

# Education

## Black Scholars Call For Dismantling \$1.7 Million Study of Blacks in America

By Robert Smith

A growing number of black scholars are calling for the dismantling of a new \$1.7 million study of blacks in America.

The study, which was commissioned by the National Academy of Sciences' Commission on the Behavioral and Social Sciences and its research arm, the National Research Council, is designed to "examine every aspect of Black life in America" in the last forty years. Funded by a number of foundations, including the Carnegie Corporation and the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations, the study is the largest such

undertaking since the landmark study by Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal, "An American Dilemma" published in 1944.

But a number of black scholars, questioning the need for the study, its origins and its likely policy implications, are calling on the Academy to abandon the study, although research on the project is just getting underway and the results are not scheduled for publication until late 1987. According to Professor Ronald Walters of Howard University's political science department and Professor Bernadette Chachere of the Hampton University economics

department, spokespersons for the black scholars objecting to the study, the project should be canceled because:

— Blacks are the most studied people in the world and there is no need to spend nearly two million dollars in yet another study of blacks.

— Black universities and scholarly organizations were not consulted in the development and formulation of the study.

— No new data will be generated by the study and the study proposal is "vague and unscientific" and does not identify the study's theoretical orientation or framework.

— The relatively small number of blacks on the project's steering committee and the fact that its chairman, Robin M. Williams, Jr., is white, suggests that the study's theoretical direction may be incorrect, ultimately having adverse policy impacts.

A black perspective on a study of this magnitude is essential" according to Dr. Walters and the absence of such a perspective means that the study "would only intensify the negative policy direction of the Reagan Administration which attempts to blame blacks for their problems, rather than the racist institutions of American society." Professor Chacere asks "why is a white scholar chosen to direct the study? Why not a distinguished black scholar?"

## Saturn Target From Planetarium At Community College

The Planetarium at Clark County Community College is having public viewing sessions of the ringed planet Saturn following the 8 p.m. planetarium presentations four nights per week from Wednesday through Saturday. Presentations are presented on those days at 3:30, 6:30 and 8 p.m. The telescope is set up after the last presentation each day when the sky is clear. The principle object being viewed each evening is the planet Saturn. Saturn has just passed its closest approach to the earth for the year and will be well placed for viewing over the next few months. Though the telescope, the rings of Saturn and several of its major moons are easily visible. Other objects, such as the moon, will also be

viewed when available. The telescope sessions are free.

The current presentation at the Planetarium is the multimedia experience "Light Years from Andromeda". When we look out into space, we are looking back into time because light travels at a measurable speed. Light reaching us now from the Andromeda Galaxy left there over 2 million years ago. "Light Years from Andromeda" discusses the fantastic distances in space and what these distances mean to us.

Show schedule information is available on the Astronomy Hotline at 644-5059 at anytime. General admission is \$2.00. A discount is available for children, students, seniors, military and the handicapped with

presentation of appropriate ID. Reservations are recommended for all show (call 643-6060, ext. 326, weekdays from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.). While there is usually room for small parties without reservations, priority is given to guests with reservations. Reservations will be held until ten (10) minutes prior to show time. All performances begin on time and there is no late seating.

The Planetarium is located at Clark County Community College in North Las Vegas at 3200 E. Cheyenne Avenue. From I-15, take Cheyenne Avenue east about one mile to the College. The Planetarium is just inside the south entrance to the building. Use the parking lot closest to Cheyenne Avenue.

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## BASIE

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stage in Las Vegas and on Broadway. There are countless other stars who discovered the same sense of ecstasy when Bill Basie and his men played behind them. William Basie, an only child, was born on August 21, 1904 in Red Bank, New Jersey. His first musical training came from his mother and a "wonderful German lady named Holloway" who gave him piano lessons and charged twenty-five cents a session. Basie's first instrument choice was drums. But Sonny Greer, a boyhood friend, made Bill move elsewhere after some early competition.

Basie played the Harlem clubs in the early twenties. "Piano" was the instrument of that day. James P. Johnson, Lucky Roberts, Willie "The Lion" Smith. But the most important influence on Bill's playing was Thomas "Fats" Waller. A bright and infallible touch. Faultless time. Strong harmonic sense. It's all inherent in the Basie style — in the most simple, superbly refined manner. (Refined in the editing out of extraneous notes. Refined in the elegance of only correct and necessary emotion.) Bill then toured the famous T.O.B.A. "wheel," the major vaudeville circuit for black entertainers. When he was stranded in Kansas City he soon joined the Walter Page Blue Devils, a group Basie called "the happiest band I've ever been in." Then several of the members joined Bennie Moten. Soon after Bennie died in 1935, Basie became the leader. John Hammond heard them on radio, got Willard Alexander interested, influenced Basie to add to his 9-piece band and, in 1936, brought them to New York.

Then it was one peak piled on another. From high-spot to higher-spot to greater achievement. Without slack.

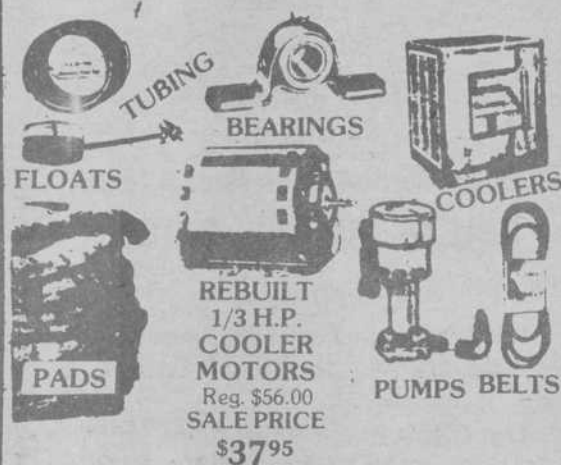
At the Fourth Annual Kennedy Center Special Awards Ceremony in Washington, D.C. in

December, 1981 (Bill Basie was one of five honored that evening — along with actor Cary Grant, actress Helen Hayes, choreographer Jerome Robbins and concert pianist Rudolf Serkin), the introductions by Henry Mancini included this: "No one and no one band has contributed more to American music than Count Basie."

Radio City Music Hall in New York City the Black Music Association paid homage to this outstanding member of American jazz royalty at an all-star gala entitled "To Basie With Love." The program notes acknowledged his gifts: "Count Basie, during his nearly fifty years as a bandleader, is internationally recognized as a modern music immortal." Count Basie played on — in concerts, at dances and special events, on TV Specials and annual tours to Europe and Japan and frequent jaunts to other faraway places. Bill and his band grew more popular than ever before, year after year. Despite problems with his health and his mobility, the Count continued to excite audiences, resolved to go on and on as long as he could.

William James "Count" Basie died April 26, 1984. The last sentence of the obituary read: "Your melodies will linger in our hearts forever."

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