Building on the First Century: Humanities in the Black College Classroom

Southern Education Foundation
Black College Library Improvement Project

Building on the First Century: Humanities in the Black College Classroom

A Workshop Report

August 30,31 - September 1, 1989 Atlanta, Georgia Ritz-Carlton Hotel

Introduction

The Southern Education Foundation's Black College Library Improvement Project, sponsored with a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, held its third workshop, "Building on the First Century: Humanities in the Black College Classroom," August 30, 31-September 1, 1989, in Atlanta, Georgia.

Each of the 20 participating institutions sent its librarian and a faculty member from the department of humanities to participate in the workshop. The three priority areas of the project--collection development, library utilization, and professional development of library staff--continued to be the focus of discussion during the sessions. This year, presenters focused on areas of a model humanities curriculum, the changing academic environment, classroom teaching techniques, and the role of the library at the historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs).

The Southern Education Foundation extends its appreciation to the Black College Library Improvement Project's advisory committee members: Dr. Charles Churchwell, Dr. Guy Craft, Ms. Francine Henderson, Ms. Deanna Marcum, Dr. Samuel Nabrit, and Dr. Jessie Carney Smith. These members who served as consultants for the entire three years of the SEF/Mellon project evaluated institutional project activities, provided technical assistance to the library staffs, and engaged in the planning and coordinating of the workshops.

SEF also extends its gratitude to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for its commitment of funds to the HBCU libraries for enhancement of collections and overall services to students and faculty.

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WELCOME BY SEF PRESIDENT

Elridge W. McMillan, president of the Southern Education Foundation, welcomed the participants (See Appendix I) to the third SEF/Mellon Black College Library Improvement Project workshop. He acknowledged the presence of Dr. Samuel Nabrit, former member of SEF's board of directors and current member of the Black College Library Improvement Project's advisory committee. He reminded the audience of Dr. Nabrit's role in spearheading the effort to secure the grant from the Andrew Mellon Foundation, and working with the Mellon Foundation to advocate the importance of a grant to help increase humanities collections at the historically black colleges and universities.

Participants were reminded of one requirement of the grant which is critical to the Mellon Foundation: colleges must maintain at least the level of support for library acquisitions that was in place prior to the grant. SEF has been assured that this criterion has been met by the institutions.

Herman L. Reese, SEF consultant and project director of the Black College Library Improvement Project, introduced the advisory committee members, and each participant provided short introductions of names and institutional affiliations.

DEVELOPING A MODEL HUMANITIES CURRICULUM

David Dorsey, professor of humanities, Clark Atlanta University, was described by advisory committee member Dr. Guy Craft as one of the most "prolific writers of today in the humanities."

Dr. Dorsey admitted that he has what people consider "maverick views;" therefore, he was delighted to be asked to present those views and to be taken seriously. He began his formal remarks by asserting that it is evident to all investigators that the rationale and the techniques employed in American humanities education are grotesque, inchoate and destructive. In his opinion, the function of humanities as a curriculum is to supply the skill of perceiving consciously how and which values are communicated by society to the individual and by the individual to others. This goal specifically rejects the role to teach certain values either in morals or in aesthetics. The duty of the humanities teacher is to teach students how to do certain things, and permit the students to do as they wish with these skills. Dr. Dorsey further maintains that it is a perversion of the profession to try to make students better people or to instill in them an appreciation for certain types or works of art.

The question was posed: What is required in order to make students understand how ideas operate?

1) The janus muses, the two sides of the same crucial door to the humanities, are a sense of history and a sense of culture. Students must understand how each statement of art or philosophy is rooted in a particular culture at a particular moment in the development of that society.

2) Students must develop an intimate familiarity with an alien culture in order to gain a sense of history and culture. Facts about history

or about any artistic genre will not achieve this sense. In addition to the immersion in an alien culture, students must be exposed significantly to diverse cultures.

3) The only means for a genuine understanding of the nature of human diversity is through exposure to the linguistic structure and value structure of a foreign language. The requirement must have an attainable, measurable objective.

4) Non-European languages must be included in the curriculum among the optional languages which meet the general education requirement.

Dr. Dorsey maintains that humanities is teaching how a certain transaction takes place. In his teaching of English linguistics to mostly college teachers of English, when he asks how one forms the plural of nouns in English, without exception, the students do not know. Dr. Dorsey asserts that virtually everyone can do it correctly, however speakers of English cannot say what rule is being used. Consequently, one must acknowledge that in using language one speaks and hears according to a complex set of laws, but has a minimal and inaccurate conscious understanding of these rules.

