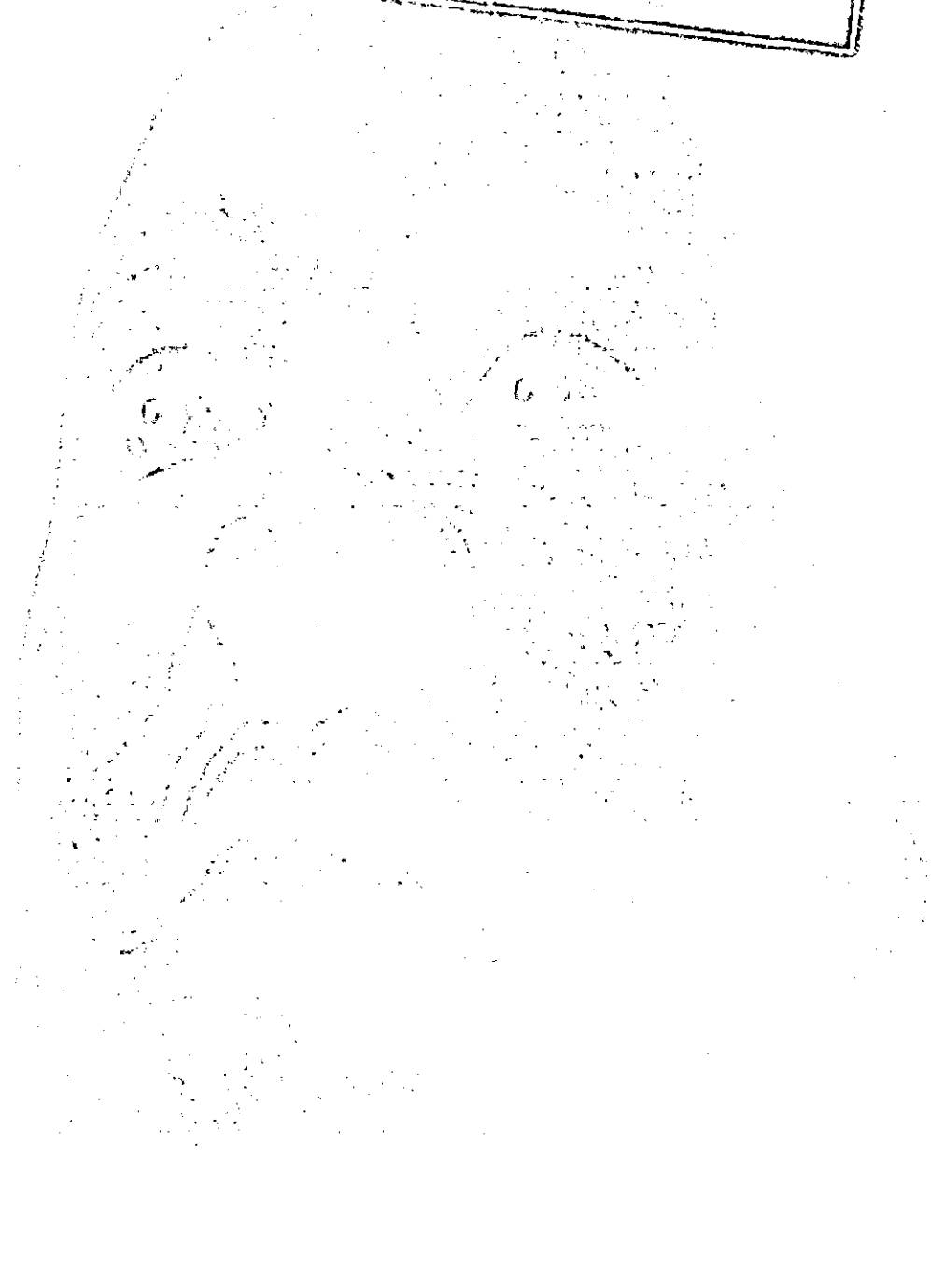
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The Assassination of  
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

**"There is something addicting about a secret."**

—J. Edgar Hoover

In the spring of 1967, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. risked all he had worked so hard to establish: his international reputation; a working relationship with the news media; a progressive relationship with other Black leaders (as well as the nations's White leaders); and the financial security of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. On that spring day Martin Luther King Jr. dedicated himself, and the S.C.L.C. to officially and publically condemning the Vietnam War as "politically and morally" unjust. Dr. King pledged to do everything within his power to end America's Vietnam involvement.

On April 4, 1967, Dr. King called upon all Black and white people of goodwill to boycott the Vietnam War by becoming conscientious objectors to military service. Dr. King also outlined a program designed to "begin the long and difficult process of extracting America from its nightmarish conflict."

King bitterly assailed America's military policy from the viewpoint of the Vietnamese peasants, who "watch as Americans poison their water and destroy millions of acres of their crops, weep as bulldozers destroy their precious trees, wander into towns where they find thousands of their children, homeless and without clothing, running around in packs... like animals. They see their children being degraded by American soldiers as they (children) sell their own sisters to American soldiers and watch as these same soldiers solicit their mothers."

Added King: "If America's soul becomes totally poisoned, part of that autopsy must read 'Vietnam'."

Exactly one year later, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was murdered.

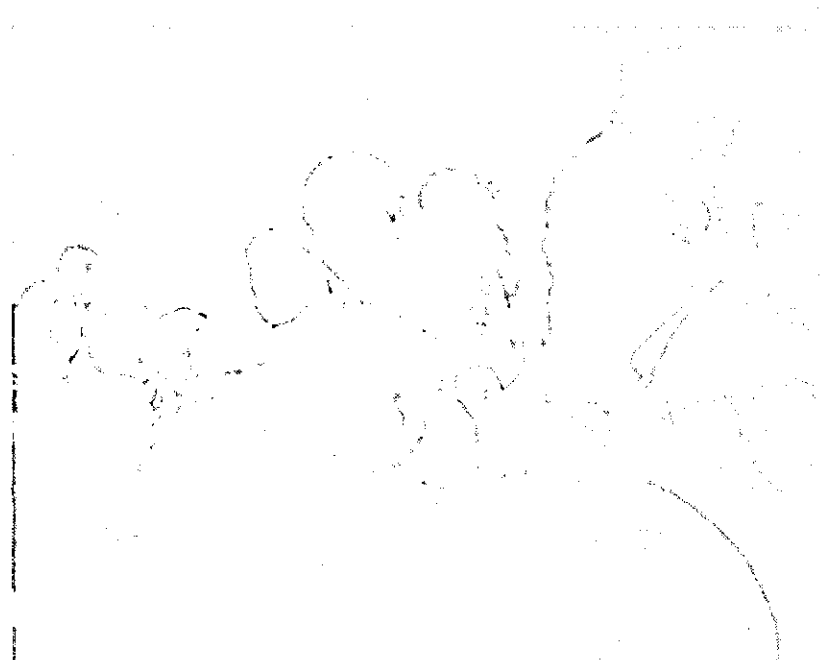
The next several writings of Ethnic Notes will examine the tragic and untimely demise of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Many of the situations that will be examined, primarily the King assassination, remain controversially suspect today. Ethnic Notes would like to express its interest in the truth behind King's tragic death and, along with many other "persons of color," and prays that the truth concerning the death of Dr. King will eventually be told.

The two things that upset the establishment most about Dr. King were 1) King vehemently spoke out against

America's involvement in Vietnam and 2) King's plan for a poor people's march on the nation's capital.

King planned to literally lead thousands of the less fortunate to Washington, D.C. It was intended to broaden the base of King and his associates from that of "Black" rights to one of "human" rights.

Governmental officials were worried about the masses of people that would be pitching their tents on the Capitol's grounds. Of even deeper concern was what such an encampment would do to America's image as the richest nation in



Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. speaks to a group of young admirers.

the world.

At the White House, the Justice Department, the Pentagon and Washington's metropolitan police headquarters, dozens of conferences were being held in an attempt to coordinate containment strategies. Almost all of Washington believed that if King's Poor People's March took place, almost anything could happen.

The federal government, what with its methods of tapping phones, spying and otherwise infiltrating various social groups, had absolutely no idea how to handle such a massive demonstration.

The torrents of violence that consistently greeted the non-violent protesters dramatized yet another problem that had beset the civil rights movement, almost from its very beginnings. Why was the U.S. Constitution not being adequately enforced? No one was naive enough to expect any appreciable assistance from local law enforcement in the deep South, but what about the F.B.I., the nation's law enforcement agency? Wasn't the F.B.I. sworn to uphold the Constitution and to enforce the laws of the land on behalf of the people?

Who were the men that made up J. Edgar Hoover's F.B.I.? What, actually, were their motives towards the civil

rights movement? And just how dedicated were they to enforcing those laws that guaranteed basic human rights for every American? Backed by a growing body of Supreme Court decisions and Congressional legislation on civil rights, surely the F.B.I. had all the legal sanction it needed to defend the rights of the protesters and to arrest those lawbreakers who perpetrated acts of violence against them.

