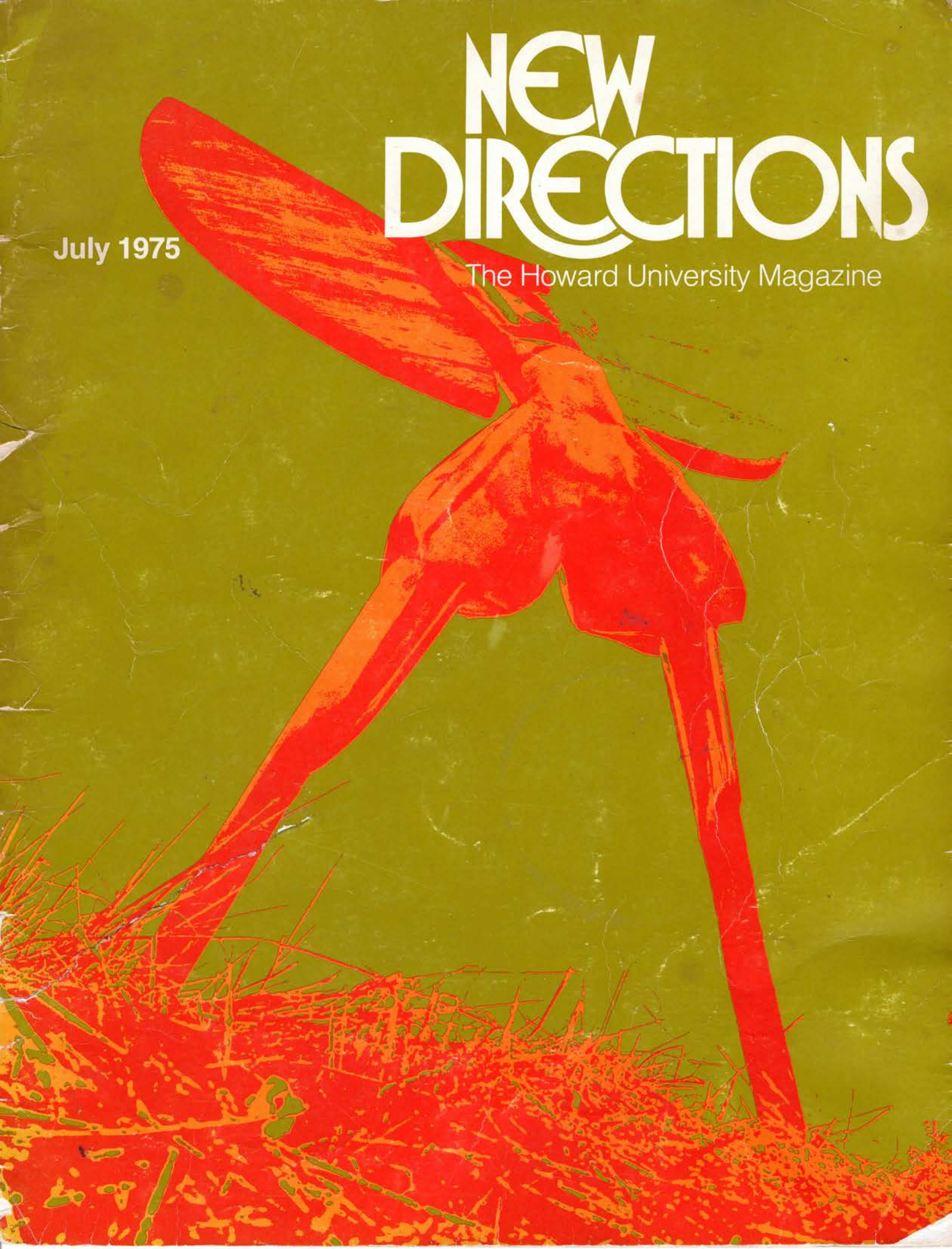


# NEW DIRECTIONS

The Howard University Magazine

July 1975



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Vol. 2 No. 3

2 Notes

3 Letters

## ON THE HILL

4 Beyond Human Understanding  
A New Dimension in Art

7 Total Black Theater in Art Exhibition

14 Black-on-Black Crime

18 How Well Do You Write?  
Some Implications of Teaching Composition

## COMMENTARY

20 Don't Get Mad . . . Get Smart

24 The 'Soul' Handshake

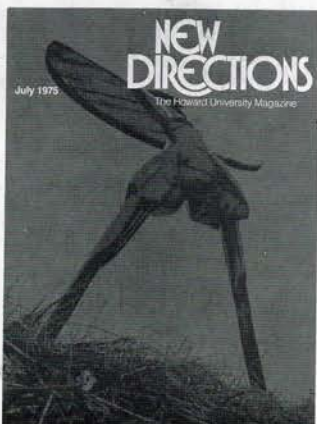
## THE ARTS

### Book Review

26 Black Star: A View of the Life and Times of Kwame Nkrumah

26 Faculty Tenure: A Report and Recommendations by the  
Commission on Academic Tenure in Higher Education

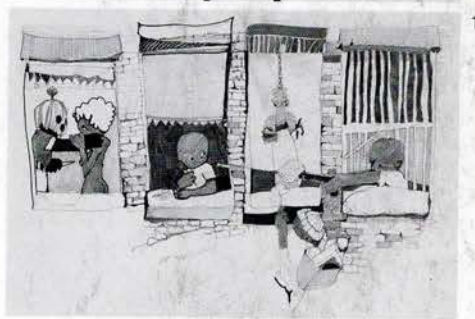
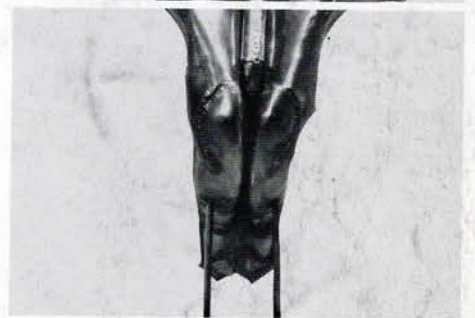
28 Poems



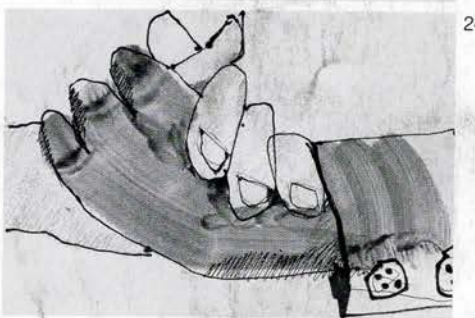
On the cover is a 3-color tone line conversion of artist Stanley White's sculpture, YOGI. See story beginning on page 4. (Photo by Roland L. Freeman; Design by James A. Davis.)



7



14



24

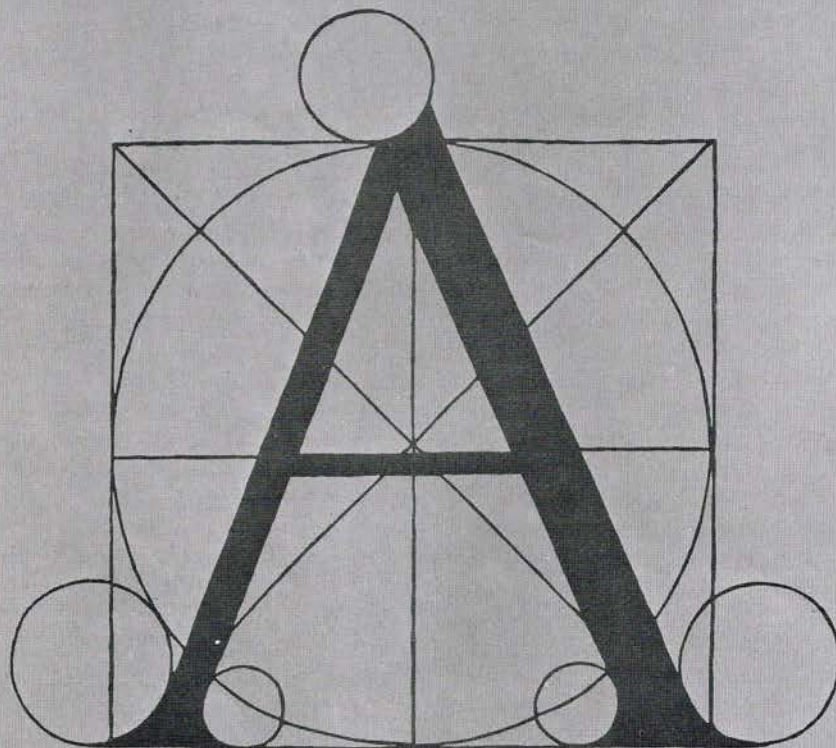
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# *From the Editors Notebook*

It takes a reader to appreciate good writing; a professional to judge the achievement of another professional. And in the judgment of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education, *New Directions* is one of the "TOP TEN" magazines in the nation. Below is a reproduction of a citation presented to the editor.

2



The judges in the 1975 Recognition Program of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education present to you this  
**EXCEPTIONAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**  
for excellence in the program category:  
MAGAZINE PUBLISHING:  
TOP TEN MAGAZINE

We congratulate you and your staff and wish you continued success in your efforts.

*Blair L. Keenan*  
President

Howard University



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# Letters

## Black Nationalism

First, I want to thank you for your excellent publication which I read as soon as it arrives.

Secondly, I want to plead for a measure of understanding of those few whites who understand and identify with the ideals of Black nationalism, freedom, and equality. Because to do so without hypocrisy (if that is indeed possible) is to incur the hatred of most other whites and suspicion of many Blacks as well. It can be a lonely road.

Dr. Chancellor Williams in "The Destruction of Black Civilization," reviewed in your April issue, states: "The whites are the implacable foe and everlasting enemy of the Blacks," and that Blacks must fully realize that "the white man is their bitter enemy." I cannot disagree with these statements either racially or historically, but only plead for Blacks to look at individuals who may be valuable exceptions to this historical and racial truism. Look at us with suspicion, if you will, but as objectively as possible.