Goals of a Curriculum

Specific goals were outlined by Dr. Dorsey. The purpose of humanities courses should be to make the student conscious of the signs of art, and conscious of her or his own process of interpreting the signs. Secondly, understanding of the process means understanding that the process applies to all the artistic transactions. A third consideration is that students should be led to make evaluations consciously, and to make them explicit. They must be given a rationale and an intellectually valid process by which they can respect their own judgments about any work of art, no matter how unfamiliar

it may be. The last goal must be to instill an understanding that an aesthetic dimension reinforces and directs the implicit value system in all human enterprise, including science and business.

Dr. Dorsey explained that there are two common goals of a humanities curriculum which he has rejected: 1) instilling values; and 2) having students acquire a broad outline of European or American, or even Black cultural history. A humanities instructor can teach the role of history in shaping values, so that automatically the student seeks the historical and cultural context when interpreting a work of art, or any work of communication. Students should be made aware that because of the state of American secondary education, damage has been done; they must know the debilitating consequences of their ignorance of history, and seek the means to repair the damage over the rest of their lives.

Characteristics of a Curriculum

Multi-disciplinary. All relevant courses share the same ends. Each student takes courses in several disciplines.

Training. All courses have as a major component training students in effective expression of cogent thinking, especially written expression.

Focus. Explanations of each allusion, historical fact, structure, and design are selected as essential to teaching the process of conveying or finding meaning in art, and are not taught as ends in themselves.

Abstract Theory. All courses in each discipline must include some overt, identified attention to abstract theory.

Personal Utility. The course must demonstrate a sense of personal utility. The student's assessment of the usefulness of the work for expanding her or his own comprehension of the world becomes the primary criterion of value. Each course demonstrates that the criterion of universality is false.

Dr. Dorsey offered several suggestions for the historically black colleges and universities relative to resource collections. Libraries must attempt to repair the dearth of non-European materials, especially Asian materials. There is a need for more works about criticism and theoretical works written in foreign languages and translated into English. More cooperation between librarians and faculty should take place with the goal of familiarizing students with bibliographies. Moreover, computerized databases of all materials should be available.

The model curriculum proposed by Dr. Dorsey differs from the typical standard current practice. He offered the method to the participants with the hope that they would determine that it has a cogent moral validity. Dr. Dorsey remains convinced that emancipating the individual mind is the only morally defensible way, the only psychologically possible way, and the only intellectually tenable way to liberate students from their unexamined value system which happens to be the American value system. Humanities courses are the only institutionalized programs which possibly could free students from their modern slavery.

Dr. Dorsey answered various questions raised by the participants relative to the selection of foreign languages. He asserted that the languages must be useful to students, especially those with an international focus. For instance, Dr. Dorsey offered that there is a need at his institution to teach Arabic, and that students are requesting such a course. Japanese and Chinese are other foreign languages which should not be ignored. He also urged that programs be instituted which would enable students to be given the opportunity to become exposed to life in a given country.

THE CHANGING ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT

Dr. Charlotte Alston, vice president for academic affairs, Bennett College, was the first speaker during the third session of the workshop. She informed the audience of certain changes in age groupings that will occur in the 1980s: 15-17, down 20 percent; 18-24, down 14 percent; 25-34, up 13 percent; 35-44, up 42.4 percent; 45-54, up 11.5 percent; 55-65, down 1.9 percent; and 65 and older, up 19.6 percent. These figures were presented to demonstrate that no longer will there be the dense population of students between the ages of 18 and 21.

By 1992, it is predicted that half of all college students will be 25 and older. In addition to an older population of students, there will be an increase of international students; new initiatives supporting access for handicapped students; the increase in women attending college will exceed the male population; and there will be an increase in the single-parent student. Clearly, the growth area in education will be in adult and continuing education, all of which will present dramatic challenges to the academic environment.

For instance, an older student population will necessitate the availability of services which were not necessary to provide in past years; services such as child care, longer hours for library use, and extended hours for bookstores and financial operations. The question of the adequacy of the 8:00-5:00 P.M., and five-day-a-week schedule must be raised. With an older population, many of whom will be otherwise employed, the notion of the weekend and evening college will become the new reality. Accordingly, with the possible decline of the number of full-time students, private colleges and universities, and particularly HBCUs, will be the most at-risk because these colleges run a larger share of their budget from tuition revenues. Part-time and older students with family and job responsibilities will force reevaluation of the concept of the four-year, eight semesters bachelors program.