Dr. King's plans toward ending America's involvement in Vietnam were criticized by many of the Black leaders. And his decision to become more political eventually

lead him to become involved in the strike staged by the municipal sanitation workers in Memphis, Tenn. Although King had been devoting all of his time towards

organizing the massive Poor People's March on Washington, his new political policy would not allow him to ignore a call for help from the Memphis sanitation workers, 99 percent of whom were Black.

Prior to King's intervention, the workers for the Memphis Sanitation Department had been unable to gain any sizeable support from Memphis' Black community or gain any sympathy from more than a handful of White sympathizers. King's help was requested by the Rev. James Lawson, a S.C.L.C. member and leader of the Memphis Strike Strategy Committee. The plan was for King to send in aides James Bevel, Tyrone Brooks and Andrew Young to help organize a massive march in Memphis that, hopefully, would direct the nation's attention to the city of Memphis and the plight of its sanitation workers.

The F.B.I.'s role in the Memphis sanitation workers strike, prior to the King assassination, continues to be one huge question mark. Most Americans would like to believe that the F.B.I. thoroughly investigates all federal crimes. However, revelations about its "COINTELPRO" (Counter Intelligence Program) indicate that the F.B.I. had, in fact, been COMMITTING some.

King's non-violent movement in

Memphis was eventually jeopardized by a series of events that culminated in the massive usage of weaponry. Tear gas, clubs and mace were utilized by the police, under the instruction of then Fire and Police Commissioner (and former F.B.I. agent) Frank Holloman. It is a fact that most, if not all, of the violence initiated in Memphis, seemed to have been initiated by a few overly zealous demonstrators. In fact, later it was revealed that more than a few of the persons involved in the use of physical force (smashing windows, looting, etc.) had been instigators placed there by the local Memphis police and the F.B.I.

## The Federal Bureau Of Investigation

Retired senior agent Arthur Murtagh, a 20-year veteran with the F.B.I., attempted to explain, during his testimony before the Church Committee, the mindset of the powerful and feared F.B.I. director, J. Edgar Hoover. (The Church Committee, aka the Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activity, was chaired by the Democratic Senator from Idaho, Frank Church.)

"The Bureau was exempt from civil service regulations, so it was virtually free to establish its own criteria for the selection and training of its personnel."

This meant that J. Edgar Hoover, over a period of some 50 years, was able to bring in literally thousands of carefully selected personnel that were as politically disposed to the Right as he was.

Equipped with a personnel system that allowed its employees virtually no avenue through which they could present their grievances, Hoover was able to force hundreds of persons to depart the Bureau, based solely on their inability to air grievances involving unethical or illegal F.B.I. conduct. Transfers to undesirable posts were also utilized as punishment. Hoover's control over some 7,000 agents was nothing less than totalitarian.

In creating the F.B.I., Hoover had invented an institution that presented a polished exterior to the public and an interior that was engrossed with rigid rules of conduct and an eerie atmosphere of almost total secrecy. The budget for F.B.I. investigations never found their way into reports accessible to the public. (The F.B.I.'s annual appropriations were almost always based solely on Hoover's own testimony before Congressional Committees. These committees were often at liberty to examine all avenues of the F.B.I.'s operations, while conducting inquiries into alleged illegal F.B.I. conduct.)

Continued on page 14



# Around Town

## January 20

New Image Business Associates invites the public to its small business luncheon every Wednesday at the Bill J. Priest Institute of Economic Development, 1402 Corinth, room 202 A&B, in Dallas, from noon-1 p.m. Lunch is \$5 per person. For more information, call 214-350-9590.

## January 21

The Dallas-Fort Worth Association of Black Communicators, joined by The Center for Non-profit Management and the Volunteer Center of Dallas County, will once again sponsor a panel discussion featuring several prominent members of the African American media on Thursday, January 21, from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at The Center for Nonprofit Management, 2900 Live Oak, Dallas. The cost of the event is \$10 for Center members and \$20 for non-members. Seating is limited. For information and reservations, call Paige Dukes at 214-826-3470, ext. 200.

....

A two-day seminar titled "Breaking the Barrier of Bias" will be held at The Raddison Hotel & Suites in Dallas January 21 and 22. The seminar is designed to help people understand how their biases affect relationships and productivity at work and is sponsored by Person to Person Consulting. For more information, contact Tracy Brown, Person To Person Consulting, P.O. Box 150761, Arlington, Texas, 76015-6761; phone: 817-467-5753; fax: 817-467-4509; e-mail: p2pinfo@aol.com.

## January 22

Dallas Children's Theater presents a smash hit celebrating African American American History Month, *Most Valuable Player: The Heroic Story of Jackie Robinson*. Performances run January 22 through February 21 at The Crescent Theater, 2215 Cedar Springs (across from The Hotel Crescent Court). A special performance and sports hero reception, "The Grand Slam Evening at The

Majestic," benefiting DCT and The North Texas Food Bank, will be presented at The Majestic Theatre, 1925 Elm Street, downtown Dallas on Friday, January 29 at 7:30 p.m.

For more information, contact Susan Sleeper at 214 978-0110 Fax: 214 978-0118.

## January 23

The Dallas Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. will hold its annual Frederica Chase Dodd Founders Day Luncheon on Saturday, January 23, at the Wyndham Hotel in Dallas. Noted civil rights attorney Frankie Muse Freeman will be the keynote speaker. Ms. Freeman has the distinction of being the first woman appointed to the United States Commission on Civil Rights (by President Lyndon B. Johnson) and served through the Nixon, Ford and Carter administrations.

Subscriptions are \$35 each. For more information or to purchase subscriptions, please call 214-337-7881.

## January 27

New Image Business Associates invites the public to its small business luncheon every Wednesday at the Bill J. Priest Institute of Economic Development, 1402 Corinth, room 202 A&B, in Dallas, from noon-1 p.m. Lunch is \$5 per person.

For more information, call 214-350-9590.

## January 30

The 1999 Miss Dallas Scholarship Pageant, an official local preliminary to the Miss America Scholarship Pageant, will be held at 7:00 p.m. at the Majestic Theater in downtown Dallas.

For more information, contact Michelle Martinez at 214-378-5701 or e-mail, michelle-martinez@msn.com.

## February 2

University of Texas at Arlington's Division of Continuing Education is offering a course to assist

# Around Town

## February 5

Strengthening the African-American Family (STAAF) is holding its 10th Annual STAAF Conference at the Sheraton-Brookhollow Hotel, located at 1241 W. Mockingbird Lane, in Dallas. The theme this year is "Renewal of the African-American Church and Family." STAAF is a non-profit organizations made up of dedicated individuals who volunteer their time to making the community a better place.

For more information, call Tonya D. Sneed at 214-330-1343 or 214-339-4498.

....

Sankofa Freedom Forum is hosting "The African Origin of Civilization & Western Freemasonry" 3:00 p.m. at the Cultural Insights Sankofa Cultural Arts Club, located at 1908 Martin Luther King Blvd. The slide presentation and lecture by Ashra Kwesi will feature the ancient Egyptian symbols and spiritual concepts and their incorporation into the institutions of the Western world and the African origin of the first European Masonic lodges and

secretaries and administrative personnel in developing office professionalism. The focus will be on professional behavior and appearance, work organization, communication and time management skills, knowledge of organizational cultures and flexibility for change. Classes meet every Tuesday, 6:30-8:30 p.m., through February 23 in room 207, Preston Hall, 604 S. West. The fee is \$55.

For more information, call (metro) 817-272-2581.

## February 4

Dunbar Learning Center's "Recent Paintings" is showing in the Augusta Savage Youth Gallery, opening February 4. Under the instruction of art instructor Lucan Watkins, the students have won numerous awards, including a select piece (Jazmin Williams, student artist) currently on the Southwestern Bell Telephone Book. Dunbar Learning Center Recent Paintings Opening Thursday, Feb. 4 5-7 pm. Closes Feb. 26.

"Greek" fraternities and sororities.

A \$10 donation is requested, \$5 for students and elders. No one will be turned away. Refreshments will be served.

....

*The Wounded*, a play exploring male/female relationships dipped in the unique flavor of African American humor, will appear at the South Dallas Cultural Center, 3400 South Fitzhugh (across from Fair Park), February 5, 6, 12 & 13. It is produced by the Blacken Blues Theater.

Free tickets will be available at a "Meet the Cast" event at Black Images Book Bazaar on Thursday, Feb. 4 between 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. For more information, call Willie Holmes, 214 515-0076 or send e-mail to wheducate@msn.com.

## February 13

The UTA Division of Continuing Education will offer two ExCET pretest prep courses this spring for teachers and students planning to become teachers. The

three-hour seminars will be held Saturday, Feb. 13 and Saturday, April 10 shortly before the ExCET exams are conducted. For further information and registration, contact Continuing Education at (metro) 817-272-2851, or fax 817-272-2556.