Because, there are some whites who are as sickened by the hypocrisy, criminality, and inequality of contemporary society as you are . . . some of us that have no stomach left for the bland conformity and institutionalized repression of white society. And there are some who realize the distinction John Henrik Clarke points out between Christianity and Christendom, the latter a "political instrument." True Christianity, like Christ, is totally pacifistic, nonviolent, nonexhibitive, and as such totally incompatible with a capitalistic society. But to believe such is "unAmerican"!

I further agree with Clarke that socialism is the answer, but not by itself. To be fully successful (as much as any human institution can be) it must be tempered by a dedicated pacifism and humanism. In this nuclear age, there really is no longer any alternative to that.

Alfred James III  
Petroleum Geologist  
Wichita, Kansas

## A True Reflection

For the first time, I have received a true reflection of *New Directions*. It was a pure delight to read the April 1975 issue.

To say that the whole issue was thought-provoking would be an understatement. Many changes have prevailed at Howard University since my day and I often have nostalgic memories, from time to time, that urge me to "go and see if you will."

The realities of Black history, the eternal truth and the destruction of myths are all just as relevant now as then and the university has made a significant impact on these three issues.

When we stop and reflect upon the terrible arrow of time—*New Directions* will be the past, the present and the future.

John L. Mason  
Assistant Professor  
Civil Engineering Technology  
Savannah State College  
Savannah, Georgia

## Dr. Leon Wright

I was delighted to read about my friend and former teacher, Dr. Leon Wright, in the April 1975 *New Directions*.

Dr. Wright has been an inspiration and a guiding influence in my life during the 20 years since I was a student at the School of Religion.

Ernest J. Newborn  
Associate Minister  
The Christian Church in Missouri  
Jefferson City, Mo.

## Another View

Though being a white American, I have alienated myself many times from some of my friends and many of my relatives because of the support I give to the causes of Black Americans.

For over two decades I have condemned generalizations of the Black community and I must also condemn *New Directions* for the generalizations of the white community. Evaluate the April issue through "a white man's eyes" and you will understand my disappointment.

Melvyn G. Bleeker  
Minneapolis, Minn.

Please send all correspondence to: *New Directions*,  
Department of University Relations and Publica-  
tions, Howard University, Washington, D. C. 20059



"Like swift, graceful gazelles, they dance and dance around the bird as if performing a ceremonial rite before a symbolic god in a medieval temple."

## Beyond Human Understanding

### A New Dimension in Art

By Abdulkadir N. Said

Like a legendary creature from outer space, the shadowy frame of the huge bird was visible through the streaks of light which penetrated the darkness of the place. The bird's massive wings stretched horizontally. Its head was slightly downward as if it had just flown in from some mysterious place above. But when the light streaks increased in intensity and gradually illuminated the stage of Ira Aldridge Theater, you then knew what you were seeing was not a creature from outer space. Rather, it was an unusual work of art by Stanley White. It was created from steel, wood and rubber and symbolized the mysticism of a mythical bird with human characteristics. The backdrop which gave the illusion of quiet space was merely a huge screen made to look that way by special lighting.

Soothing music fills the hall. You feel at peace with yourself, with those around you. You relax to the beat but at the same time fix your stare at the bird on stage. You are overwhelmed by its long legs, its massive seven-foot frame, and a serpent-like neck that shines like a silver sword. You are struck by the bird's human face—that of a woman—and its huge wings carved from wood. Simultaneously

two female voices—a vocalist and a narrator—come over the speakers to introduce the bird and to render poetic explanation of its virtues and supernatural powers.

The poetry begins slowly in unison with the mellow music and the soft tone of the vocalist. You hear every word and feel as though you too are in a flight with the bird—just as suggested in the following lines written specially for the production by Clay Goss:

*Within the drums/light is possible.  
Listen to the wings/of the bird that is/  
flying off to war. Among the living/there  
will be life/or death due to/circum-  
stances beyond all/comprehension/  
Travels like the four/winds blowing  
around the/globe. All things are/pos-  
sible in the end. Listen to the bent/  
inner workings of the/Mother Force/  
Transmigrations, Primal/Images like  
the God/Mercury. A messenger/where/  
all our fathers go/as one Legend to/  
their memories. Like birds as their  
wings/lift them slowly off/into the sky.  
Within the drums/even flight becomes/  
merely possible/within the drums/The  
Beginning as well as the End. Flight!*



PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROY LEWIS

All of a sudden, two spot lights brighten the aisles in the theater. You sense something is about to happen. But what? You hear foot steps coming from the opposite end of the stage. As you turn to look, a group of masked dancers clad in white and black costumes swish by as if they too were endowed with wings like the bird. Like swift, graceful gazelles, they dance and dance around the bird as if performing a ceremonial rite before a symbolic god in a medieval temple. Indeed, their performance captivates the audience. Even the few fidgety youngsters in the theater find a meaningful diversion in the activity on stage. There is no motion, no sound. And when the dancers finish their ritualistic performance and dash back off stage through the aisles, the audience bursts into applause.

The lights dim once again to allow for the exit of the bird and to make way for the grand entrance of yet another piece of art.

**It is all part of a well-orchestrated production** heralding the birth of a new concept in the presentation of visual art. If you have any doubts in your mind

about the production, all are dispelled by the time the first act is ended.

At one point you are shifted from stage to screen through the effective projection of slides superimposed over 16mm. film showing various pieces of White's birds lined up on a field of green grass. Pieces of sculpture are in fact made to hop about like grass-hoppers as if they were gifted with the power of motion.

At another point you are taken back to the roots—Africa—via a powerful on-stage performance by a trio with "talking" drums.

White's production, "Beyond Human Understanding," is hardly that. It is within the realm of understanding, thanks to his artistry. For an hour and 45 minutes, his work, striving for new dimensions in art, casts a spell over an audience who came for a performance and remained for a rite. For White, the sculpture seems only the beginning of his expression.

#### WHO IS STANLEY WHITE?

Stanley White, 23, is an art teacher at Dunbar High School in Washington, D. C. and an alumnus of Howard University.

His interest in art began early as he was growing up in Fredericksburg, Virginia.

It is conceivable that he might have chosen another line of work, but fate steered him to his present profession. His artistic talents were recognized at a crucial point in life by his seventh-grade teachers. Much later, it was nourished and sustained by encouragement from high school instructors. Their collective interest in him and his work inspired White to push on.

After graduation from Walker Grant High School, he won a scholarship to Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond. But he transferred to Howard University after one year, to satisfy a deep desire to be among his people. He graduated in 1973, and just this past May was awarded the Master of Fine Arts degree.

At Howard, White developed a lasting attachment to the field of visual art. This deep interest served him as a catalyst in his search for a deeper meaning in his work. The urge to learn more and to discover the unknown led him in the direction of the supernatural in art forms, as found

the potential of the resources that exist in our community and demonstrated that it can be properly channelled and given the opportunity to blossom, if so desired.] The dancers' movements were incredibly rich in nuance and implication with a mere gesture, a swivel of the body, a motion of the hands or feet, adding a world of emotional and conceptual connotation which complimented the statue.

The poetic explanations recited by Ruth Parkham increases our cogitations of man's relationship with the animal world. The bird, which is the topic at present, is a symbol of freedom and movement, good and evil in many regions of the homeland. Just as in African societies, an artwork is part of a system. It has a physical existence, a general form, a certain style; and it follows a certain canon of representation and system of arrangement. Of great importance are the many ways in which an object is handled and utilized. The music, poems, songs, dances, gestures, costumes are close in context to the different rituals, initiations or cult practices as exercised in African and Caribbean societies. "Beyond Human Understanding," therefore, reaches back to the primary source and examines the multivalents and diverse nature of African art.

*SCENE II:* Visual projections of selected sculpture constructions on screen are introduced. Through the artist Ron Anderson and his various manipulations in film projection, superimposed images of "Yogi," (wood and steel construction) with unidentifiable faces fade in and out. Different angles and views are seen of "Yogi," as she is energized across the screen, moving from one station to another in an open field. This preliminary orientation gives rise to "Yogi" in physical presence on stage. Drums are struck, singing continues and the following praises resound in the theatre:

**"Mystical people . . .  
supernatural people . . .  
gliding through space and  
time carrying the scent of  
struggle on your features.**

**"Bird people . . . moving  
sweetly in your rhythms that  
caress your existence like  
no other creature in the  
universe. Wings sometimes  
cuttled up in a bird statue  
pose, motionless . . . as if  
you've forgotten where u  
from."**

The dancers exit, taking flight, leaping, jumping, simulating "Yogi" as she stands majestically, strong and proud. To the artist, "Yogi is a tribute to the African woman whose qualities are similar to a creature of flight more so than a bird. The head is symbolic of the masculine qualities present in the life of African women more so than in American Black women." Though this is a subjective opinion of White's, he sees it as a "positive characteristic of the African woman, for she is a flexible element of nature, capable of assuming many roles."

The artwork occupies a conceptual niche in the minds of the creator, and those who view it. The statue reflects, but also stimulates and generates thoughts.

"The bird on her head is symbolic of her oneness with nature and her relationship to the bird family for she is capable of physical and spiritual flight and her visual and physical strength is awesome. Her existence is made of the intellectual reasoning of a human plus the knowledge and instincts of the animal world topped with the ability of swift movement contained in her physical structure."

**The Sukuyan**—This welded steel and rubber piece is a bird similar to the vampire, taken from Trinidadian folklore.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY ARTHUR McGEE

**Yogi**—This wood and welded steel sculpture is a tribute to the African women whose qualities are similar to a creature of flight more so than a bird.