By the year 2020, the nation is projected to have 44 million blacks, and 47 million Hispanics. There will be a third growing population of Asian Americans who represent 44 percent of all immigrants to the United States.

Dr. Alston reminded the participants that currently there is debate and discussion about cultural diversity, and its implications for curriculum development and instructional delivery. One of the urgent questions asked by many academics, as pointed out by Margaret Wilkinson, is: "Will embracing cultural diversity force the education community to throw out the classics, replacing them with works by women and minorities?" Another issue is the institutional faculty profile which will undergo significant change. It is no secret that the number of blacks acquiring terminal degrees is declining, and the decline is reflected in very critical discipline areas, specifically in mathematics, and computer and information science. There simply is not a large pool of African Americans on which to draw. Given these issues and facts, Dr. Alston believes that the ability of faculty and staff to celebrate and appreciate cultural diversity will be tested as the faculty becomes more culturally diverse.

Another indicator of change in the academic environment is the decrease of black men going to college. The Census Bureau reports that the enrollment of black male students fell more than seven percent between 1976 and 1986; from 34.5 percent of those who were high school graduates to 27.8 percent. The United Negro College Fund's statistical reports suggest a similar conclusion in reporting a steady decline in male enrollment from 45 percent of that college population a few years ago to 42 percent today.

Another issue affecting change in the academic environment is the rise in the cost of a college education. In its *Annual Survey of Colleges, 1989 and 1990,* the College Board reports that tuition and fees will increase an average of five to nine percent this academic year; four-year independent colleges will average $8,737. Related to this reality is the reported growth of

the lower-income African American population with the consequence that family contribution to student education will become increasingly prohibitive. There also is the reduced ability of African American institutions to provide substantial scholarships and other forms of financial aid. Accordingly, more students will be forced to work, to live off campus with the consequence that the campuses will not have the usual large numbers of students on campus all day, but rather a highly mobile group shifting between job and academic responsibilities.

Dr. Alston cited highlights of a recent study by the American Council on Education which found that students today suffer more stress than students of previous generations. Increasingly, more students are reporting instances of depression due to financial, academic, and social pressures. These pressures have a serious impact on today's students to respond and meet the academic challenges mandated for success in the 21st century. Dr. Alston maintains that what this means is that the HBCUs will have to do more in a programmatic way to counteract reinforcement of inadequacy among students which certainly these circumstances generate.

There are several pressures that students face and will face as they move forward into the 21st century. As the academic environment changes, many institutions are noticing that the academic probation issue is surfacing more frequently as another serious concern. Dr. Alston was shocked at the number of students on academic probation at her institution last year. With the support of her colleagues, she decided that Bennett should conduct a thorough investigation of the probation situation, and make some effort to address the issue programmatically. All the parameters of student and academic life were explored to obtain a profile of "the kind of student that is prone to reach the probation stage." A profile was not found; there was no average kind of student for the probation list. It then was decided to give academic probation students a challenge. Rather than accept the option of being away from the institution for a semester or a year, the students had to meet a

a clearly defined structured challenge and goal for one semester. Dr. Alston wrote letters to students inviting them to accept that challenge.

When the students returned to Bennett, they were involved in a series of seminars. The question posed was: "Why are you having academic difficulties?" The students clearly were able to identify their problems, and as a result, Bennett was able to determine its direction because the students defined the problems. Consequently, the students were ready to take responsibility for their own predicament, with guidance and support.

Of the students who were on probation, there were 24 freshmen who participated in the project. At the end of the semester when Dr. Alston did a review of grades, 50 percent of those students showed significant academic improvement. The improvement experienced by these students ranged from GPAs of 2.0 to 3.5. Of the 24 sophomores, 45 percent showed significant academic improvement. Of the 16 juniors, 75 percent showed significant academic improvement. And, of the two participating seniors, 50 percent showed extremely good achievement.

Dr. Alston delights in relating this story because it demonstrates the type of nurturing that must take place at the HBCUs, if the institutions are going to move to new altitudes of success and excellence. She is suggesting that although a number of demographics have been presented regarding the academic environment, there are real human problems within that changing dynamic, and that these are problems that must be addressed.