## February 21

LaFuente presents its 3rd Annual Bridal/Quinceañera Expo '99 (Feria de Novias y Quinceañeras) at the Grand Place at Fair Park. Bridal fashion shows will be at 1:30 p.m. and 5:00 p.m., with a Quinceañera show at 3:30 p.m.

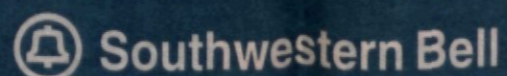
Admission is free. For additional booth or event information, call 214-977-7886.

### ATTENTION:

If you're interested in placing your event in our *events* calendar, send it to us by mail or fax no later than the 21st of the month preceding publication to:

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Continued from page 11

In 1972, the United States Senate, through the Church Committee, concluded in its report that "... covert programs had been used to corrupt the lawful political activities of individual Americans and groups of citizens, to discredit them, using dangerous and degrading tactics, in an attempt to destroy Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and in so doing, violated basic American law and the fundamentals of human descency."

One of the major problems faced with the F.B.I. in the South was that the agents were all White southerners who had been influenced by the mores of the community. To maintain their status, the F.B.I. had to be friendly with the local police and those persons who were promoting segregation. On every occasion, the F.B.I. was in colusion with the local police forces.

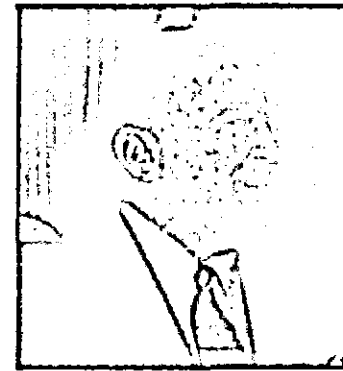
William Sullivan, Director of the Domestic Intelligence Division during the harassment of Dr. King, testified that "J. Edgar Hoover was extremely upset about the criticisms that King had made about the F.B.I.'s failure to protect Blacks in the South, against violations of their civil liberties."

Hoover detested criticism, Blacks and anything that threatened the status quo. Dr. King's movement epitomized all that threatened Hoover's tenuous hold on reality. In May of 1962, the F.B.I. included King's name on Section A of the "Reserve Index," as a person "to be rounded up and imprisoned in the event of a national emergency." In October of 1962, the F.B.I. began an investigation of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and of president, Dr. Martin L. King Jr.. The investigation was carried out under the heading of "Cominfil," an acronym for Communist infiltration.

The United States government,



King, center, with his wife, Coretta. F.B.I.'s Director J. Edgar Hoover (photo at right) doggedly maintained that King had Communist Party connections. The Bureau, along with local law enforcement agencies, never provided adequate protection for King and his followers during their public demonstrations.



tion remains unsubstantiated. The Church Committee uncovered no evidence that any of the advisers within the S.C.L.C. were members of the Communist Party at any time during the entire Cominfil investigation.

The Church Committee's investigation was nothing less than an abysmal failure, unable to procure any relevant F.B.I. documentation. It also failed to publish many of the documents that it did receive and it failed to publish, with the exception of a few excerpts, the testimonies of those who appeared before it.

Perhaps the Church Committee's biggest failure was its reluctance to challenge the concept that the government had the right to monitor the constitutionally protected rights of its citizens. The Church Committee wrote, "The extent to which government officials, outside of the F.B.I. must bear the responsibility for the F.B.I.'s campaign to discredit Dr. King is not clear. The same techniques that were used against Soviet agents or communist agents, were brought home to be utilized against any organization that the F.B.I. targeted."

through its federal police, made the assumption that it had the right to examine, using both legal and illegal methods, the constitutionally-protected actions of its citizens. This was the assumption that Hoover shared with President John F. Kennedy, Attorney-General Robert Kennedy, Vice President (and later President) Lyndon B. Johnson and others in positions of influence. This meant that those wide-ranging investigations into the S.C.L.C., and of Dr. King, were conducted with the full knowledge of all of the above.

The investigations were carried out through the use of electronic surveillance and through the use of informants and was based on the suspicion that one of Dr. King's close advisers was a "communist."

Today, some thirty years later, any proof of an S.C.L.C./communist affilia-

The Church Committee also found out, through the efforts of Senator Richard Schweiker of Pennsylvania, that those techniques employed by the F.B.I. against King and his associates were also utilized against the Warren Commission's critics.

The chilling language of the Church Committees

report is underscored by the refusal of the F.B.I. to make available any evidence regarding its most extreme programs to destroy Dr. King. For example, during March of 1969, Congress was considering a resolution to declare Dr. King's birthday a national holiday. The Crime Records division of the F.B.I. recommended first briefing the relevant committee of Congress considering the resolution because the F.B.I. wanted to keep the bill from being reported out of committee.

In 1962, the Southern Regional Council released a report criticizing the failure of the F.B.I. to take adequate action during civil rights demonstrations. This report was updated and released in November 1962. Soon after the report was issued, Dr. King was quoted in the press as having said that he agreed with the conclusions in the report and that the F.B.I. had grossly failed to adequately investigate civil rights violations.

Later, Dr. King would also state that he fully realized that neither he or any of his associates could ever, under any circumstances, trust the F.B.I. to provide protection for them.

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Russell D. Shockley is the director of Ethnic Notes. For lecture or presentation information, call or write Ethnic Notes, c/o MON.

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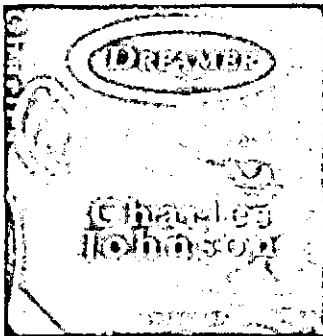


**Book Review**  
Angela  
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## Dreamer

By Charles Johnson  
Scribner, \$23)

What better way to celebrate Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday than by reading a book about him. Not just your ordinary biography, mind you. But a novel. That's right, a work of fiction from the author who brought us *Middle Passage*. Johnson, writing in brilliant historical fiction style, combines his knowledge of the turbulent civil rights era with a skillful pen and flair for language. Written in the first person, the story is told by a character named Matthew Bishop, one of King's devoted followers. Another character in the story bears an uncanny resemblance to Dr. King and is trained by Matthew to be a stand-in. Matthew grapples with the issues of what it means to be of African descent in America, what it means to be great, and what must be done to foment change. John-



## Books that talk about healing, dreaming and achieving

son's novel provides readers with a different look at King—his humanness and frailties.

### Brothers on the Mend:

*Understanding and Healing the Anger for African-American Men and Women*

By Ernest L. Johnson  
Simon & Schuster, \$14

Did you know that anger causes physical problems? Are you aware that "unchecked and misunderstood anger is eroding the emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being of African American men, while testing the women who love them?" Dr. Johnson, a medical and health psychologist, presents material that is destined to help the healing process. His guidebook dealing with anger management offers case studies and practical help for developing skills for handling stress, anger, and rage. He talks about boys growing up without fathers, and offers suggestions for single women raising sons. He discusses rage in the workplace. Also of

note, Johnson deals with issues of forgiveness and spirituality in handling anger.

### The Dream Keeper

(and Other Poems)

By Langston Hughes,  
illustrated by Brian  
Pinkney

Alfred A. Knopf, \$7.99

Langston Hughes' poems really speak for themselves. This collection, selected for children, is enhanced by the skillful scratchboard illustrations by Brian Pinkney. The poems celebrate the hopes and dreams, the life and love of our people. Young writers will benefit by reading these poems as they teach themselves how to combine words skillfully to express thoughts and feelings. Here is an example from the book:

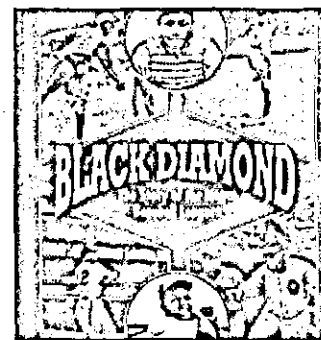
"Dreams"

Hold fast to dreams

For if dreams die  
Life is a broken-winged bird  
That cannot fly.

Hold fast to dreams  
For when dreams go  
Life is a barren field  
Frozen with snow.

—Langston Hughes



### Black Diamond: The Story of the Negro Baseball Leagues

By Patricia and Frederick  
McKissack Scholastic, \$3.99

Because African-Americans were shut out of the American pastime, major league baseball, here is a question for you. Who, in 1947, joined the Brooklyn Dodgers, thereby integrating the major leagues? If you answered Jackie Robinson, you're right! But how many of our children are familiar with the era in sports history when Black ball players had to endure segregated, second-rate liv-

ing and playing conditions while maintaining first-rate determination, courage, and talent? Are they familiar with Josh Gibson, Satchel Paige, or James Thomas 'Cool Papa' Bell? This well-research book written by this prolific husband and wife duo provides readers with a vivid history and biographical accounts.