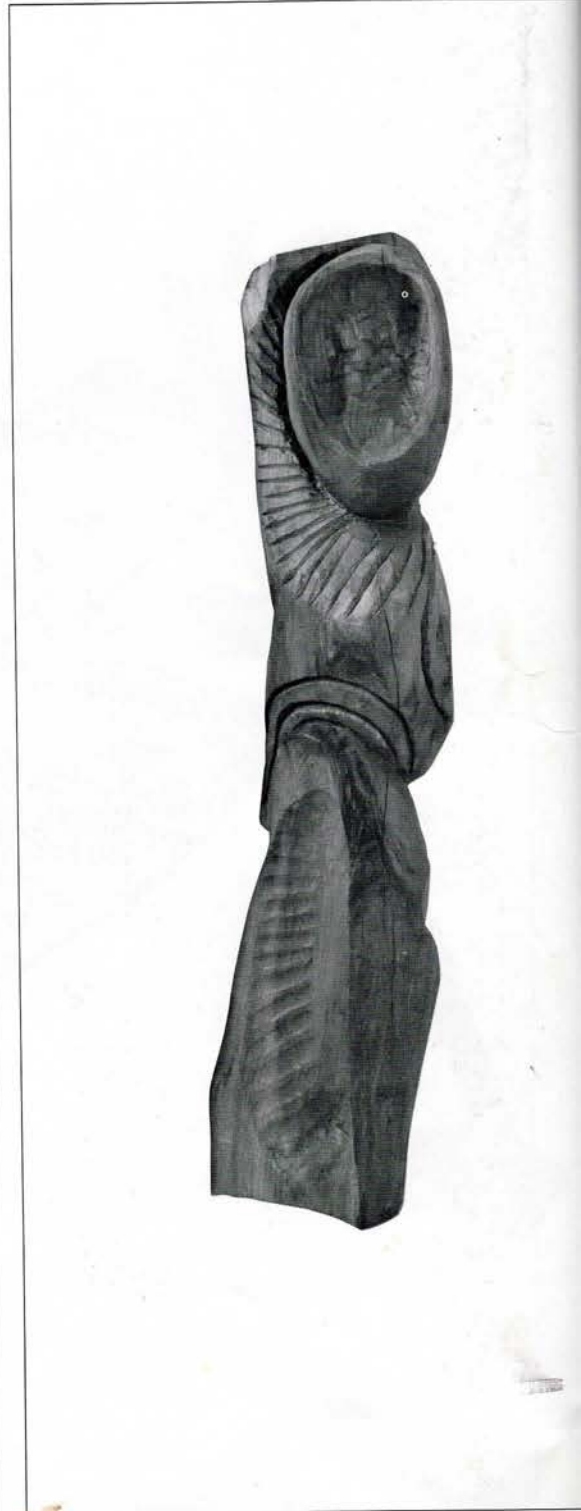


**Venus**—This wood piece reflects quiet and peaceful forms which exist in the Universe.

10



**Woman on a Sunday Morning**—Carved from a birch tree and composed of circular negative and positive areas, this sculpture suggests a ladylike stance church women seem to possess.



**D'Glo**—This rubber and welded steel sculpture represents a water serpent from Trinidadian folklore. She has the face of a very beautiful woman and long hair which is actually seaweed that she strokes with a golden comb. Men are attracted by her sweet singing and the obvious value of the comb. In pursuit of the comb, they follow her below the surface of the water where they drown. She then returns to the surface for another lustful victim.



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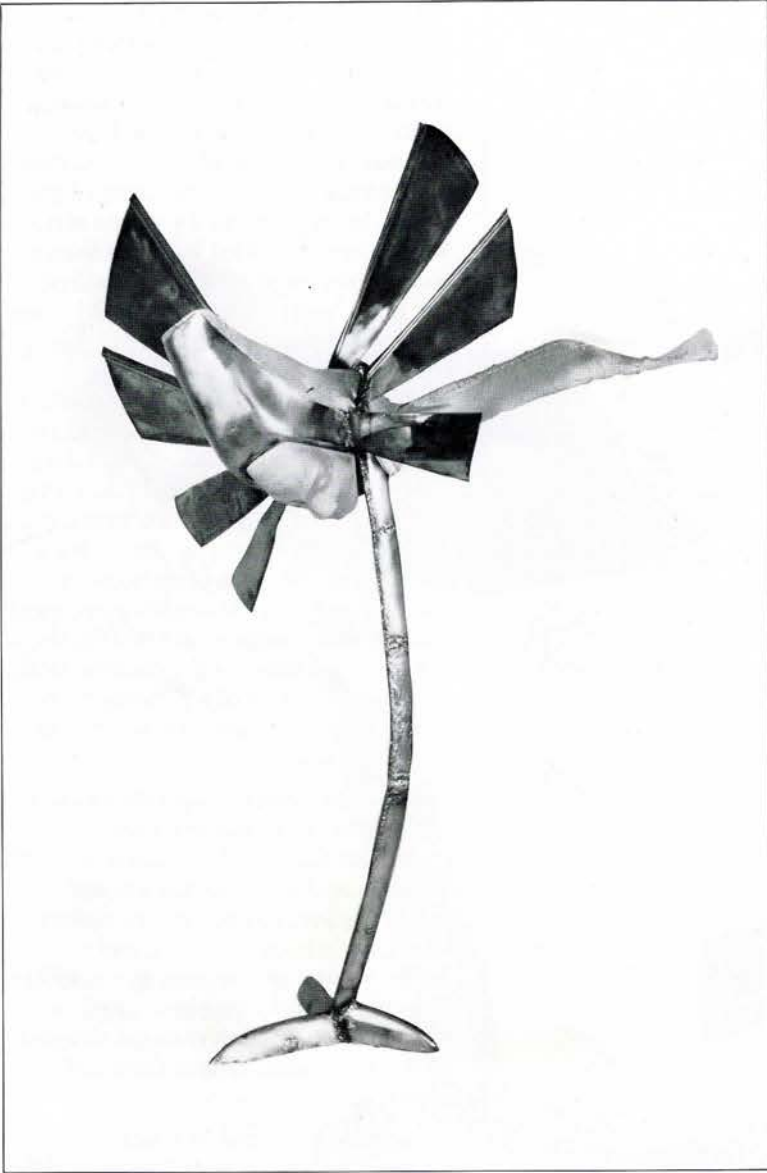
Technically the reviewer's attention is drawn to many aspects of this statue. The general form of the object and its component parts; its smooth, metallic qualities; the contrast of wood; its association and resemblance to human and animal parts; and the name of the object. In one context the statue is no longer seen as welded bumpers from a steel graveyard of an affluent society, but as an object/being that has assumed anatomical organizations, with identifiable parts. In another context, it symbolically represents male, female and bird-like attributes—the simplicity and complexity of their forms, and the consummate articulation of non-living structures. In still another context, the sculpture is no longer an object, but a concept: the creation of an 'icon,' a plastic symbol of the artist's inner most feelings and thoughts, and finally, the generic appellation of the construction becomes the name of a personage—no longer a mirage or apparition—but an effective image.

The elegant vignette superbly tailored to the gifts of Stephanie Glover, confirmed the flexible element of "Yogi," capable of assuming many roles. The superlative artistry looked smart, stylish, effervescent, and altogether worthy of attention in the future. Her choreography mirrored a look of ultimate "distillation of dance stripped to the barest essentials of form and meaning."

Drummers Tony and Michael Duncanson and Thomas Mosley furnished the audience with captivating sounds from their instruments as a range of acknowledgements were showered upon them.

**"Surfacing in our history like  
a fish coming up for air . . .  
her ugly head appears  
among the masses of our  
people. Surviving through**

**Untitled**—Rubber and welded steel.



**Untitled**—Rubber and welded steel.



**Bird Woman**—This welded steel and rubber sculpture is the product of the artist's desire to find information about the bird in its relationship to African mythology. In Africa and the Caribbean, the bird is symbolic of different societies. It is a symbol of physical and spiritual freedom, and a symbol for a new day or better days.



**time . . . existing for all eternity . . . The modern tragedy for sons and daughters of material lust. . . D'Glo! . . . D'Glo! . . . D'Glo!**

So speaks Judy Howell, a "cultural catalyst" of the Washington Metropolitan area, as she dramatically introduces "D'Glo," a sculpture construction of rubber and welded steel. In "D'Glo" a synthetic product is incorporated, representing the face and upper torso of the sculpture. Certain forms and materials, when brought into conjunction and activated in appropriate technical procedures, have the capacity to organize and concentrate the readability of an experience as we perceive it. The quality of a work (as in D'Glo) is determined by a subtle interrelationship between purity of perception and the essence of things. In this construction the articulation of rubber with a metal affords the opportunity to exploit the sensuous quality of the synthetic with the virtues of steel. Recognition of the qualities of these things; their hardness and softness, heaviness and lightness, similarities and differences, advances the sense of mystery in "D'Glo," a symbol of lust.

*FINALE:* The artist comes on stage to be with selected pieces of sculpture constructions, other participants in the production and the audience in close communion with the works and with each other.

It was a handsome and enjoyable production, a marriage of the arts for an understanding of and significance in continuing Black cultural heritage. In this context, White manifested an exquisite sensitivity to objects and experiences, structures and relationships, (in this initial production) but primarily as means to ends rather than

as ends in themselves, contrary to conventional attitudes. The evolution of a work of art did not cease when it left the artist's studio, but was embraced by the sister disciplines and the community to extend the "exalted manifestations of the human spirit."