There is an increase in pressure from external and internal sources on HBCU campuses to improve the institutional quality image and raise admissions standards. For the most part, this means that the HBCUs must compete for students who achieve high SAT and other standardized test scores. Dr. Alston submits that if the institutions are to be true to their historic mission and heritage, then there must be a reevaluation of the use of these tests as measurements.

At a recent meeting of the Civil Rights Commission, Dr. Nancy Cone, executive vice president of ETS, commented: "All children do not receive comparable education in our schools. Their homes do not provide them with equal starts on that education. And our social institutions do not serve all equally well. There are real differences in test scores. Such standardized tests (such as the SAT) must not be the sole criterion to admit students to college or to the awarding of financial aid."

Dr. Alston asserts that there are peculiar and distinct sets of circumstances related to the preparation of blacks. Therefore, what this means is that HBCUs must conduct their own research designed to help the institutions look at other ethnic indicators for potential success, and to govern admissions standards accordingly.

There is a potential decline in the enrollment of four-year institutions due to a dramatic increase in the number of community colleges; 45 percent of today's students are enrolled in such colleges. In a recent college survey conducted by ACT, the overwhelming reason given by students for going to college was to get a job, to increase options in career-oriented paths. Without question, students are seeking short-term preparation for employment. Hence, the attractiveness of the community college and the associate degree program is appealing to a large number of African Americans, as well as Hispanics who are in these community colleges. However, this circumstance potentially can be valuable for those in four-year institutions, provided that the graduates of community colleges who already have proven that they indeed can achieve and excel are recruited aggressively. Moreover, articulation agreements with community colleges must be pursued, and those persons with primary responsibility for the curriculum and the academic programs must be able to tailor programs to meet the needs of this transfer population.

There is growing pressure from state and federal agencies and regional accrediting bodies for colleges and universities to be more accountable for

the educational product and services they provide. It is critical to understand and to view assessment as an opportunity to examine the institution; to focus on accomplishments and failures; to refocus on future priorities by reviewing the reasons it was established; and, to focus on the needs of the diverse students and communities it serves. In this regard, each college can create its own set of mission-related indicators of educational effectiveness. Colleges which take a cosmetic approach can expect great attrition.

Dr. Alston contends that academic stability will be maintained by successfully adapting to the changing environment, and educators will be forced to create an academic environment to address these issues.

REACHING THE UNREACHED IN CLASSROOM AND LIBRARY

Dr. Ben E. Bailey, professor of music at Tougaloo College, focused his remarks on aliteracy as opposed to illiteracy. The aliterate, one who looks only at the headlines of the newspaper and who never reads a novel or poetry for pleasure, constitutes a large number of students at HBCUs. These students lack a positive attitude toward reading, doing so only for work or for some materialistic, immediate need. For the most part, aliterates turn to television, a medium which does not encourage thinking.

In order for the aliterate students to be successful in the college setting, they must undergo changes in attitude and habit. Unexposed to carefully chosen language and complex verbal constructions, the aliterates do not develop abilities to be critical, analytical, and precise. Consequently, they are at a disadvantage in modern society. Dr. Bailey maintains that reading and writing are the keys to everything professors attempt to do with students in college, and they are the tools for developing thinkers.

The family environment and television are factors contributing to the causes of aliteracy. The school is another force because it has focused on the sub-skills of reading instead of the global act of reading. Schools allow little time for students to read for pleasure, and the habitual reader is seldom rewarded.

Dr. Bailey urges colleges to show students that despite their backgrounds, they have ideas and thoughts that are worth sharing and that these ideas and thoughts can be refined by reading, writing, and discussing them with others. According to Dr. Bailey, students must perceive that imagination is valued and that imagination can become richer and more meaningful as they acquire knowledge. In this regard, the greatest danger to developing this imagination is the unimaginative professor who is a threat if he teaches the same material in the same way each year. In order to create an environment in which the unreached can be reached, professors must be stimulated to be intellectually alive and excited about their disciplines and teaching.

Dr. Bailey offered a few examples of efforts initiated at Tougaloo College to reach the unreached--the aliterate. Fifteen years ago, the college established a Writing Task Force which organized short and long-term workshops, published newsletters, and conducted course surveys to encourage professors to use more writing. Assembly programs have focused on familiarizing the student body and faculty to the goals of the library. Faculty and student book review series are activities which continue to attract participants. Instructors of the freshman seminar required students to write a four to seven page essay on a controversial issue not examined in class. Senior biology students have held poster sessions in which they presented the results of their summer research done at various places throughout the nation. In addition, a few professors involve students in their research as research assistants who locate information, digest it, and pass it along to the professors.

