

Entertainment

BILLIE ROWE'S NOTEBOOK

WASHINGTON, D.C. — President Ronald Reagan, Senators, Congresspersons and educators, are at odds over the highly praised Graduate and Professional Opportunities Program within the Department of Education. Referred to as "G-Pop" in the academic arena, its founding purpose is to increase the access of minorities and women to graduate and professional education. Since set in motion in 1978, "G-Pop" has annually fathered over 1,000 graduate fellowships for women and minority Americans according to a report issued by William E. McHenry, the director of the Southeastern Regional Resource Center. It also pointed out that during the '85/'86 academic year 155 campuses will each receive an average of nine fellowships worth \$75,000. According to Thomas J. Linney, Jr., director of government and association relations, the Council of Graduate Schools in the U.S., "This is the largest program for minority graduate and professional students in the Dept. of Education and is the least generously funded."

Notwithstanding, there was a recommendation in the Reagan Administration's '86 budget that the program be ELIMINATED. A spokesperson for the Office of Management and Budget offered this reason: "We have been trying to eliminate small categorical programs, especially when others can meet the financial needs of students, including graduate students. Linney and Congress disagree. In TJL's book "Many of those programs — only about 12,000, are left now out of the some 50,000 the government supported in the early 70s — do not target women or minorities." Both the House and Senate have passed appropriations bills for fiscal '86 that would provide the same \$11.7 million needed by the Dept. to carry "G-Pop" another year. This program is a part of the Higher Education Act of '65 and is due to expire next fall. Committees in both Houses are reportedly

drafting legislation that will extend. There is also outside cloak room talk that the Senate subcommittee on Education is considering raising "G-Pop's" tuition payments to \$6,000 annually from the now \$39 00 and the stipend to \$10,000 from the present \$4,500. A later report from the National Research Council states that the total number of minority students receiving doctorates rose by 8.5 percent between '78 and '84 for a 9,461 count. In the same period women jumped 28 percent lifting their count from 8,313 to 10,660.

WRITE NEWSY: Tom Shropshire, the just retired senior veep and treasurer Philip Morris/Miller Brewing Co., is enjoying a deserved avalanche of affection from a horde of international friends. The corporation for which he achieved for 33 years led the applause. Bill Howell, Miller's president, heightened the flow of his adrenalin with the surprise importation of his children, and two brothers, one from Atlanta and the other from Gary. As men are not supposed to cry, Shelia Payton informed us that Shrop's eyes just got a wee bit damp. He was further floored when presented with two of three volumes of letters sent by long time friends expressing abundant joy as an affidavit of their affection and lasting admiration of his achievements. On the 23rd, there will be a major testimonial dinner in his honor at the Hyatt Regency in Milwaukee. As expected, proceeds will be donated to a charity in his name . . .

. . . Joseph Burgess, the ex EDGE's 1st veep, just did ballot-bounce his opponent to win a seat on the Yonkers City Council from the 1st Ward. It's his first try for political office . . . Stevie Wonder'ful will add to his exposure and bankroll via a 30-second TV commercial and a 60 second radio pitch for Hansen's Food. It's his first on camera product endorsement. If you're in the east, forget it. The product is concentrated in western states only . . . Lois

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TV'S 'GEORGE JEFFERSON' TO STAR IN HACIENDA'S 'NORMAN, IS THAT YOU?'

On Friday, December 27 the Hacienda will see the opening of "Norman, Is That You?" in the hotel's Fiesta Showroom starring the popular Sherman Hemsley (TV's George Jefferson on the long-running "The Jeffersons" television sitcom).

Hemsley brings his well-known face and proven acting abilities into the controversial play which finds a father (Coincidentally, the owner of a dry-cleaning establishment just as Jefferson runs on television.) discovering his son prefers males to females at the same time his wife takes off with his brother and business partner.

Hemsley brought to life the character of George Jefferson first on "All in the Family" and later into his own series, "The Jeffersons". Hemsley is not unlike the characters he portrays. He has worked hard to achieve the success he now enjoys.

He started performing in elementary school plays. However, he didn't consider acting as a 'career' until he left the service. After attending the Philadelphia Academy of Dramatic Arts, he worked as a postal employee during the days and as an actor at night. After performances in "Black Book" and "The Blacks" he was encouraged to move to New York to pursue acting further by actor/director Robert Hooks.

Always the practical one, Hemsley made the transfer to New York only after he made a transfer within the postal service (to insure a roof over his head!). He quickly became part of the famed Negro Ensemble Company and studied acting with Lloyd Richards. After a year of hard work, Hemsley found himself Off-Broadway in "The People VS. Ranchman" in 1968. 1970 saw him on Broadway as Gitlow in "Purlie Victorious" and a repeat of that role later on HBO. When "Purlie" closed, Sherman joined the cast of "Don't Bother me, I can't Cope" in Toronto and San Francisco. In 1973, one of Hollywood's most influential producers saw Hemsley and as they say, "A

Star Was Born".

His Emmy nomination in "The Jeffersons" along with his professionalism have opened many new doors for Hemsley.

He has recently finished filming "Ghost Fever" which will be released in the fall of '85. He plays 'The Mouse' in the Irwin Allen production of "Alice in Wonderland". Hemsley is also featured in a national television commercial extolling the virtues of Total cereal.

While Sherman Hemsley is constantly expanding his horizons, and while he is a recognized performer with impressive credits, he feels he is an actor just entering his prime.



Sherman Hemsley

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NEW TOWN TAVERN