Such an attempt to implement distinctions between ends and means and of continuous cultural stock-taking in his products, is the ultimate goal of today's Black artist. □

*The reviewer is an assistant professor of art at Howard University.*

# Black On Black Crime

By Judith S. Andrews

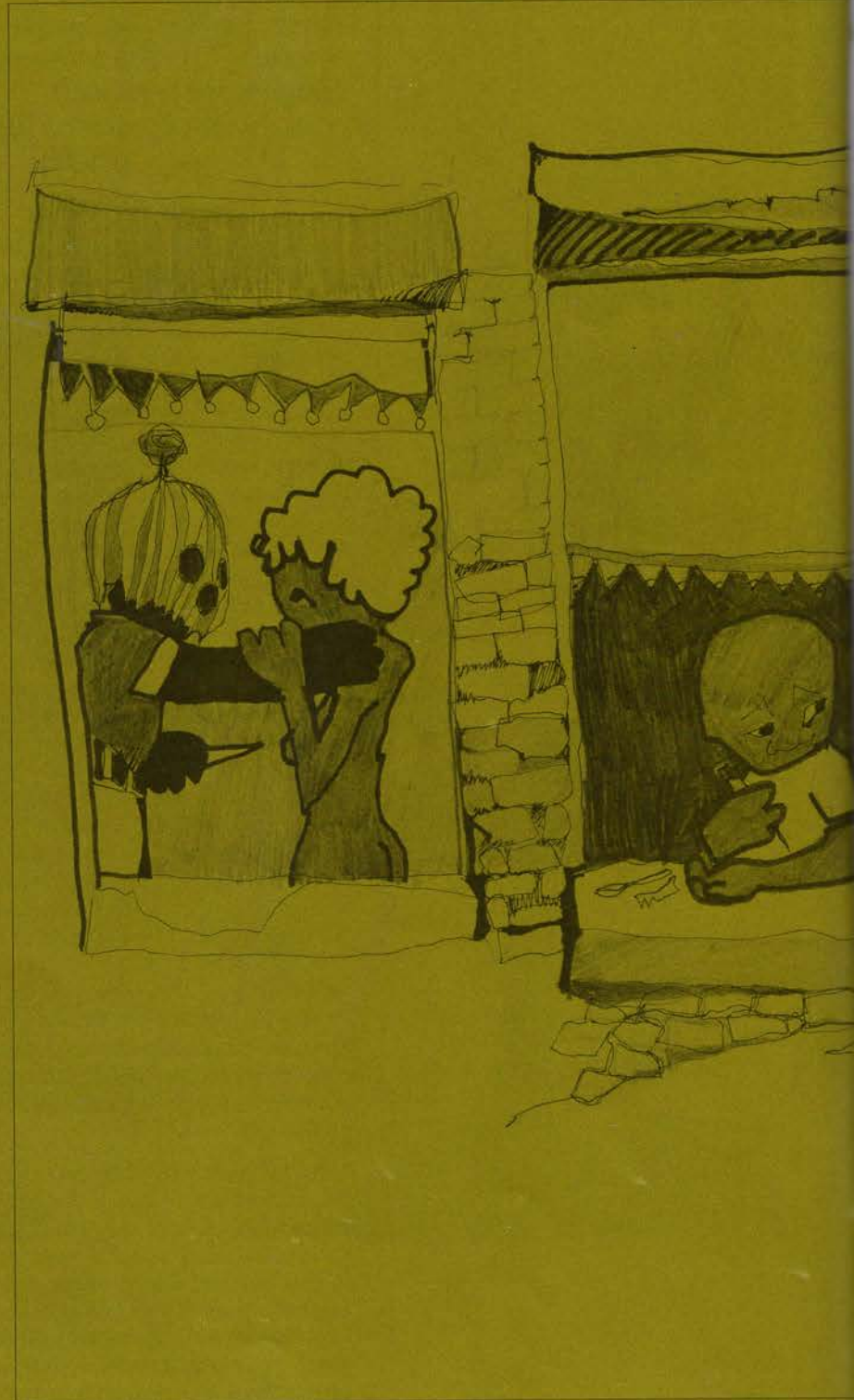


ILLUSTRATION BY MICHAEL PLATT



15

What do you say to an elderly woman whose purse has been snatched? How do you account for a drunken man who beats his wife who is in a wheelchair? Or the teacher who carries a weapon to school because of fear of assault by students; can you honestly admonish the teacher?

The answers to these questions and the theories about their causes are numerous. Most researchers quickly point out that society is at fault for the perpetuation among Blacks of self-hatred and frustration. Others stress the economic conditions of Black people and the dehumanizing effects of the capitalist system. Obviously, these explanations do little to alleviate the anguish of the swelling number of victims of Black-on-Black crime.

In the aftermath of the Watergate political scandal and the daily revelation of other "white-collar" crimes like price-fixing and tax evasion, many captious observers question the validity of discussing the violence Blacks perpetrate on each other. The argument runs like this: "Whites are ripping off this country for millions of dollars each day while we sit around and discuss stolen stereo equipment and color television sets." But human nature is such that the fear of stolen property and personal injury is more menacing to the average person than the fact that major business corporations made illegal contributions to the Nixon reelection campaign.

The dimensions of the problem of crime and violence in the Black community are complex, and unfortunately many solutions seem tenuous at best. Yet more and more Blacks are coming together to discuss the possibility of curbing the rate of crime among Blacks. One such gathering took place in June at Howard University under the auspices of the Institute for Urban Affairs and Research. The focus of the three-day conference was "Crime and Its Impact on the Black Community." More than 200 people from across the nation attended the sessions

dealing with issues ranging from new policing techniques to the need for more positive self-awareness among Blacks.

No concrete answers resulted from the conference, but one did come away with the feeling that crime was an issue of tremendous urgency that was gnawing at the patience of those who suffer most from its grip. Facts and figures tend to substantiate the anxiety.

While recent FBI statistics show an overall national increase in serious crime of 17 percent, even more unsettling for Blacks is the rate at which young Black men die.

An article by Orde Coombs in the November 3, 1974 issue of *The New York Times Magazine* reports that in Michigan, "Between 1961 and 1971, the death rate from homicides among young Black men increased by more than 230 percent. In 1971, half of all deaths among Black men from ages 15 to 44 came about through accidents and murders. If this sad state continues in Michigan, 1 out of every 8 Black men will be murdered or die in an accident. While the current projection for white men is 1 in 17; for Black women, 1 in 26; and for white women, 1 in 30."

Recent studies have shown that the death rate for young Black males is not much better in other major urban centers. A report by the Chief Medical Examiner of the District of Columbia shows that during 1973 and 1974, the Black male of age 20 to 29 was most prone to be the victim of criminal homicide. In the District of Columbia, during 1973 and 1974, and in Atlanta and Miami during 1974, the frequency for Black male homicidal victims between ages 20 and 29 exceeded all other age categories for Black men and women and white men and women. Among the 299 autopsied homicidal deaths in D. C. in 1974, 255 were Black—203 Black males.

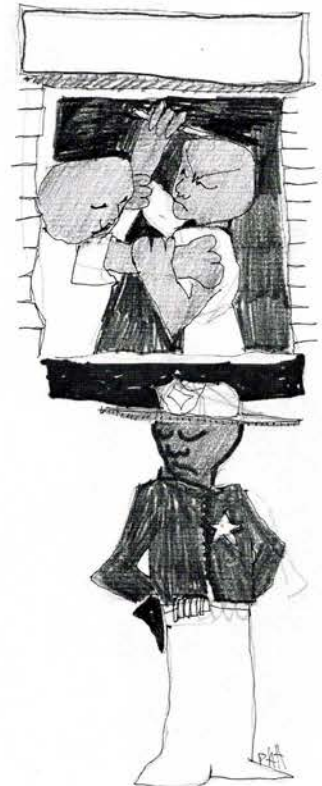
When confronted with these alarming statistics, it is readily assumed that these deaths are primarily drug-related or resulted from police brutality. And most



researchers agree that drugs and the police are major death factors among young Blacks. However, there is another important factor that is overlooked, perhaps because it stares us all in the face—alcohol abuse.

According to Dr. Frederick Harper, former fellow at the National Center for Alcohol Education, "The D. C. Chief Medical Examiner's report said that alcohol is truly a catalyst for violence of all types . . . Significant intoxication at death exists in approximately 50 percent of adult victims of homicide and accidents and in some one-third of suicides. In addition, a substantial and probably similar percentage of intoxication exists among perpetrators of fatal violence."

Harper noted that of the 299 D. C. homicides for 1974, alcohol was diagnosed in the blood of 39 percent of those victims killed by firearms; 74 percent of those killed by stabbing; and 64 percent of those killed by blunt force.



"These statistics again are typical of other urban cities and they strongly indicate that alcohol is involved in over 50 percent of homicides in the cities and that the Black male is most likely to be the victim."

Alcohol abuse seems most pernicious in that homicides and assaults are too often brought home. Anxiety and anger are exacerbated to the point that one almost unconsciously strikes out at those closest in life, perhaps a family member. These so-called "crimes of passion" predominate in the Black community.

Elsie L. Scott of the New York Commission on Racial Justice and a participant at the Howard conference said: "You probably have more to fear by going home to your husband than you do from strangers in the street." She quoted from a study which said, "the risk of injury from a violent crime involving a stranger is about half as great as the risk of injury from a non-stranger violent crime."



Scott's research, like Harper's and others in the criminal justice field, is replete with data which prove or disprove some point or another. However, this reliance on statistics is perhaps one of the more perplexing ironies of crime research for Blacks. The problem simply put is this: Black researchers must satisfy a data-happy society by using figures to support their theories but at the same time they must often look askance at the very sources of the figures.

"The *FBI Uniform Crime Reports* serve as the foremost authority for police departments and many private citizens in spite of all the criticism that has been given of the reports," Scott said. "The crimes included in the reports are murder, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny and auto theft . . . crimes usually associated with Black, poor and racial minority persons."

Several researchers at the conference said that police statistics have to be ques-

tioned because of the frequent misuse of data to support either the hiring of additional policemen or the acquisition of additional funds to support crime fighting.

As one example of this statistical abuse, Scott cited the case of the head of the New York Transit Police who was forced to resign after confessing that he ordered his subordinates to falsify reports to make his department look better.

The concern of Blacks over the abuses of statistics is not of recent vintage. In 1900 Blacks gathered at the Fourth Hampton Negro Conference to discuss the same question, according to Dr. Lenwood G. Davis, assistant professor of Black Studies at Ohio State University. He spoke of a speech given at that meeting by John Henry Smyth who was then superintendent of the Virginia Reformatory.

"The speaker (Smyth) made a significant observation when he stated that in the discussion of the criminality of the Negro too much importance was attached to mere statistics," he said.

"In any discussion of an ethical character mere statistics may not be relied upon," Dr. Davis said. He suggested that the only way to play the statistics game is for more Black researchers to compile their own data and delve more deeply for accurate interpretation of the facts compiled by others.

Even in 1900, Blacks were asking the same question that continually reared its head at Howard's 1975 Conference: "What is to be done?"