Dr. Bailey does not believe that the unreached must be treated qualitatively different from the way the more developed students are treated; it mainly is a matter of acculturation and the improvement of self-concept. In order for the students at HBCUs to become thinkers, they must be given challenges. The students must know that their efforts are accepted and respected, that they can grow, and the institution is willing to help them grow.

EXCELLENCE IN AUTOMATED CLASSROOM AND LIBRARY

Ms. Miriam A. Drake, dean and director of libraries at Georgia Institute o: Technology, offered remarks on technology issues facing libraries. Sh reminded the librarians and faculty members that students are using computer: in kindergarten, and will be computer literate when they arrive at thei: doors. Therefore, it will be the responsibility of the libraries to creat instructional programs and an environment in which they can become informatio: literate. They must be taught information-finding skills.

Ms. Drake reviewed with the workshop participants the role of the librar which she maintains is to transfer information; libraries no longer can b viewed as being in the book business. In order to make this shift towar service, costs also must be shifted. The investment in hardware, software an information resources can be substantial, but it has a large payoff. Mor people can be served and the productivity of people can be increased.

Library automation was highlighted and divided into two categories housekeeping and user services. Housekeeping involves the purchasing an receiving, cataloging, catalog maintenance, and circulation. Automation o these functions makes the library more efficient and reduces the amount o labor needed to perform these tasks, however does little for the user. On th other hand, user services are directed at making information easy to find fo the consumer. The online catalog permits multi-dimensional searching, and som universities have added commercial databases to their online systems.

Ms. Drake reminded the participants that in the future governmen documents of all types will be issued only in machine readable form. The 199 Census of Population will be available only in machine readable form on CD-RC or tape, and the maps used to collect and analyze population data also will b available in digital form.

Each library must design systems for their clients, not the library staff. Librarians need to know the capabilities and limitations of hardware, software and staff. However, Ms. Drake believes that all libraries should be using OCLC or RLIN for cataloging and interlibrary loan. OCLC brings the resources of 3000 libraries to the local library.

Technology will enable libraries to create rich environments for learning. In this regard, librarians must continue to experiment and explore better ways of serving the needs of their users. At the same time, librarians must be conscious of their responsibility to preserve the documents, history, literature, and culture of the past.

THE SCHOMBURG CENTER FOR RESEARCH IN BLACK CULTURE AS A RESEARCH RESOURCE IN THE HUMANITIES

Dr. Howard Dodson, director of the Schomburg Center, provided information on his past work with historically black colleges and universities during his three years at the National Endowment for the Humanities as a consultant. The Endowment had received 55 applications from faculty at HBCUs, and the applications had gone through the normal process of the fellowship program; only one of the applications had been funded. The questions posed to Dr. Dodson were: "What is wrong? Is it the institution with its guidelines, programs, or what?" A week after Dodson consulted with the Endowment on what was to be a week-long consultation, he was offered a full-time position to determine the problems, and determine ways of addressing them. For the next two to three years, Dodson visited the HBCUs and conducted seminars for humanities faculty to introduce the faculty to the Endowment's guidelines.

Dr. Dodson stated the concern that many participants and speakers have voiced: discussions at the colleges center around what student preparation is needed in order to get one a job. In this regard, the courses which make up the humanities receive a low priority. He pointed out that it may be useful to realize that the founding of the National Endowment for the Humanities was a direct consequence of those people in the major institutions who began to feel themselves pushed to the margins of the institution. Therefore, this problem is not unique to the HBCUs, but it is prevalent to the humanities as a whole.

Librarians were reminded that in the course of the development of the library, the personnel have been convinced to some extent that the library is indeed secondary to the central enterprise of education and to American life. At the time of budget submissions when funds are sliced from the library, the personnel cannot explain to the administrators that without a strong library, the university does not exist. Without a solid base of knowledge in the

library environment, one does not have a substantial humanities program. If there is not a solid library in the institution, accreditation is at risk in most of the systems throughout the country.