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## Some Things Are More Important Than Driving.



Ask your boss for a ride to work. DART's E-Pass is the ultimate business card. For as little as \$29 a year, your company can buy annual passes for employees, good every day on every service. The program even provides a free ride home in case of emergency. Call (214) 743-RIDE (7433) for more information, then talk to your boss about participating in the E-Pass program.

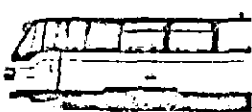


Where do you want to go today? Chances are, wherever it is, DART's already there, or we'll be there soon. Give us a call at (214) 979-1111, and our friendly customer service representatives will be happy to help you with trip planning and route or schedule information. Give us a call and get on board. We're saving you a seat.

**706** Out of the loop? With DART's Downtown Dallas Trolley-Bus, you won't be for long. We've got three (loops that is—A, B and C) to get you to work, to lunch, to shopping and the arts. Plus, with improved light rail connections at Pearl Station, getting around Downtown Dallas is now as easy as A, B or C.



Catch the midnight train to Irving. Leave your briefcase at home, grab the family and get on board. The Trinity Railway Express isn't just for work anymore. Saturday service between South Irving Station and Downtown Dallas, began December 5, 8 a.m. to midnight. See a movie, grab a bite, catch a hockey game, then get on the midnight (12:35 AM) train to Irving.



### Two Minute Warning.

Beginning January 18, train schedules at Park Lane Station will be delayed by 2 minutes during morning and afternoon rush hours to accommodate upcoming system expansion and construction. Delays will be in effect for trains traveling from Pearl to Park Lane in the morning, and Park Lane to Pearl in the evenings. Delays will not affect commuters traveling to downtown in the morning or back to Park Lane in the evening.

**316** Now arriving. Route 316 is now serving businesses along International Parkway and Plano Parkway, as well as the West Plano Transit Center. From there, connections can be made with Downtown Dallas, Collin Creek Mall and Prestonwood Transfer Point with routes 210, 350, 351, 352, and 356. Getting to work is easier than ever.

**511** Attention shoppers: Route 511, serving the East Plano Transit Center and Park Lane Station, has extended late night service to the Target Store at U.S. 75 and Parker Road and to Collin Creek Mall, with continuing non-stop service to Park Lane Station. Shop 'til you drop. We'll pick you up.



Electronic Urban Report

Newsbits

Oh Lauryn, sweet Lauryn. Is there no end to the accolades for your solo album? Well...there really seems to be no end in sight. She has just been nominated for a Grammy in 10 categories! The nominations for the 41st Annual Grammy



Hill

Awards were announced yesterday at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills, Calif. But contrary to popular belief Ms. Hill isn't the only black person to be nominated. Brandy got a nomination for Best

R&B Album for "Never say Never," Brandy and Monica were nominated for Best Performance by a R&B Duo or group for "The Boy is Mine" and Jay-Z got a nod for Best Rap Album of the Year for "Hard Knock Life Vol. 2." Tribe Called Quest and Big Punisher are also nominated for Best Rap Album of the Year.

.....

Lauryn Hill's baby daddy, Rohan Marley, was saved by police from the blazing inferno that used to be his 1998 BMW. The inferno, which happened while Rohan was asleep, was caused by an electrical malfunction. Mr. Marley was treated for smoke inhalation and was released. (That was awfully nice of the police. Especially since his father shot the sheriff! ha,ha...ha?...Cornny, We know. Save your e-mail.)

.....

Coolio's case is moving to Superior Court. No not ODB, Coolio. Pay attention! A judge at a South Bay Municipal Court decided there was adequate evidence to send his traffic stop/gun and drug raid to a higher court. According to

Coolio



a clerk in Division 6, Coolio's case will be heard in Southwest Superior Court in Torrance on Feb. 9. The rapper was arrested in Lawndale, Calif. on Sept. 15, 1998 when a routine traffic stop snowballed into possession of a concealed firearm and marijuana charges, among some other misdemeanor traffic violations which have already cost Coolio \$1,000 in fines.

.....

The late, great Bob Marley has inspired more artists than you could shake a stick at, figuratively speaking of course. Those he influenced will be showing their skills on the upcoming release "Black Survivors." The album's producer, Stephen Marley, is but one of the many heads that will appear on the star-studded album. Others include Erykah Badu, Guru, Lauryn Hill, of course, MC Lyte, OutKast, The Lost Boyz and Aerosmith. (Aerosmith?) The album is scheduled to be released sometime this summer.

.....

Public Enemy is still fighting the power



Chuck D

that be. They may have obeyed PolyGram's request and removed MP3 files of the still unreleased "Bring The

Noise 2000" album. But they are still trying to spread their sound for free. Late last week, the group posted a new song on its website, www.public-enemy.com. The song, "Swindlers Lust," is available as a downloadable MP4 file. Interestingly enough, the track's lyrics deal with the group's struggle with the record industry "A dollar a rhyme, but we barely get a dime." Chuck D goes on to rap repeatedly in the track, "If you don't own the master/ The master owns you."

MON

This is a partial reprint of the Electronic Urban Report, free, factual, online infotainment on the hottest celebrities, events and issues in urban/Black entertainment. Visit their website at http://www.eurweb.com. Tell them you saw them in MON.

**THE STARS COME OUT AT NIGHT...**

Host **CAMERON SMITH**

Al Jerreau, Sade, Grover Washington Jr., Luther Vandross

**Smooth JAZZ** TELEVISION

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# Dallas Theater Center presents A Raisin in the Sun

The Dallas Theater Center begins the new year with the groundbreaking American classic *A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry and produced in association with the city of Cleveland's Great Lakes Theater Festival. Directed by L. Kenneth Richardson, *A Raisin in the Sun* features Irma P. Hall as Mama and Dallas favorite Billy Eugene Jones as Walter Lee. The first play by an African American woman to be produced on Broadway, *A Raisin in the Sun* tells the powerful story of a family's dreams and fears as it struggles to get ahead. Filled with passion, anger and hope, this stirring drama is as relevant today as it was in its premiere forty years ago. Ms. Hansberry's award-winning play opens January 19 and runs through February 7 at the DTC's Kalita Humphreys Theater, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. *A Raisin in the Sun* is the first production of The Kimberly-Clark Contemporary Family Series, which begins its inaugural season at Dallas Theater Center this spring. Exxon is the producing partner of *A Raisin*

in the Sun.

Irma P. Hall, who plays Mama and has numerous movie and television roles to her credit, was most recently seen in the film production of Nobel Prize-winning author Toni Morrison's *Beloved* starring Oprah Winfrey. She has also appeared in the films *Soul Food* and *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* and can be seen in the currently running *Patch Adams* with Robin Williams. Ms. Hall is a retired Dallas school teacher and has performed locally with Dallas Minority Rep (which she co-founded) and Theatre Three. Her regional theater work includes productions at San Diego Rep, The Old Globe, Cleveland Playhouse, Steppenwolf and the Goodman Theater. Her television credits include *Touched by an Angel*, *Lesson Before Dying*, *I Am Annie Mae* and *Wishbone*.

Billy Eugene Jones (Walter Lee) was featured in the Dallas Theater Center's *The Collected Works of Billy The Kid* (Rabin Award nomination), *All's Well That Ends*

*Well, Avenue X*, *Ohio Tip-Off*, *Spunk*, *A Christmas Carol* and three Big D Festivals of the Unexpected. Mr. Jones' regional credits include the Shakespeare Festival of Dallas, Theatre Three, Stage West, Casa Mañana and Ensemble Theatre. His television and film credits include *Def Comedy Jam*, *Comic View*, *Wishbone*, *Walker, Texas Ranger*, *Places in the Heart*, *Hexed*, *High Ambition* and *Stealin' Home*.

For ticket information and show times, call the Dallas Theater Center at 214-522-8499.