In Coomb's article, he phrased the question this way: "What can be done? How in this time of vaunted equality can the pathologies of the ghettos be lessened? How long will middle class Blacks and whites put up with being held captive in their cities: When will the vigilantism of "Death Wish," the current popular movie which stars Charles Bronson as a liberal-turned avenger, become an accepted part of our city-scape?"

Indeed, vigilantism is one of the many means Blacks have employed to fight crime in their communities, particularly in

areas where police confidence is low. And in some cities, police have encouraged the organization of tenant patrols and block patrols. An innovative example of this is a community in New York where block residents carry whistles and blow them at the sight of any abnormal happenings on the streets. A visitor from Detroit—described as the "Murder Capital" of America—said it is not uncommon to see signs in some residential areas saying: "This Block Protected by Private Police."

Most of the conferees agreed that the least acceptable method of combatting crime in Black communities is the cry for more repressive police measures. This is left to the advocacy of the "law-and-order" types, both Black and white. The Black community has had its fill of police shooting down bicycle thieves and arbitrarily stopping Black men as robbery suspects. On the other hand, it seems that many Black residents are tired of sleepless nights and triple-locked doors. □



# How well do you Write?

## Some Implications Of Teaching Composition

By Rudolph L. Brathwaite

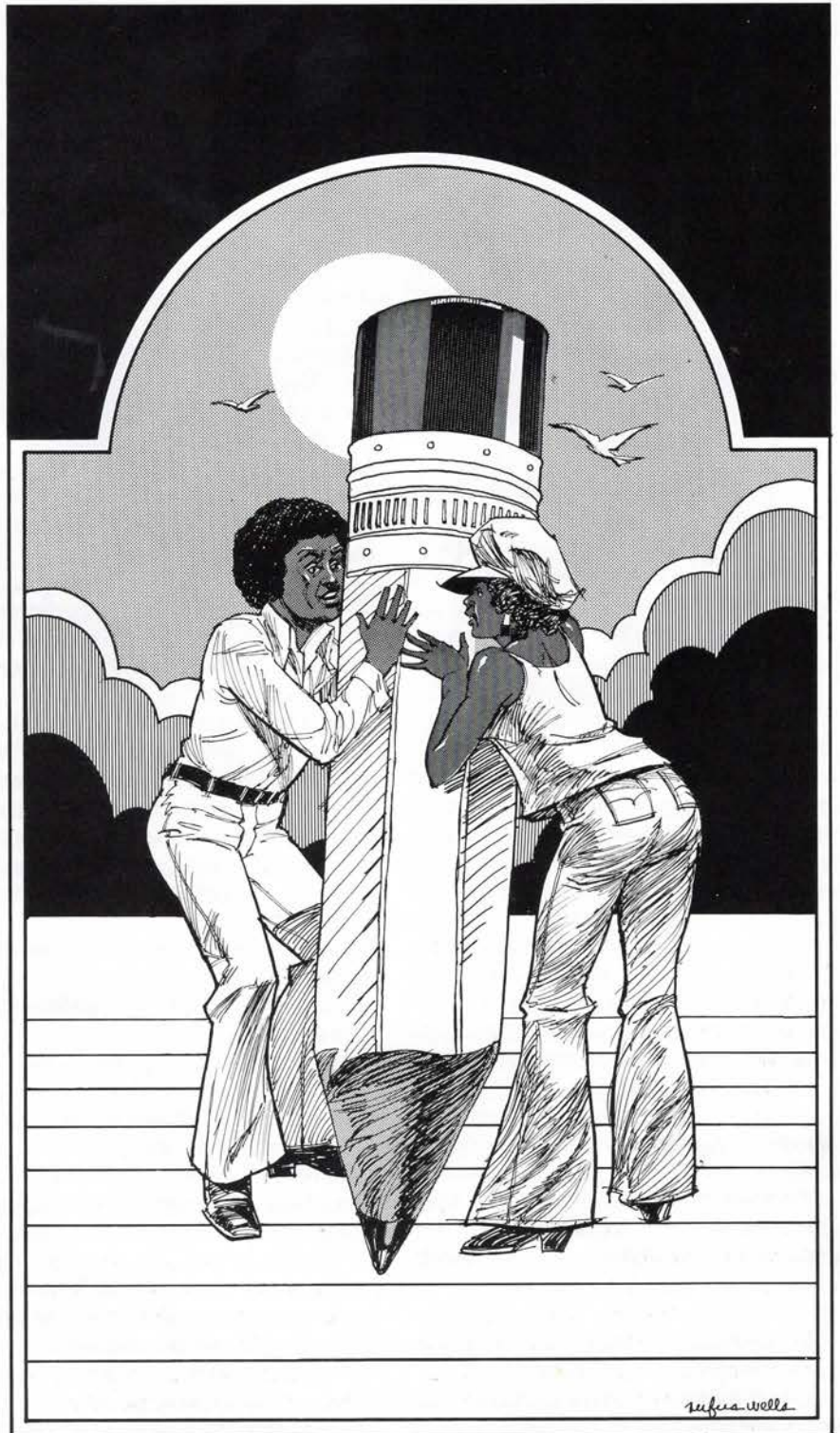


ILLUSTRATION BY RUFUS WELLS

The problems of writing have been a central focal point on many university campuses. This is clearly demonstrated in the number of "mini" courses offered in composition, in the grave expressions of college administrators about the standard of English at their institutions, and in the spate of text books written in an effort to tackle writing problems.

It has been argued that the modern tendency to promote the watching of television at the expense of the reading of books has been a primary contributory factor to the decline of writing skills. Another argument is that the turn towards the purely "literary" view of composition (that is, the teaching of composition through literature) has also influenced this decline; that the traditional method of emphasizing grammar as an inevitable constituent of the teaching of composition was sacrificed with resultant disadvantages to the student.

Whatever the causes of writing deficiencies, no instructor of English—indeed, no instructor in any discipline—can ignore the problem.

One often wonders whether the growing interest in poetry is not symptomatic of the students' disenchantment with prose composition. At Howard University, an increasing number of students are turning to the writing of experimental poetry. On the surface of it, this ought to be an encouraging sign. It may be that such students believe that poetry provides them with the opportunity for introspection, that it has a liberating influence not found in prose composition. Yet poetry, if it is to be genuine, is just as demanding as—perhaps even more so than—prose composition.

The flowering of this poetic sense must not be stifled, but then the virtues of prose composition must be equally emphasized for we live in an essentially prose environment. An obvious implication for the instructor of composition—and for those in the humanities in general—is to utilize this zeal for poetry in the enhancing of prose writing.

As Coleridge in his *Biographia Literaria* points out, a poem contains "the same elements as a prose composition," the only difference being in the combination of these elements in keeping with the differences in purpose. A poem, after all, is made up of words, syntax, sound—in short, of many of the elements inherent in prose composition. There is no reason why the instructor of composition cannot attempt to quicken the student's appreciation of prose composition through poetry. It ought to be remembered that much of the aesthetic pleasure derived from a poem resides in its syntactic combinations.

Viewed in this light, poetry can be a useful auxiliary of prose. The student, of course, should never be allowed to view the writing of poetry as an escape from the writing of prose composition. The characteristics of such "escape" poetry are rather obvious: the writer, under the guise of what he/she calls "invention," abandons all principles of grammar, diction, rhetoric, syntax, etc. and concocts a piece which only he/she can interpret; there is no rule of composing except the writer's own. Such a view of poetry cannot amount to much, and will surely not help in the understanding of prose composition. Therefore, instructors of composition by skillfully emphasizing those elements in poetry that are akin to prose composition can do much to promote the level of writing.

But even if instructors succeed in amalgamating these, as far as possible, they will still have much work to do. It seems, more and more, instructors will have to turn to a semantic view of writing. By this it is meant that instructors will have to move beyond sentences that are grammatically satisfying to a sharper analysis of word implication.

A knowledge of the semantic possibilities of verbs, for example, will enable instructors to define with greater precision such terms as "awkwardness," "weak diction," and "illogical." It seems that very many of the errors so labeled spring from a misapplication of verbs. For example:

"Stricter gun control laws will *select* to whom guns are distributed."

Although this may be one of the grosser errors of this nature, such sentences are not uncommon. Why is this an incorrect sentence? The answer is usually that "laws cannot 'select,'" that the diction is "awkward," or that the sentence is "illogical." And why? The answer to the second question is much more difficult. The problem becomes more complex when it is seen that if "dictate" is substituted for "select," the sentence is acceptable. Both verbs, "select" and "dictate," are used with a personified subject, and yet one cannot be used. Quite clearly, there is something intrinsic in the make-up of the verbs that make one of them accept "laws" as subject and the other reject it.

The peculiarities of verbs, how they react in certain sentences, what words they accommodate, and how they influence the total meaning of the sentence—all these provide a useful study.

Sometime in the future, there will be a need of a grammar of semantics to which students can turn. This approach will go a long way towards solving writing problems. □

*The writer is an instructor in English at Howard University.*

***"The mills of the gods grind slowly, but they grind exceedingly small."***

## **Don't Get Mad . . . Get Smart**

**By Dr. Benjamin L. Hooks**  
Commissioner  
Federal Communications Commission

*The following was excerpted from Commissioner Hooks' address at the 107th Commencement of Howard University, May 10, 1975.*

Dr. Charles Beard, one of the eminent historians of our time, was once asked this question by a reporter: "After many years and a life time devoted to the study of history, would you be able to tell our readers what has been the result of your study?" It is said that Dr. Beard replied: "It would perhaps take me two weeks to sum-up what history has taught." The reporter pulled out his notebook. As they were talking, Dr. Beard said: "No! Maybe I can sum it up in about four expressions or secular proverbs. And these four things perhaps sum-up the totality of what I've learned across these years of my study of history."

The four things that Dr. Beard gave the reporter were: 1) The mills of the gods grind slowly, but they grind exceedingly small. 2) Whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad. 3) The bee, the ordinary honeybee that you see in your back yard, fertilizes the flower that it robs. 4) When it is dark enough, you can see the stars.

I would like to take those four expressions very briefly and use them as a basis for whatever message I might have—and couple it with this expression from the Old Testament: "Where there is no vision, the people perish."

