

BLACK HISTORY

Education shouldn't end with black history month

by roosevelt fitzgerald

faculty writer

Well, here we are. February is ending and so is Black History Month. Both, by Tuesday's end, will have had their twenty-eight days--with one added on for good measure this year--of life and, like cicadas, will go underground and await resurrection again next year.

When Dr. Carter G. Woodson initiated Black History celebrations in 1921, it was his hope that it would serve as a stop-gap. He felt it was necessary because Americans--black and non-black--were provided few opportunities of learning of the contributions black people had made to the development of this country. He did not expect that it would remain necessary to maintain the observation. His hope was that one day, the textbooks of the schools of America would present, as part of the history of America, the history of Black Americans. Once that would occur, it would no longer be necessary to set aside a segregated amount of time for contemplating and learning of that subject matter.

Many among us are quick to say that things are changing. They are. However, they're chang-

ing at a snail's pace and grudgingly. This is so because we, who are customarily so sensible, have decided in this instance not to be. We have the "cart before the horse." We are seeking changes in attitudes and behavior without first educating the masses. We expect the different races to be aware of and appreciate the contributions of others without their knowing what those contributions are. I'm tempted to say: "How silly" but it is much more than that. It is stupid and malicious.

Among the truisms which we've all heard and will continue to hear are: "It won't change overnight," or "The next generation will make it better." We've heard that for many nights and many generations and what do we have? Well, we have black students holed up in a building at the University of Massachusetts protesting racism on that campus. All heck is breaking out at the University of Michigan protesting racism on that campus. Rebel flags are flying at the University of Alabama and other southern schools and black students are protesting "Dixie" being sung at half-time and pep rallies at such places as the University of Mississippi. The "sheets" are driving

native Idahoans out of their own state and they are protesting. The airwaves of Salt Lake are being infiltrated with racist patter and students at BYU and in Salt Lake City are protesting. You can get to Howard Beach from here but you might not get out alive and the residents say there is no racial problem there. Donald Rochan left the LAPD and joined the FBI and when assigned to the Omaha office, came to work one day only to find the faces of apes pasted on a photo of his children. Rep. Mickey Leland, D-Texas who was instrumental in putting together a repeal of the Fuel Use Act, was not invited by the White House to its signing because he was associated only with civil rights legislation. Ross Barnett, governor of Mississippi during the 1960s died in 1987 and some described him as a "great" American. Mecham, black Viet Nam vets, Oscar nominations, Forsythe County, and we still do not know, as a nation, whether Jimmy "the Greek" was on the mark because we do not know that history. Mark Ross of Huntington Beach is beaten into a coma after his arrest on traffic warrants.

We're not doing much better on the home front. Flashcards--NLV Police,

Chaz, Black faculty, black reporters with major local newspapers, letters to the editor on black matters, being seated near the toilets in restaurants and coming under close scrutiny when entering convenience stores.

We learn, as a whole, about black people from the movies and the television. *The Jeffersons*, *Good Times*, *Amen*, and others are our classrooms. Sure, I know about *The Cosby Show*. One decent show is not enough to undo all of the damage. As long as we rely on the movies and television to educate us about blacks and other minorities, we will continue to make our usual mistakes. Anyone who thinks such an education is sufficient, try watching *General Hospital* for three years and then see if

there's a license to practice medicine waiting for you. Ok. You can intern with Ben Casey, Marcus Welby or Dr. Kildare.

February: 23. W.E.B. DuBois was born on this date in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. This scholar and writer left a legacy of pride and inspiration as evidence by his voluminous writings. He was the first black man to earn a Ph.D from Harvard and he strongly advocated the necessity of developing college-trained leaders.

24. Daniel A. Payne, who became the sixth bishop of the A.M.E. Church was born on this date in 1811. He was Senior Bishop for 20 years and in 1863 he was instrumental in the purchase of Wilberforce University for the A.M.E. Church.

25. Muhammad Ali (Cassius Clay) won the world heavyweight boxing championship from Sonny Liston in Miami Beach, Florida in 1964.

25. Hiram R. Revels became the first black U.S. Senator in Mississippi's history on this date in 1870.

25. Jordan C. Jackson was born in Fayette County, Kentucky on this date in 1848. He was prominent in Republican politics and an alternate delegate to the National Republican Convention of 1876. He worked vigorously against enactment of the separate-coach law of Kentucky.

26. In 1898, Pierre L. Carmouche volunteered to serve in the Spanish-American War. He recruited 250 men to join

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