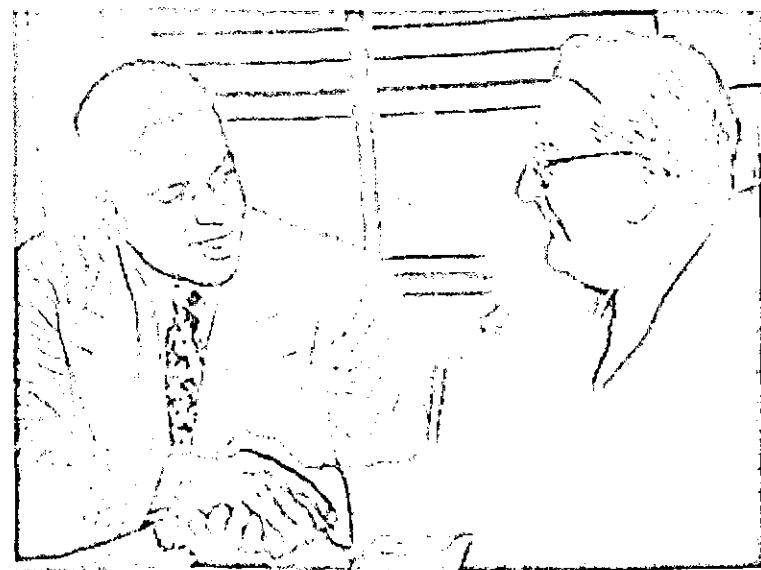


*A Raisin in the Sun* co-stars Irma P. Hall and Billy Eugene Jones

## Play about the life of Jackie Robinson signals onset of Black History Month

Dallas Children's Theater presents a smash hit celebrating African American History Month, *Most Valuable Player: The Heroic Story of Jackie Robinson*. This compelling drama, conceived by Gayle Cornelison and written and developed by Mary Hall Surface and the California Theatre Center, focuses on Jackie Robinson's personal sacrifices and triumphs as he ventures beyond the Negro professional baseball league to integrate major league baseball without the use of violence. Robinson overcomes threats, taunts and other forms of racism, all the while putting aside his own pride and anger for the good of all African American players.

Jackie Robinson with Branch Rickey



Brooklyn Dodgers' general manager Branch Rickey recruited Robinson to be the first Black man to play in the major leagues, challenging him to "have the guts not to fight back... can you conquer the enemy of prejudice with the strength of your spirit?" Robinson's courage and dignity under enormous pressure opened the gates of major league ballparks for other African American baseball players and changed the entire nation in the process.

Jackie Robinson's example still serves as an inspirational source of great inspiration. As Robinson himself stated: "Lord knows I'm no politician. But I have changed things... with my glove and

with my bat... Every time a Black child, a Mexican child, any child, gets a door slammed in his face, I'll be standin' right beside him... Jackie Robinson's gonna be there, battin' a thousand for anybody who needs me."

For reservations or ticket information, call 214-987-0110.

## Blacken Blues Theater's *Wounded Women!* comes with warning

We all know what happens to a woman when she doesn't exhale. She writes best-selling novels. Terry McMillan has launched a career on the frustration of African American women in their search for the perfect man, penning first *Waiting to Exhale* and following with *How Stella Got Her Groove Back*.

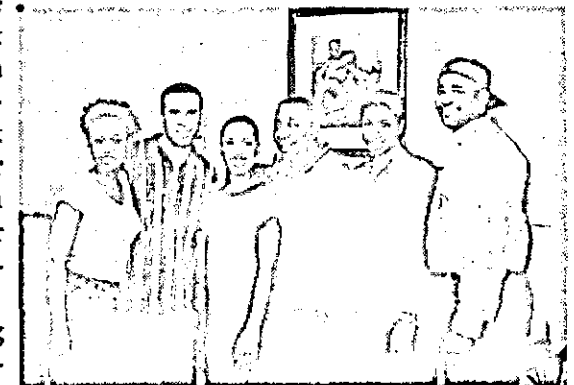
But do you know what happens to a man who meets a woman who is waiting to exhale? He writes a critically acclaimed play called *The Wounded*. Willie Holmes is a Dallas playwright whose latest project is causing both men and women to laugh uncomfortably. The tone is set in the first monologue when the character named Mark proclaims, "Women enter a relationship searching for love while a man enters a relationship searching for a way out."

*The Wounded* is an entertaining adventure in male/female relationships dipped in the unique flavor of African American humor. The Soul Rep Theatre's Third Annual Six-Act Play Festival first produced the play in August of last year. *The Dallas Morning News* referred to it as "bittingly funny." The dialogue is sharp and witty, with a serious undertone.

Willie Holmes is a native of Birmingham, Ala., who moved to Los Angeles with his parents at an early age. When his parents divorced in 1974, his mother took the children and returned to Birmingham. Holmes attended Bethune-Cookman College and went on to receive a graduate degree in political science from

Ohio State University. He is currently an administrator in the Dallas Public School system.

It wasn't until after his own divorce that Holmes decided to retreat back to his first love. "I wrote to survive. It was like a drug, keeping my mind emotionally balanced. On my honeymoon, my wife confessed she wanted to be married and have children, but not with me. We were divorced six months later. After that



Cast members of *The Wounded*

encounter, my life spiraled out of control for a year. I was devastated by the cruelty and callousness of love."

Holmes gives credit for his survival to Jesus and his thirst for writing. "Women do not have a monopoly on pain. Men hurt too, but in our culture, we are not allowed to show it." *The Wounded* portrays a realistic and entertaining view of broken relationships.

The play will be performed at the South Dallas Cultural Center. For ticket information and performance times, call 214-515-0076.

# Media liberalism vs. media ethics

By Joseph Perkins

These are not the best of times for the nation's news media—thanks to CNN, Time, The Cincinnati Enquirer, Stephen Glass and Patricia Smith.

But it's hard to determine which is worse—the egregious violation of journalistic ethics by these news organizations and individuals, or the tortured explanations of how and why they went wrong that have appeared in recent weeks in various newspaper and magazine columns.

"Media competition," writes *Washington Post* media critic Howard Kurtz. The "entertainment culture," writes *New York Times* opinionist Frank Rich. "To be a (journalist) in this culture sometimes means shading the truth," adds *Los Angeles Times* media writer Josh Gitlin.

But Kurtz, Rich and Gitlin have only identified the symptoms of the media's credibility crisis. The root cause is institutional liberalism at news organizations like CNN, Time and The Cincinnati Enquirer. And liberal bias on the part of scribes like Glass, the disgraced *New Republic* associate editor, the part of scribes like Glass, the disgraced *New Republic* associate editor, and Smith, the defrocked *Boston Globe* columnist.

Indeed, one the tenets of liberalism is that the military is inherently evil. And it is with this mind-set that the producers at CNN and the editors at Time (both of which are owned by media conglomerate Time Warner) collaborated on a report claiming that, in 1970, U.S. forces in Vietnam used the lethal nerve gas sarin to kill American defectors holed up in a Laotian village.

Had this been true, the U.S. military would have been guilty of war crimes, for having violated the Geneva Convention's ban on use of chemical weapons. But the report was a big lie. It was a slander, a libel on the good names and reputations of the brave men who put their lives on the line to defend this country.

Another first principle of liberalism is that big business is bad. That's why *The Enquirer* devoted a year to trying to find dirt on Chiquita Brands International, finally producing a front-page series in May that not only impugned the banana empire with corrupt business practices in Latin America, but also suggested that Chiquita was involved with drug trafficking.

*The Enquirer* originally claimed that its series was based on "thorough reporting" by one of its star reporters, who claimed to have a source within Chiquita's executive ranks. As it turns out, the reporter had feloniously stolen Chiquita company voice mail. And his damning allegations against Chiquita were lies. *The Enquirer* ran three days worth of front-page apologies and proffered Chiquita \$10 million to let bygones be bygones.

Both *The New Republic* and *The Boston Globe* are well-respected publications. But because of their institutional liberalism, it didn't occur to them, until too late, that their talented young liberal writers were producing fiction. That's because, in the case of Glass, his most notorious pieces besmirched conservatives. And because, in Smith's case, her writings were primarily devoted to pet liberal causes. Indeed, Glass authored an article in *The New Republic* about the annual Conservative Political Action Conference, during which, he wrote, he witnessed two young conservatives "getting to second base" in a men's room, two others using "what looks like cocaine" and a "get-naked room" where one couple would have sex while other unclothed couples watched TV. He also wrote about a visit to the First Church of George Herbert Walker Christ, an evangelical cult that supposedly believed that the former president is the Second Coming of Jesus.

Glass' *New Republic* editors were only too willing to believe this garbage about conservatives. And of course, it was all lies.

Smith, *The Boston Globe's* Pulitzer Prize finalist, was not overtly political in most of her writings. She ground no ax about the military-industrial complex or about big, bad business. She preferred little fables about ordinary people. But she would get her dander up if some pol bent too far to the right for her liber-


al tastes. Like Massachusetts Acting Governor Paul Cellucci, whom Smith found guilty of "political lunacy" for insisting that welfare recipients work 20 hours a week and not allowing them to dodge the work requirement by signing up for a few classes or for "job training."

CNN, Time, The Cincinnati Enquirer, The New Republic and The Boston Globe have all responded to

their journalistic embarrassments by firing the culprits directly responsible and promising to do better in future. But they haven't dealt squarely with the real problem: Their journalistic judgment is clouded by institutional liberalism.