In 1976 we will be celebrating the 200th anniversary of the founding of this country. We remember in the hot and sultry summer of a Philadelphia summertime that those people who had gathered to record for history their reasons for trying to establish a separate nation.

Being aware of the necessity of recording for posterity their reasons, they decided to write their reasons. And they had drafted Thomas Jefferson, the young Virginia lawyer to get together the first draft, and they had debated over it. And the words from the Preamble of that Declaration are words that I suppose should still strike admiration in our hearts today so far as they are concerned, because they started us on a great adventure.

"We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

Even today I can find nothing wrong with the words. The problem is that the nation, since those words were written, has not had the vision or the will and the purpose to make them really true. Because if we were to be fair today, we would have to say 200 years after those words were first to hit the air that the problem of making the idea of equality a reality is still a dream. And that Blacks and minorities, and to a great extent women, have never received the blessings of what that Preamble said. Even though it was a great dream and a great vision—it still is—you and I must decide in this year whether or not we will in fact be able to make that vision come true.

We read of the many things that happen in our world; we see in Boston, the cradle of liberty, the debate over school busing. Even though some of us knew it all the time, the question whether you were down South or up South didn't really matter, because all of this country is inflicted with a racial virus and hatred.

When I hear people talk about the concept of neighborhood schools, those of us who were raised in the South must remember when we walked by many white schools to get to the Black schools;

when we were bused by white schools or when we had to run by white schools; and you didn't hear people talking about the neighborhood school concept in those days. The sanctity and the sacredness of that idea did not become apparent until Black folk presented themselves at the neighborhood school and all of a sudden the neighborhood school became very important. But I tell you today, my brothers and sisters, "The mills of the gods may grind slowly, but they do grind exceedingly small." We have sowed the wind; we are now reaping the whirlwind.

Last year this time, or just a few months ago—and I do not wish to be vindictive or make fun of those who have fallen from power—but who can help but remember the arrogance of those who recently held national power, as they schemed and plotted. And if you would go into the loneliness of San Clemente today, or go into jails and prisons all over this country, you would have to say: "The mills of the gods may grind slowly, but they do grind exceedingly small."

The second thing I would bring to your attention, "Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad." I lived in this country all of my life. I went back to Memphis, Tennessee to practice law in 1949. So I know first hand the agonies of discrimination and segregation. I practiced law in a courthouse where I could not drink from every water fountain but only "colored water." I had to use separate restrooms. But in the midst of all of that, I began to realize that if I got mad I really wouldn't be able to make it. So the question was not *getting mad*, but *getting smart*. And I think that God gave unto us Martin Luther King, Jr. as a modern prophet just as surely as he gave Moses to the children of Israel. Dr. King tried to leave a message with us that there was a better way than hatred and getting mad. For many of you who are graduating today, you young people who are full of vitality and energy, this

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROLAND L. FREEMAN



Dr. Benjamin L. Hooks

seems like something that is out of date. But I would like to take just a minute to say that I have seen the power that Dr. King talked about working—not at the "Red Sea" but in Jackson, Mississippi, Albany, Georgia, and Birmingham, Alabama. I was at the funeral of Medgar Evers and I saw the deputy sheriffs and the policemen and the National Guard, and every other white man they could deputize with pistols and rifles and shotguns; and dogs of every kind and description, telling us we could not go any further. I saw young Blacks armed with nothing but the power of the truth singing: "We Shall Overcome, make those men get up from their rifles and march back."

There is a power in this world that transcends that which we can see, feel, hear and touch with our natural senses. But when Dr. King died, many of us got mad and thought we could resort to shotguns and pistols, knives and force. As I looked at many schools and colleges, I got upset with this. But you know, I have to say this to you today at the risk of being unpopular, if you really want to have a revolution, you're not going to accomplish it wearing "nob-hill shoes" and drinking J&B (Scotch). You've got to really settle down if you

want to do your thing. I like to also remind you that a warfare is not like "Gunsmoke." You can't shoot all day without reloading, and reloading involves having some bullets as well as some pistols. We cannot, it seems to me, win mad and angry.

**"The bee fertilizes the flower that it robs."**

The great thing that I have seen happening across this country—and I see it at Howard—I've seen young people not getting mad but getting smart, and understanding that if you want to take over this world, you've got to know how to run it when you take it over. That's marvelous and I am with you on learning the history of the Nile River and the Swahilian dialect, but let us not forget how to keep the lights on and the buses running as we learn all of these other things. I see from your faces and from your minds a new determination to get smart and to learn some real sense so that you can help to remake and reshape this world. And say to white folk, "don't come down but get over because we are on our way; we've got something to work with." I will trust that you will not get angry, you will not get mad, but you will get smart.

"The bee fertilizes the flower which it robs."

When I read that statement, it seems to me—and I have to say to you—that one of the damning and besetting sins of Negroes in this country (I said Negroes not Black folk) has been our inability to understand that if we "make it" we owe something to those who are behind. Let me challenge the graduates of Howard who are going out to teach and practice medicine and law, dentistry, pharmacy and nursing—whatever you are—remember that you owe something to those young Blacks who are still in the sweltering heat of the ghetto where there is too little for too many. Don't become

**“Don’t forget where you came from . . .”**

big so fast that you forget where you came from.

Remember what your mothers and fathers did without so that you might have; they stood back so that you might go forward. During your formative years, some of these Black mothers have labored in kitchens and done domestic work. They were determined to get you an education, and when you come out you owe something to all of the Black and white brothers and sisters who are still struggling in an environment where they don’t have enough. And if God should help you make it, please don’t forget where you came from, and where you might have to go back if you’re not careful.

One of the things we have to watch, and I see it now and then . . . When I was a judge on the bench in Shelby County (Tennessee) and was meeting with the dignitaries in the power structure of the city, they would often come to me and say: “Judge, if all of your folk were just like you, there wouldn’t be any trouble.” But I knew they were lying. It is a great temptation to succumb to. On the cocktail circuits of Washington . . . the good steak circuits of Washington (you know a Baptist preacher can’t talk about cocktails much but we can talk about chickens and steaks and all those things that have died so that we might live) they keep trying to entice and entrance you with what you could be if you forget momentarily that you are Black. But if I look back and remember, I am not the Federal Communications Commissioner simply because the President wanted a Black man or because the Senate decided to confirm one; I am on that Commission because Black people all over this country raised enough hell to get me there. If I have any obligation, it is to you and not to anybody else.

I shall never be satisfied until we are

able to portray the totality of Black and minority life in this nation. When you look at television, remember this: by the time our children reach the age of 18 they would have spent more time watching television and listening to radio than they would have spent in the public school system. They are shaped by the sights and images that they see. And what do they see? Do they see the Jim Cheeks, the prestigious intellectual scholars who are trying to horn the fine edge of the best of our youth? Do they see our best colleges and universities? Do they see our great lawyers and doctors? Do they see that or do they see only the criminal people who have done something that they considered to be wrong—the bizarre, the unusual, those who have gone berserk?

In Washington, when the Congressional Black Caucus presented Edward Brooke (senator from Massachusetts) and Maynard Jackson (mayor of Atlanta) before 3,000 people who had paid a \$100 a plate; when more than 500 elected Black officials from all over this nation came, national television didn’t have one minute to say anything about it. But when two desperate Black men took over the D.C. Jail, television found time to tell that story. When Dr. Dorothy Height of the National Council of Negro Women unveiled a statute to Dr. Mary Bethune, one of the greatest women (and I didn’t say Black women) who ever lived and who happened to be Black; an adviser to four Presidents, who rose from the darkness and obscurity of the recent post-slavery era to become the president of a great college . . . when they erected a statute to her, the first statute erected for a Black on public grounds in this country, national television didn’t have a minute to cover that story. When the NAACP or the Urban League meet, you never see that on television. But when a desperate young man got on top of a hotel in New Orleans and started shooting, they interrupted every news and entertainment program to talk about it.

I tell you that our young people—our children—are being shaped by what they see. You and I have the obligation, but since I am in that position, my pledge to you is that I shall use every lawful means at my command to try to change that picture so that the totality of Black life can be presented.

When they talk about double digit inflation I don’t want them only to have those who have Ph.D. degrees but get some of the mothers who live on welfare who can take a dollar and make it ten dollars and let them tell you how to meet the threat of inflation because they know from first hand experience. And while I like to see our stars of the basketball world and our great singing stars have all of the time that they deserve on television, I also want them to see the people who come from the universities and colleges who are slaving in the vineyards of this country to make it responsive to the poor and the dispossessed. And I shall keep on telling that story at the risk of being misunderstood and called the “One Issue Commissioner.” In other words, I’m going to fight until hell freezes over.

Those of us who have come up through the agony of many years of experience during the Depression and hard times and good times, know something of this suffering. And even though you are young, if you should live but a few more years, you will know something about the darkness in your life, midnights when you cannot sleep, an itch that you can’t scratch, a tear that you can’t stop. But I would like to suggest to you that God today is still on the throne.

After 50 years of living in this world and having all kinds of experiences, I believe there is a God who rules above with a hand of power and a heart full of love; and somehow if we are right, he will fight our battles.

When I see those of us who talk about Black power, I believe in it, when I hear

those of us who talk about Black pride and our heritage, I believe in it, when I hear those of us who talk about Black is beautiful, I believe in it. I want to tell you that Black being beautiful is more than a handshake, it's the quality of the soul, a reality of life. And if you do all that talking about blackness and then have to look for the book to sing the Black National Anthem, I count you out. And I would like to say that I am not a Black separatist; I recognize that this is an integrated university, my heart has been cleansed of hatred, and in spite of all the things that I have had to endure, I think Black and white together we shall overcome some day. So I believe in white allies, those who are willing to join with us in this fight.

When I practiced law in Memphis, it was a strange thing about the courthouse. In the criminal court, there were white judges, white juries, white prosecutors, white defense lawyers. Everything in the courthouse was white except the second row, and that was Black defenders on their way to jail and the penitentiary. So we decided that we ought to have some (Black) public defenders. After a great deal of agitation, I was appointed assistant public defender and served for a number of years.

