

NNPA FEATURE

# COPING

by  
Dr. Charles Faulkner



A long time American institution, the Black Family, no longer exists in the traditional American form. Ask almost any Black person and they will tell you about

their fatherless family, a teenage daughter who has a young child, a son who has been arrested at least once, a father who left home years ago but is

regularly seen sleeping in doorways and guzzling alcohol. The mother of course, is living on welfare and slowly going out of her mind.

The Black Family has been trapped in its tradition of religion, its belief in education, as an escape from poverty, its adherence to the law of the land and its hope for a better life. There factors kept the traditional Black Family sort of under control and trapped in its pacifism. If this tradition had continued most

Blacks would be starving, in prison or dead. This tradition has virtually destroyed the Black person in American.

In order to survive, some Blacks have used the system against itself. Most Americans dream of the day when they can purchase that expensive merchandise that is advertised on television. They want their piece of the pie. But they were unable to break into the system and get decent jobs. They discovered a way to be prosperous in Amer-

ica. Education doesn't necessarily lead to success in America (ask any one of thousands of Black college graduates who can't get jobs.) If you are Black, you will not be able to get a decent apartment or house in most neighborhoods (read the recently-published report on housing discrimination in America.)

Faced with these roadblocks to success, many Blacks found that the way to make big money, fast, was to sell drugs. This is their way of attaining wealth in America. It is their way of realizing the American dream. This is their way of acquiring some of those fancy items that are advertised on television. This is their road to status.

Now, examining the national response to the acquisition to wealth, by selling drugs, is one of the major American contradictions - that will result in the jailing of thousands of Blacks, but will not stop the flow of drugs into the community.

Blacks know that tons of drugs are shipped, weekly, into this country. They know that the Blacks who are arrested are an infinitesimal part of the problem. They believe that this government could stop the flow of drugs into this country if it really wanted to (and if people in high office were not profiting from the drug business.) They know that they are making thousands of dollars, while the people who bring drugs into this country are making billions - and are not in jail.

They argue that as soon as they find a way to grab a slice of the American pie, they are jailed. But the "Big Boys" are not touched. They want to know why they are harassed when they are just "trying to make a decent living."

They want to know "what's" wrong with selling drugs when people who have money can get their doctors to prescribe the same drugs for them. And neither they or the doctor goes to jail.

## JUKE JOINTS

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pianist.

The Birmingham Sunlights, an all-male acappella gospel quintet, and blues singer/dancer/guitarist John Dee Holeman complete the show. Holeman is one of the greatest performers of the ancient African art of juba patting, a kind of body percussion with rhythmic footwork.

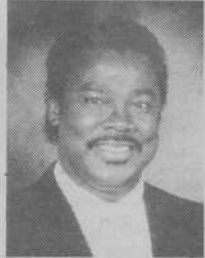
The "Juke Joints" tour is funded in part by the National

Endowment for the Arts, Folk Arts Program, the Western Federation of Arts and the Nevada State Council on the Arts.

Admission is \$8 for adults, \$6 for students, seniors and handicapped. Advance tickets are available at all Ticketmaster outlets or at UNLV's Ham Hall Box Office, 739-3801.

For more information call the Clark County Dept. of Parks and Recreation, 455-7340.

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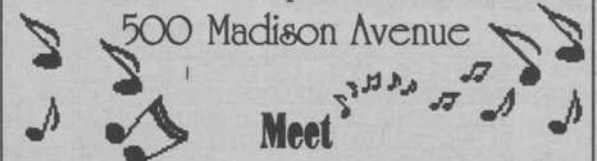
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