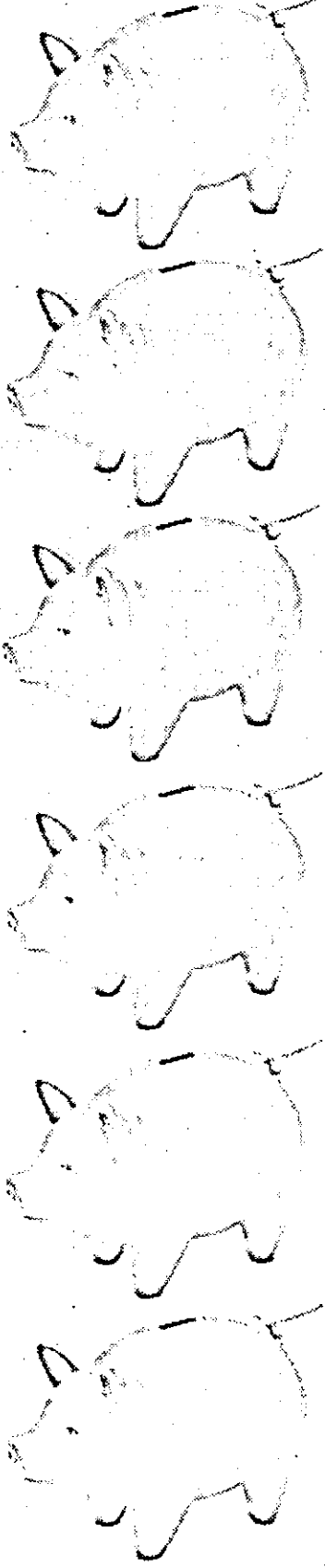
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Joseph Perkins writes for The San Diego Union-Tribune.



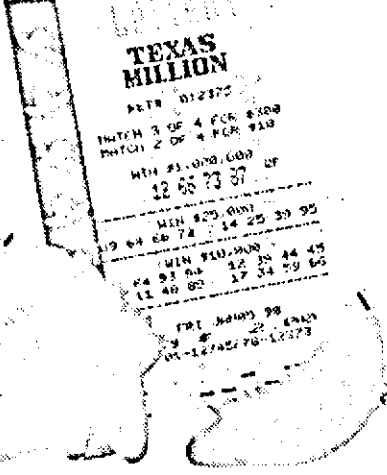
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## 7 Chances To Cash In.





**You and Your Money**

John Dudley

# Stock splits: Wall Street's 2 for 1 sale?

One result of the current bull market has been a dramatic increase in the number of companies splitting their stock. What is a stock split? Simply put, it is a division of a corporation's outstanding common shares into a larger number of shares according to a formula: 2 for 1, 3 for 1, 5 for 1, and so on. If an investor holds 100 common shares of a company's stock before a 2-for-1 split, that same investor will find 200 shares of that company's stock in his or her portfolio after the split.

Stock splits are not a case of something for nothing, however. If the stock in our example above was trading at \$50 before the split, the "post-split" shares will normally trade at \$25 per share. An investor's total investment in dollar terms is not increased as a result of the stock split; shareholders end up with precisely the same proportionate investment in the company that they had before the split.

While stock splits are not exactly a free lunch, they can have positive effects

on a stock price. The primary reason companies undertake stock splits is to create interest in the stock among a wider group of investors by lowering the per share price. Many investors prefer cheaper shares; an \$120 per share stock that suddenly costs only \$60 per share achieves instant affordability for many investors who might have balked at paying the original price. While new investors end up owning a commensurately smaller piece of the company for their \$60, the attractiveness of the "post-split" price and pent-up demand for that stock may fuel a rise, though sometimes only temporary, in the stock's price.

With the stock market reaching record levels, the number of companies splitting their stocks is on the rise. The current bull market has been characterized by a tremendous flow of funds into blue chip stocks and mutual funds, with a focus on large-capitalization issues. Numerous stocks in the Standard & Poor's 500 are now trading at triple-digit per share prices. Oftentimes, a stock that

costs well over \$100 per share can be intimidating to smaller investors. When a stock price gets to the level that may discourage investors, companies may consider a stock split.

Since the current bull market began in October 1990, more than half the companies listed in the S&P 100 have split their stock. In 1996, 166 New York Stock Exchange-listed companies split their shares, up 26 percent from the previous year. The year 1997 saw 235 of those companies split their shares, breaking the record set in 1983 when 225 companies split their stock. Through the first quarter of 1998, 100 NYSE-listed companies had either split their stock or announced forthcoming splits.

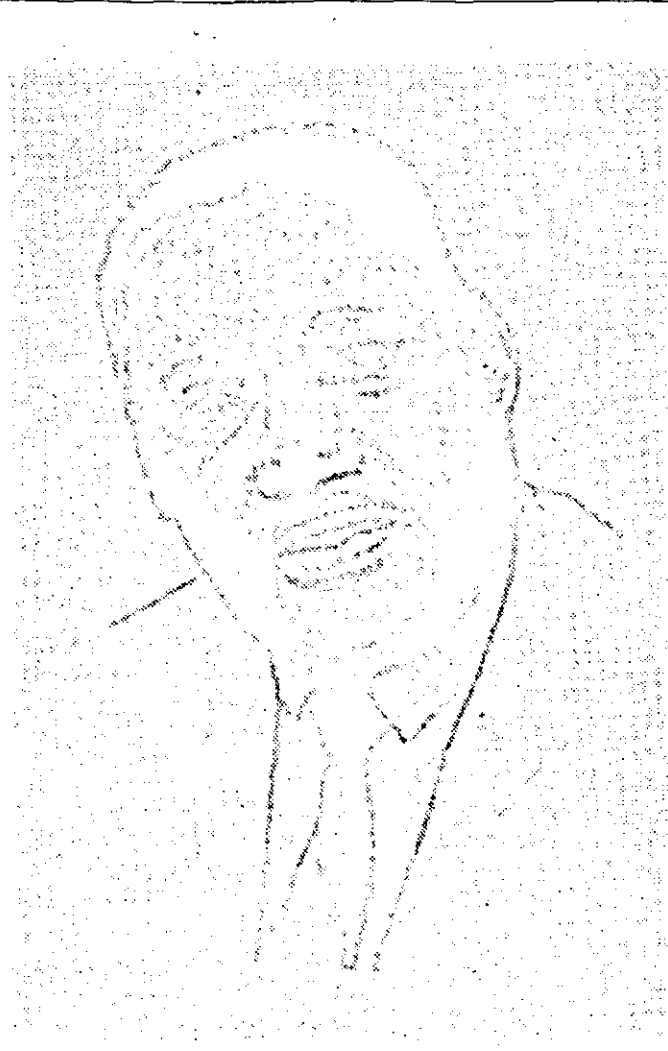
While stock splits alone are not a reason to invest in a particular company's shares, stock splits are by and large viewed favorably on Wall Street. And while past performance is no guarantee of future results, stock splits often send a signal that management is positive about a company's future. Recent quantitative

research found that 9 of the 14 companies in the S&P 100 index that split their stocks in 1996 outperformed the index, which rose more than 22 percent, by an average of 8.4 percent in the following year. (Keep in mind that the indices are presented to provide you with an understanding of their historic long-term performance and are not presented to illustrate the performance of any security. Investors cannot directly purchase any index.)


Companies announce impending stock splits well before the actual split. Your professional financial advisor should be able to tell you which companies are planning a stock split. Remember, a company's earnings, growth prospects, market strength, etc., are still the primary factors to consider when planning a stock purchase. But a stock split can provide you with a nice chance to buy a stock (or more of what you already own) at a reasonable price.

MON

*John Dudley is a financial advisor with Prudential Securities. He can be contacted at 214-761-5142. Prudential Securities is not a legal or tax advisor. However, its Financial Advisors will be glad to work with you, your accountant, tax advisor and/or attorney to help you meet your financial goals.*



## Kroger Salutes Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. For His Vision and His Dream



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# Black investors, long on the sidelines, are playing catch-up

By Peter Truell

Alfred G. Osbourne got right to the point recently in urging stock ownership on a group of African-American health care workers in the Bronx.

"Over time, inflation is going to eat your assets alive," Osbourne, a broker for the financial services group of the American Express Co., warned an audience clad in white coats and scuffed sneakers at the Morrisania Health Center in the South Bronx. To pay for children's college educations and build a retirement nest egg, he said, "you need to have some money in the equity market; mutual funds are one of the nice ways to get started."

Nothing new there. But the reaction was illuminating. Most of the more than 50 people who attended two of Osbourne's workshops filled out forms requesting private consultations with him, he said.

Osbourne says he often sees such reaction these days when he speaks to Blacks about investing. Moreover, he says, roughly two out of five of the people he sits down with set up a stock-buying plan and "follow through and stick to it."

A momentous shift is taking place in the investment practices of Black Americans. Abandoning the conservative habits of their parents and grandparents, rising numbers are putting their savings into stocks rather than real estate, insurance policies and certificates of deposit.