One day the man who headed the office came and said the legislators have appropriated enough money to have two public defenders in each courtroom. I thought that was fine. He said *another lawyer* will be in charge of the courtroom. I didn't think that was so good but I held my peace until I could get back to the office and find out who the lawyer was. I found out that the lawyer who would take charge of the courtroom was a young white lawyer who had finished law school a scant six months before and had never tried a case in anybody's court in his entire life.

At that time I had been practicing law for 15 years and had tried every kind of case you could think of. But because he

was white and I was Black he would be in charge, I would be his assistant. Not only that, he would be making more money than I was making, and have a secretary. To be frank with you, I didn't get angry about it—I got MAD. I got so mad that when I went home to tell my wife about it I found words coming out of my mouth that I thought I had forgotten after my military days.

Even though I was a Baptist preacher, when I got down that night to pray I couldn't pray at all. Every time I tried to pray I saw that man's face telling me I couldn't be in charge. This is why I can understand why people sometimes want to bomb or destroy. Had I had my way, I would have gotten some dynamite or gasoline and burned down the courthouse. That's precisely how I felt. But something kept saying there must be a better way. You can't tell folk in the pulpit on Sunday that God would fight your battles, that he will protect you, if your don't believe it. And you're not the first Black person to whom that has happened. There have been hundreds, thousands and even millions of Black folk who have trained white folk and ended up being the stock boy when their trainees became the stock clerk; and finally the managers. Maybe God wanted me to have that bitter experience to enable me to better understand the bitterness that people feel. I kept on trying until I prayed and then I sat down and wrote a nice letter of resignation in which I pointed out all the reasons why I couldn't serve under those conditions.

A few weeks after I had resigned, the Governor of the state called me at my office and asked me if I wanted to be a judge. This was almost unheard of. But when I consented, I shall not forget that on the first day of September 1965 in that very courtroom where I could not be the chief public defender, I put on a Black robe, raised my right hand and swore to uphold the laws of the State of Tennessee and the United States of America.

***"When it is dark enough, you can see the stars."***

There were old people crying and weeping because they never expected to see this day come in their life time. There were young people rejoicing. There were flowers everywhere. The room was cleared and I went back to my chambers and was getting ready to relax. The bailiff knocked on the door and said, "Judge"—I hardly recognized the title—"you've got to go to work, you have court today." I replied, "court today? I just got started." He said, "but you've got a lot to do."

When I opened the door, it happened for me what I had been hearing all those years: "Hear ye!, hear ye!, hear ye!, this honorable criminal court, division of Shelby County, Tennessee, is now open for business . . . the Honorable Benjamin L. Hooks presiding . . ." There I sat with my gavel and my black robe on. And as God would have it, paradoxical as it may seem, but truthful I tell you, the very first lawyer who stood before me and said "Your honor please" was that same lawyer who told me I couldn't be the chief public defender. I tell you, "When it is dark enough, you can see the stars." □

# The 'Soul' Handshake

By Joan Curl Elliott

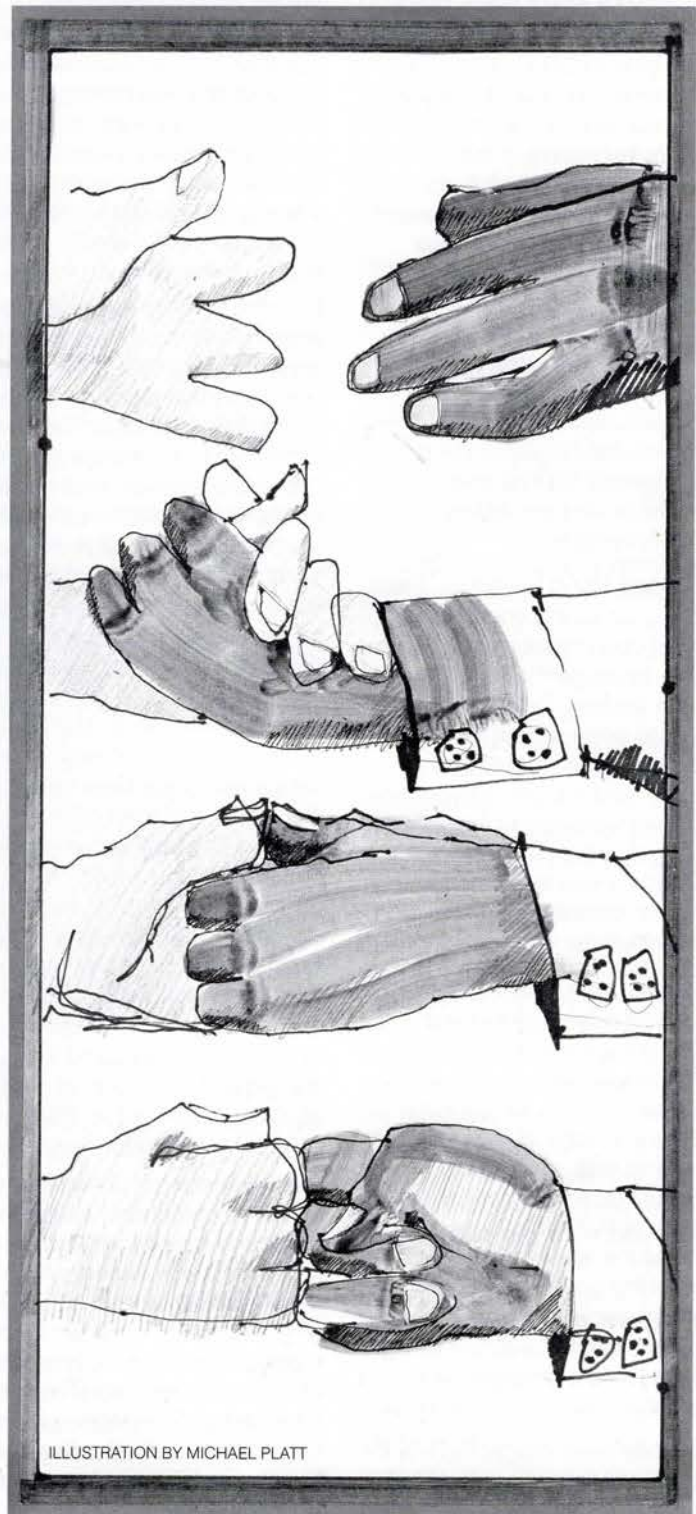
24

The hand is especially constructed to grasp hold of objects, to make gestures and delicate motions, or to touch and feel things. The human hand also helps people to communicate with each other—as in the sign language of North American Indians or that of deaf persons. In these complex sign languages, gestures and positions of the hand and fingers represent words or phrases. On a simpler level, hands convey familiar expressions and ideas. Popular examples include the clenched fist of anger, the raised palm of peace, thumbs down for disapproval or hitchhiking. Men greet each other in various manners, but one way is to shake the hand. A simple handshake, for instance, is used in greeting, in bidding farewell, or in sealing a bargain.

For centuries Africans on the continent have used various handshakes as part of their culture. In front of a tribal chief, the African cups his hands and makes an applause. To show respect to an elder, the African uses the "regular" handshake with his right arm, but places his left hand midway on his right arm. The African handshake consists of shaking hands with the right hands and shifting the grip to the thumb. Black Americans have taken this handshake and added additional motions.

Since the rise of fraternal organizations, such as the Elks, The Knights of Pythias, The Eastern Star, in the early twenties, Black Americans had secret handshakes to identify members of the group. With the rise of Black sororities (1919) and fraternities at Howard University, students introduced secret handshakes for identification among fraternity or sorority members. As the sororities and fraternities spread to other Black colleges in the United States, these greetings and handshakes were made good-naturedly and warmly.

Blacks in large cities began to devise other forms of handshakes in the urban centers during the fifties. In the sixties, when the wave of sit-ins hit the country, Blacks became even more conscious of self.



The role of the Black in the United States affected his dance, his concept of self (color and hair), his speech, and his diet. This effect continued as Blacks developed distinctive handshakes among themselves. In Selma, Alabama, Stokely Carmichael clenched his fist and shouted "Black Power." The clenched fist, to whites, represented revolt, aggression, rebellion and danger; to Blacks it symbolized unity, solidarity and togetherness.

In the fifties Black soldiers were shipped to Korea and Vietnam. Feelings of loneliness, homesickness and isolation overwhelmed the soldiers in foreign wars. Black soldiers, overjoyed at seeing someone from their home state or town, expressed emotions in their handshakes. Because of the severity of the homesickness, soldiers were glad to see any Black face because it symbolized home and roots. As they found comradeship with other Blacks, soldiers developed many greetings and handshakes to greet each other. The handshake revealed a lot of creativity as any other art form. These flashy, involved, and showy handshakes were literally dances with the hands, fingers and arms. In the fifties and sixties, soldiers in the "boondocks" or "rice paddies" of Vietnam, Thailand and Cambodia had plenty of time and little activity. To take up time in the fields, the soldiers created variations of the handshakes. Each company or platoon had its distinct handshake which served to identify members of the group. After preparation, invention and creation of the handshakes, the soldiers took pride in them as a choreographer of new dance patterns. At first the soldiers began with the common Black expression, "Give me some skin!" or "Give me five!" The two acquaintances would mutually slap hands. The handshake added bumping hips, hitting the elbows, hitting knuckles, and interlocking the thumbs. Since the military reflected the dominant American culture, there was little fraternization between the races. Few Blacks associated with whites and looked with disdain on those who did.

Whites for the most part found comradeship among their own. Hence the development of the involved handshake remained a Black phenomena. As whites reacted negatively to the Black handshakes, the more complicated they became.

Most of the handshakes represented a combination of different motions: The "Pound" is made when the person hits the fist of another with his fist to the left back, to the right side and to the front three times. The "Blood Knock" means to ball the fist together and hit fist on top of each other. The "Thumb Lock" means that each person locks his hand around the other's thumb, makes a firm grip while clutching the whole hand. "Give me five" indicates what it says. The knuckles are bent and the fingers on one person are laid on the other. The five fingers slowly fall into place of the other's fingers. Then the person brushes his hand against the back of the other. While stating, "Give me some skin," the person holds out the palms of the hands and one person slaps his hands in the other's. Comedian Flip Wilson introduced his guests on his weekly TV show with variations of a handshake. He actually styled his own personal handshake.