Traditionally, Blacks have shied away from stocks — partly out of mistrust of Wall Street, partly because Wall Street showed little interest in their money and partly out of ignorance as to how the stock market worked.

"My parents didn't even have a checking account," said George M. Daniels, who grew up in St. Louis and who has helped run an African-American investment club in Manhattan for 15 years. "We aren't taught a lot about these things. We didn't know. The main thing then was insurance."

But as the Black middle class has mushroomed in recent years and Black buying power has surged — to more than \$500 billion this year from just over \$300 billion in 1990 — Blacks are being wooed by brokers as never before and are increasingly jumping on the stock-market bandwagon.

Historically, in the African-American community, the vast majority of the family's assets was in the house, with the rest in the automobile, with virtually no money invested in the equity market,"

said J. Eugene Grigsby, a public policy specialist at the University of California at Los Angeles. Until the late 1970s, most middle-class African-Americans worked in the public sector. But as more Blacks took jobs in the private sector, especially at big corporations, they became more familiar with investment concepts like "stock options, financial statements and returns on investment," Grigsby said, and the allure of stocks grew.

Fifty-seven percent of Black households with annual incomes of more than \$50,000 have money in the stock market, according to a survey conducted by Yankelovich Partners for Ariel Mutual Funds, an investment company in Chicago that is run by Blacks, and Charles Schwab & Co., the big discount brokerage firm.

While there are no comparable survey figures for past years, brokers and investment bankers said the percentage represented a huge increase from the mid-1980s.

To be sure, the proportion of Whites in the same income bracket who own stocks is much higher — 81 percent — according to the study, but specialists say the gap appears to be closing. Anecdotal evidence shows that the number of predominantly Black investment clubs has proliferated, though the National Association of Investors Corp. in Madison Heights, Mich., the country's main investment club organization, says it does not track their numbers.

And a recent survey by *Target Market News*, a Chicago research firm that monitors habits of Black consumers, shows that the number of Black investors has been growing rapidly since 1995.

"A rush to catch up is the driving force," said Ken Smikle, the president of Target. "There is a need to rush, frankly, because the market has been ignored for so long."

J. Fred Acree, 38, a mortgage loan originator with a minority-owned firm in Winston-Salem, N.C., illustrates the trend. When he was growing up in Augusta, Ga., his family "had the house, and we had the insurance," Acree said.

"Anything else, we weren't really aware of," he added. "There wasn't really anyone to make us aware of that."

After attending college, Acree spent years putting all his spare cash into a savings account, waiting until just a few years ago to funnel some of the money into stocks.

The opportunity to deal with a Black stockbroker — "the only one I know of in that office" — also gave him "a little bit more of a sense of pride," he said.

His broker, Duane Davis, who works for First Union Brokerage Services in Winston-Salem, recently founded the Coalition of Black Investors, a national organization that is holding seminars across the country to address what it perceives as a lack of knowledge among Black Americans about finance and investments.

The fact is that the largest emerging market in the world is the minority market in this country," the Rev. Jesse Jackson said this summer at a New York conference intended to attract capital to minority groups. "African-Americans and Latinos control more than \$700 billion a year in buying power. That's more than all of Mexico, all of India, all of Switzerland, all of Indonesia and all of South Africa."

Jackson also has been putting pressure on investment banks to hire more Blacks and other minority-group members.

Big retail banks, long the main point of contact for Blacks with the financial services industry, have for the last 20 years been taking steps to improve corporate diversity efforts and in marketing

Traditionally, Blacks have shied away from stocks — partly out of mistrust of Wall Street, partly because Wall Street showed little interest in their money and partly out of ignorance as to how the stock market worked.

to ethnic groups. Only lately, though, has the brokerage industry awakened to the potentially lucrative market. And it has done so with a rush of activity, even as the bull market is starting to look a bit long in the tooth.

Mic Alexander, who works in her family's commercial-printing business in Charlotte, N.C., said she now receives an average of five investment pitches a week from investment firms, even though "lack of time and lack of interest" have largely kept her away from the stock market. Nevertheless, she said, her mother's interest has been piqued.

Tony Chapelle, publisher of *Securities Pro*, a newsletter that reports on African-Americans in the securities industry, said there was "a realization

among the more progressive firms that Blacks have money and they represent the new boom market."

At American Express, Thomas V. Nicolosi, a group vice president and Osbourne's boss, said that it was in the early 1990s, after his company completed a diversity study, that he fully realized that financial services firms were not adequately serving some ethnic groups. And it has been only in the last two or three years, he said, that American Express has created nationwide teams to offer financial education to potential Black clients.

As part of its aggressive courting of Black investors, American Express this year began using Tiger Woods, the champion golfer of African-Asian parentage, and his father, Earl, who is Black, as a key part of its marketing strategy in print and television advertisements.

Likewise, Merrill Lynch started several stock investment programs aimed at minority-group investors after taking a close look at recent census data and calculating their growing economic power, according to Dan Haughton, a senior director for marketing services at the firm. Merrill Lynch has also been hiring more Black stockbrokers.

"Our clients, our shareholders are demanding more and more that our employees look like them," said Westina Matthews, Merrill Lynch's first vice president and senior director, who earlier this year was given the responsibility of promoting diversity at the firm.

Though there are still just a handful of African-Americans in the upper echelons of Wall Street, they include E. Stanley O'Neal, the chief financial officer of Merrill Lynch, probably the second-most-prominent Black after Kenneth I. Chenault, president and chief operating officer of American Express.

Black-owned investment firms are also getting the message out. Ariel, one of the biggest, with more than \$2.5 billion in funds under management, has set an ambitious goal.

"Our mission is to make the stock market a subject of dinner conversation in every Black home in America," said Melody Hobson, Ariel's senior vice president for marketing, when her company and Schwab released the recent survey. Schwab said it joined Ariel in sponsoring the survey because it wanted more information on what it saw as an underserved market.

Notwithstanding their budding love affair with stocks, Blacks have a long way to go to catch up with other investors.

While middle- and upper-class Americans of all races have been stampeding into equities, racking up average gains of 20 percent a year for most of the last decade, the figures for the overall population indicate that this has brought more benefits to the White majority. According to 1994 census data, the latest

available, only 6.2 percent of African-Americans owned equities, compared with 23 percent of all Americans.

One reason for that is that more affluent Blacks in this country generally save less than their White counterparts. The Ariel-Schwab survey, for example, showed that Black households with annual incomes of \$50,000 or more saved an average of \$267 a month, versus \$488 for similar White households. (That comparison, however, is skewed somewhat by the fact that the Black families surveyed had lower average incomes than the Whites — \$75,800, compared with \$82,100.)

As a result of the lower rates of stock ownership and savings, the Black households in the survey had accumulated much smaller average retirement nest eggs than White families: \$42,000, compared with \$88,000.

Historically, Blacks "have had less capital to invest, and the capital they did have, they took a more conservative strategy than they should have done," said Christopher J. Williams, an African-American Wall Streeter who left Lehman Brothers a few years ago to start his own bond business, the Williams Capital Group.

In addition, he said, many African-Americans until recently "did not have longstanding employment with companies to get into 401(k) plans." Such plans, which typically allow an employee to invest automatically in a range of mutual funds, are the path to first-time equity investments for as many as a quarter of all investors, according to the Ariel-Schwab poll.

As more Blacks are tempted by stocks, they face a nerve-jangling quandary: whether to jump in now as the seven-year bull market shows signs of sputtering, or to hold back and possibly fall even further behind. Some Black investors fear that they may be the last people to join the party and the first to suffer a hangover.

"We're getting on board a train that is already moving," said Edgar J. Hicks, 50, an African-American grain broker in Omaha. "My contention is that when this thing does back off, we may be the ones that get hurt the most, because we are investing late in the cycle."

Hicks has joined an investment club that grew out of the African-American congregation at the Salem Baptist Church in north Omaha. Now in its third year, the 20-member club has had so-so results in its stock market investments, despite the market's huge run-up during the period.

"We're doing OK, but part of our problem is we've bought the popular stocks," Hicks said, meaning shares in companies that already had seen the best of their gains or that simply were familiar to the group because of their big local

operations. Lucent Technologies was a winner but Calenergy and Union Pacific have been disappointments.

"There are real pressures on us out here, when the market is running this good," he said. "If we aren't participating in this, we are losing."

Hicks said he first struggled to understand the ins and outs of the stock market in the 1960s, when he was growing up in Shreveport, La., the son of a physician. As a young man, he made a disastrous first investment in the Penn Central Transportation Co., the debt-ridden railroad that ultimately collapsed in the late 1970s.

He said he was drawn to Penn Central because he was "always interested in the grain market, the railroad, and the outside." But these vague instincts were no substitute for the tough research that might have provided the young investor with some inkling of the troubles brewing at the company.

"The problem I had was, who could give you pointers on how to do it?" Hicks said in an interview from his office at DHV Inc. in Omaha. Such information wasn't easy to come by for a Black man; even in the 1970s, he recalled, he was practically turned away at the entrance of the local office of Merrill Lynch. "You weren't well-received when you went in there," he said, describing how the office manager would hurry to meet him at the door and block his way.

(James Wiggins, a Merrill Lynch spokesman, said, "If he was offended in any way, we'd want to apologize for that, because it's certainly not our policy to treat anyone badly who comes into our offices.")

Even after 25 years in his business, Hicks said, he still occasionally feels that some Whites look on him as a curiosity.

"I find it a real struggle," Hicks said. "People are inquisitive about a Black person being in finance, trading in grain."

Critics of financial services companies say they still have a long way to go in their dealings with minority populations.

Hilary Bailey, a Jamaican-born economist who surveyed 700 fellow members of St. Paul's Community Baptist Church on Hendrix Street in Brooklyn about their financial circumstances and habits, faulted local financial firms for failing to offer the community he surveyed a broad-enough array of services and products, from business loans to retirement investments.

Big banks like Chase Manhattan and Citibank were the dominant providers of financial services for the people he polled, he said, but they mostly sold mortgages and credit cards.

Osbourne, the American Express broker, says he is trying to change such patterns. Churches like Bailey's, he said, are ideal places to promote his products.

"I do a tremendous amount of work with the churches — that's my target market," Osbourne said in an interview at his office in the Kew Gardens section of Queens.

Osbourne, who says he advises 540 clients, half of them Black, recently sponsored a brunch at Canaan Baptist Church in Harlem for 55 pastors.

Still, the old resistance can die hard. "There is a mistrust of Wall Street" in the Black community, said Chapelle, the newsletter publisher. He recalled how his own father, a lawyer who grew up in the shadow of the Great Depression, said he "would rather play the horses than invest in the stock market," because of his fears about the potential for market manipulation by big Wall Street firms.

"Wall Street may conjure images of opportunity and shared prosperity for White Americans, but Black Americans have generally seen Wall Street as somewhere that is suspicious," Chapelle said. "For the most part, Wall Street has never been a place that has been trying to make investments in Black America."

A result, he said, is that "African-Americans are still about 10 years behind the *Money* magazine, baby-boomer generation."

While that may be true of the group, a growing number of individuals investing for the longer term — especially college-educated Blacks — are keeping up with the pack. Consider Charles Hicks, a safety engineer with the Ford Motor Co. in Detroit.

Hicks said he first became interested in investing after college. He and some of his contemporaries decided to start an investment club, which is still going strong 18 years later and which he says has achieved compound annual average returns of close to 30 percent a year. The group has even bought into radio stations, he said.

Or consider 15 Fund Inc., an investment club in New York City that was created in 1983 by friends who decided to give up Lotto and try their luck in stocks.

"We used to pool our money to buy lottery tickets," said Daniels, a founder of the club, whose members at the time were mainly church workers. "We didn't win anything. So we said we'll do better if we get into the stock market."

The friends started putting in \$25 a month each, said Daniels, who is now retired from his job as a journalist with the United Methodist Church in Manhattan; some have since raised their contributions to \$50 or \$100. The club has invested in blue-chip stocks like Coca-Cola Enterprises, the bottling company, as well as Home Depot and Lucent, to earn average annual returns of 15 percent to 16 percent over the last decade, he added.

The goal of the club, which now has 14 members and belongs to the National Association of Investment Clubs, is to earn returns of 10 percent to 15 percent on each stock and to double its money every five years.

Daniels, who never bought stocks until he became involved in the club, said Black investors' caution about the stock market was understandable. "Anything that you don't know much about, you're scared about," he said.

But African-Americans have become more sophisticated about stocks in recent years, he said — especially the younger generation. Daniels has bought his 7-year-old grandson some stock in McDonald's, he said, and likes to tell him that "that's one of your hamburgers you're eating" when they visit the local outlet.

"I'll do it later with Disney," he said.

MON

This article first appeared in the *New York Times* on Sunday, August 23, 1998.

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**You and God**

Ron Shaw

**Can You Be Trusted?**

1 Cor. 4:2

I remember watching an episode of Gomer Pyle a few years ago. The specific episode I watched was of great interest to me. Gomer was called on to escort a high-ranking officer's daughter to a dance. The reason he was selected was because the father of the young lady felt he could be trusted. Speaking as a father of a beautiful daughter, I could relate to the father's sentiments.

Every father wants to know the young man his daughter is going to be with, can be trusted with his little girl. This is also a good reason to treat the women we men date with all the courtesy and respect that we think our daughters deserve.

As I started thinking about our latest study on stewardship, I remembered how I felt when my daughter's escort came to pick her up for her prom. The first date my daughter ever had was with me. During that date, I informed her that any fellow who did not treat her as I treated her when I took her out did not deserve another date. When I met the young man, I interviewed him. I was trying to determine if I could trust him. After he came to the house to ask if he could escort her to the prom, and after I asked several questions, I informed him of my approval and explained to him why. In short, I told him that some day he would have children. Perhaps even a daughter. I told him how important it was for a man to be trustworthy. I told him I was trusting him with one of my most prized possessions. As I thought about those words, the

Lord said to me, "Ron, do you think I trust you?" It was a sobering question. I would like to think one of my best qualities is my trustworthiness.

According to our text, the most important quality of anyone serving as a steward is their ability to be trusted. The Bible says we are stewards of God. I wonder if can God trust you? When you consider all the things we ask the Lord for, that question must be settled. Stewardship is not about our trusting God, but rather His ability to trust us. Faith is about our trusting God. Stewardship is about Him trusting us. Can He trust you with money? Can He trust you with notoriety? Can He trust you with power? Your trustworthiness tells a lot about your character. God trusted Adam and look at what happened. He trusted Noah and look at the results. Abram was a man God could trust. Joseph is one of the most notable stewards mentioned in all the Bible. Potiphar trusted him with all his household business, all of the business outside the house, and even with his wife. When His wife tried to seduce Joseph, his reply was that he couldn't violate Potiphar or God's trust in him.

I am convinced that the reason we don't see or realize more of the tangible blessings of our salvation is because of our poor stewardship. Poor stewardship exposes gross mismanagement. We charge what we don't have the resources to purchase, we live above what God has supplied for the day and then want to believe Him for a miracle to get us out of the mess that our poor stewardship has created.

I was talking to a young lady recently who is trusting God to supply her with a godly husband. I asked her if God could trust her with a godly man. She looked puzzled and asked, "What do you mean?" I informed her that God had to be able to trust her with a godly man just as He had to be able to trust a man with a godly woman. I told her if she wanted God to bless her with a godly man, she had to work on becoming a woman He could

trust with that kind of man.

Nagging him, preaching at him, criticizing him for not acting as she desires, having an attitude when he doesn't yield to her desires, complaining when he wants to live a committed life to the Lord, all had to do with her being a poor steward of a godly man. The same applies to men. If you want God to bless you with a good wife, you have to be willing to be a good steward of one. Cussing her out, hitting her, criticizing her because she's committed to the work of the Lord, refusing to honor her as the weaker vessel all demonstrate poor stewardship.

The question is, "Can you be trusted with the things you say you desire?" Can God trust you to honor Him with your substance if you had the kind of money you want? As a husband, I want to be trustworthy. As a father, I want God to trust me. As a pastor, I want God to trust me. I heard a pastor confess once that before God could trust him with the size congregation he had, he had to work out some things. I

recently read a book by one of the leading Christian business professionals. He said before God could bless him with the kind of success he now enjoys, he had to deal honestly with some issues that would have wrecked him and several people around him.

Why should God put something in your hands that you can't be trusted with? Stewardship is an issue that every Christian must face as we approach the new millennium. As God continues to look for those whom He may show Himself strong through, we must answer this question: If He did increase His power in our lives to bless people, would we start merchandising it for our own profit under the guise of godly prosperity and building His kingdom?

Can you be trusted?

MON

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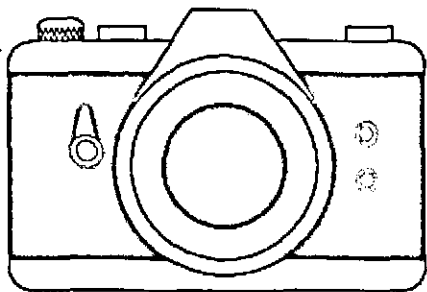


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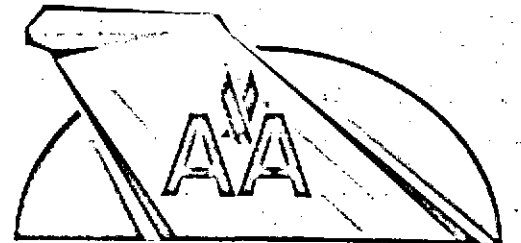


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