Perhaps the most popular of the handshakes is the "Dap." It begins with a combination of the regular handshake, the "Blood Knock" and the "Pound." After these motions the person kisses his fingers and points to his lips, mind, heart; touches the hand of the other softly, puts the hand in the other and rocks the hands back and forward. These handshakes originated with Black soldiers, sailors and marines. Within the Armed Forces, each group created a version of the "Dap." As members of the servicemen moved from Korea, Thailand, Vietnam, Italy and Germany, they found variations of the "Dap" at their new bases. In the military the race problem arising from color is exacerbated by the private handshakes. The whites resented the new shakes of the Blacks and considered them as rebellious. The Blacks accused

the whites of repression on all levels. As the members of the Armed Forces returned home, the handshakes spread in the Black community all over the country.

One of the few positive elements which evolve from the life in a racist society is the solidification of group identity. Notwithstanding class differences, Blacks love each other and move toward each other in an all-white or all-Oriental-situation. The "soul handshake" communicates the unity and togetherness in a foreign or native situation. If a communicant gives another a "regular handshake," then this means that the two persons are not necessarily on the same "frequency." The "regular" handshake gives the appearance of a "stuffshirt" or a noncommunicant. However, if the communicant moves into the "soul handshake" then these motions indicate that these two persons can "rap" (talk) on subjects which affect the Black community sympathetically. □

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## Books

26

### Black Star: A View of the Life and Times of Kwame Nkrumah

By Basil Davidson  
F. Praeger Publishers, New York  
225 pp., \$7.95

Reviewed by K. Pobbi-Asamani

Among the various literature on the late Kwame Nkrumah, Basil Davidson's book reflects the most valuable contribution to Nkrumah's philosophy of life, leadership, and understanding of the real political world. This book depicts Nkrumah's personality as an ordinary person—not necessarily as former Prime Minister or President of the Republic of Ghana.

It did not take very long after independence for Nkrumah to realize that foreign policy may also be used to promote the goals and objectives of the independence struggle. Unfortunately, the division of independent Africa into rival blocks had been affected by the conditions of the cold-war which highlighted a demand for the objective and rationality for the achievement of African unity. To some extent the realities of independence provided a fertile ground for this ideological dispute. Independence also articulated the balkanization of Africa by Europeans and subsequently led to economic dependence.

Historically, the early days of the European common market and the Treaty of Rome made former French overseas territories associate members of the European Economic Community. Nkrumah raised his concern against this emerging phenomenon of colonialism, because he believed it was based on the principle of breaking up former large united colonial territories into a number of small states—non-viable states incapable of independent development and ones that must rely on the former imperial power for defense

and even internal security (Nkrumah, *Neo-Colonialism* London: 1965 pxiii).

Davidson's book points out that Nkrumah's thoughts on non-alignment were based on co-operation with all states, whether they be capitalist, socialist, or have mixed economy. Because such a policy allowed for the coexistence of diverse ideologies in private and public sectors of the economy, it also involved foreign investment from capitalist countries in accordance with a national plan drawn up by the host government.

Nkrumah's political ideology contained three important elements: 1) European states divided Africa in their own interests, and continued the process after independence; 2) this left many African states with the appearance of independence, made them vulnerable to neo-colonial manipulation and control; 3) it is not necessary to accept this state of dependence. He saw neo-colonialism as imperialism at its most dangerous stage and thus a policy of non-alignment as the only solution for Africans to control their own development and break away from the vicious circle of neo-colonialism. Nkrumah further states "neo-colonialism is also the worst imperialism. . . . For those who practice it, it means power without responsibility and for those who suffer from it, it means exploitation without redress." He postulated that to break this vicious circle . . . the solution is African unity.

Some scholars of African political development may be tempted to characterize Nkrumah's thoughts and writings as fashioned after Marxist-Leninist interpretation of history and society. The fact is, he perceived himself as an ideological leader of Africans in order to gain the position of a populist political hero among African political leaders.

Davidson's book, therefore, is a valuable contribution to the political literature

on Africa in general and in promoting better understanding of Nkrumah's views on political ideology, economic organization and international cooperation. □

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### Faculty Tenure

A Report and Recommendations by the Commission on Academic Tenure in Higher Education.  
276 pp., \$8.75

Reviewed by Charles E. Donegan

Few issues in higher education burn with a greater intensity than does that of tenure with its virtual guarantee of life time contracts. The concept of tenure is under strong attack; many of its critics argue that it should be completely abolished.

In 1971, the Association of American Colleges (AAC) and the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), created the Commission on Academic Tenure as a separate, autonomous unit. The Commission was financed by a grant from the Ford Foundation. The Commission's task was to design and carry out its independent program of investigation and report directly to the academic community and the general public. *Faculty Tenure* presents the views solely of the Commission and not those of the AAC or AAUP.

The mandate of the Commission was to consider how the tenure system operates in higher education, to evaluate recent criticisms of academic tenure, consider alternatives to tenure presently in effect or proposed for adoption and to recommend changes or improvements in the system if it should be retained. The Commission completed its work in June 1972.

This book consists of seven sections which are divided into three parts. Part one, Current Status And Recommendations For The Future, contains sections on academic tenure, present and future. Part two, Special Topics, deals with academic tenure in America and includes a historical essay by Walter P. Metzger, professor of history at Columbia University; legal dimensions of tenure by Victor G. Rosenblum, professor of law at Northwestern University, and faculty unionism and tenure by William F. McHugh, professor of law at The American University. Part three, Supporting Documents, contains sections on academic tenure and contract systems; faculty attitudes and tenure; plus an appendix reprinting the 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure, a glossary of terms; selected bibliography; guide to recommendations and an index.

Some of the arguments most often made against tenure are:

- Since academic freedom must be assured to all teachers, academic tenure cannot be essential to academic freedom. What is essential is academic due process.
- Tenure imposes a rigid financial burden upon institutions.
- The tenure system, especially in times of recession, reduces the institution's capacity to recruit and retain younger faculty. This makes it difficult for new entrants into the profession such as minority group members and women.
- Tenure by ensuring permanent appointments, promotes mediocrity and "deadwood" and makes it extremely difficult for an institution to remove an incompetent or irresponsible faculty member.
- Tenure encourages controversy and litigation over non-renewal of probationary contracts and denial of tenure. Contests of this nature are

becoming increasingly more frequent. Today's recession and the consequent diminution in the opportunities for employment is a major contributor to such strife and litigation. As Professor Metzger points out:

"In many faculties a new antipathy between seniors and juniors has developed, an antipathy that is generational and ideological in rhetoric, but largely economic at its base."

The goals, purposes and quality of all education will be more easily achieved and the quality improved if performance and merit are the paramount bases of tenure and contract renewal instead of favoritism, prejudice, politics, and personal aggrandizement. Faculty performance must be measured by stated objective criteria, not to do so will undoubtedly result in increased litigation, strife and discord within the academic community.

The following arguments are frequently made in support of tenure:

- Tenure is an essential condition of academic freedom: it assures the teacher that his professional findings or utterances will not be circumscribed or directed by outside pressures, and it assures students and the public that the teacher's statements are influenced only by his/her best professional judgment and not by fear of losing his/her job.
- Academic tenure creates an atmosphere favorable to academic freedom for all because the tenured faculty members form an independent body capable of vigilant action to protect the freedom of their nontenured colleagues.
- Academic tenure, by creating a faculty with a strong long-term commitment to the institution, contributes to institutional stability and esprit. It thus promotes collegiality, joint responsibility for professional and institutional

standards, and effective institutional governance.

- By forcing institutions at a definite time to decide on whom to confer tenure and whom to let go, the tenure system helps institutions avoid continuing on faculty members whose term appointments might otherwise be renewed regularly out of generosity, friendship, or neglect.

- Tenure has an economic value that helps offset the generally lower financial rewards of higher education, thus enabling institutions to compete for professional talent—especially in such fields as law and medicine, which have highly developed markets outside the colleges and universities.

The book contains 47 thoroughly explained and detailed recommendations. It is, in the reviewer's opinion, a must reading for anyone genuinely interested in academic tenure and quality education whether at the higher education, secondary or elementary school level. The Commission on Academic Tenure deserves special commendation for conducting and issuing such a significant and useful study. □

*The reviewer is associate professor of law, Howard University School of Law. New Directions review, courtesy of the American Bar Association and its Section of Local Government Law.*



### Black Prophesy

Consumed in a burning desire  
 To soar above the rancid odor  
 Of Black flesh, Black hope  
 Turned to Black rage.

Even yearning to flee from  
 The misery of yesterday,  
 The unchanging despair  
 Cannot give us freedom.

Land that we love still  
 Robs, still emasculates,  
 Still shackles our whip-  
 Scarred bodies. Law is still  
 Lawless in its belief called  
 Justice.

For yet we are still lower  
 Than the yard dog.  
 Constant fear and dread  
 Creep upon our most sophisticate  
 Lowly animal.

Fear seeps into the brain  
 Of our most prominent creature  
 Proclaiming all of us still nobody.  
 Lower than the snake.

Acquisition of worldly treasures  
 Cannot erase from history  
 The brutality endured in this land.  
 It could not be counted as past.

Today, like yesterday, yet remains  
 All night for us  
 But little Black boys will be  
 Big Black men soon one day.

Blacks will not want to flee  
 Blacks will stand and fight.  
 Remembering, remembering  
 Turner, Till, King, and X.

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Peola Spurlock,  
*Howard University*

### Suddenly Love

To be again without a plan to live,  
 To reach out in a hopeful jest.  
 Occurring like a thunder storm,  
 a ship lost, a train stopped,  
 a broken wing that has no speed.  
 And then it happens,  
 with a careless lust.  
 Too fast to think,  
 or tell your heart the truth.  
 The past has cast it,  
 in the sounds of lost time.  
 Too late to change a color set,  
 a tear of woe.  
 Oh yes, and here it is again,  
 so soon.

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Jewel Mayo  
 Washington, D.C.

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516