Dodson suggested that those in the field of library work are at a very serious professional crisis. If the crisis--ways of elevating one's own understanding of the centrality, and then being able to convey that to those who make educational and policy decisions about education--is not confronted by those in the humanities and the library, no one else is going to it.

The work done at HBCUs in the humanities is not academic work in the simplest sense of the word, it is not just education, nor is it just delivering books. It is part of a broader process of group salvation and development. This process must be realized; one must have some sense of magnitude and responsibility of one's positions. If so, then librarians and professors may begin to think in different ways about what they do, and how they go about accomplishing the task.

According to Dodson, this is the first time in the history of black people that there is not a set of political, social, and economic goals that can be passed on from one generation to another. In an effort to improve this condition, Dodson proposed to the participants that a marriage be formed which would benefit the institutions and the Schomburg Center; a relationship that would contribute to the strengthening of the humanities in the respective institutions, and the strengthening of the capacity of the Schomburg Center as an institution to fulfill its mission as a repository, interpreter, and promoter of black history and culture in this country.

Dr. Dodson presented a brief background of the Schomburg as the only such center freely accessible to the general public. It combines one of the world's strongest collection of materials concerning black history, culture, and experience with the resources for building, preserving and interpreting those

collections to a wider audience. As such, the Schomburg Center is a national research library, and a development center for advanced study of the history and culture of people of African descent. The foundations for the development of this institution stem from about four basic parts of its history. The important ingredient was the charismatic personality and drive of its founder, Arthur H. Schomburg, a man who entered the world of achievement in American life and simultaneously encouraged black artists, historians, performers, and collectors. Schomburg shared a sense of social commitment and responsibility. He was told by a grade school teacher that black people did not have any history or cultural achievement; and, as a result he spent the rest of his life disproving this notion through his collecting activity.

The Center has continued to evolve and develop because of the sacrifices and nurturing given by an extraordinary group of devoted individuals and institutions. Established in 1926, when the New York Public Library acquired Mr. Schomburg's personal collection, the Center has been nurtured by individuals such as Lawrence Reddick, Jean Blackwell Hudson, and others, to the point that when Dodson arrived in 1984, foundations had been established for this Center and its collections to assume a different role.

The responsibilities are both national and international, because the Schomburg Center from its inception has been committed to documenting the history and culture of people of African descent. The Schomburg is attempting to serve as one of the resources for bringing together an adequate and reasonably comprehensive record of the achievements and travails of people of African descent in this country and around the world.

About 21 years ago, the Southern Education Reporting Service initiated a project to locate and identify organizations and institutions in the United States which held materials documenting the history and experience of Black Americans. The project surveyed the 120 HBCUs, about 1500 mainstream colleges and universities, 881 public libraries, and 3,000 organizations, special

libraries and agencies. Three years later, the Race Relations Information Center published the results of this study, the Directory of Afro-American Resources. As of today, there are no more than approximately 200 combined libraries/historical societies and museums which can be considered to house black archives.

Dr. Dodson mentioned a few archives. In 1972, the Schomburg Center was upgraded to the status of a full research library. The Martin Luther King Center for Social Change was established in Atlanta to collect the records of the civil rights movement in 1969. The Bethune Archives in Washington, D.C. was established to collect and preserve the records of black women. The Amistad Research Center was established in 1966 at Fisk University, then moved to Dillard, and eventually to Tulane University; it has over eight million items in its collections. The University of Massachusetts at Amhurst purchased the Du Bois Collection and the Arna Bontemps papers and quietly has been acquiring other collections of black-related materials. The Wisconsin State Historical Society has developed a civil rights collection which is complementary to the King collections. Many of the southern states have stepped up their process in collecting and housing black-related materials. Georgia State Archives and the South Carolina State Archives have material which 35 years ago was not accessible to blacks.

The mountain of records related to blacks at the National Archives is now accessible as a result of the recent publication by Ms. Newton, who has moved on to the Library of Congress. A National Network of Afro-American Museums has been established, and there are over 106 institutions across the country which are establishing archives at their libraries.

One of the problems facing HBCUs is the low priority given by funding sources and others to libraries and archival depositories. They also tend to underestimate the cost of running such operations. Black archives and special collections share these general problems with their sister institutions

but the additional issue of racism compounds the problem. As a consequence, preservation of primary materials at HBCUs is either at a standstill or going on at a snail's pace because of the lack of resources to do the job. There is an equally important problem of disorganization, duplication of effort, inadequate communication, and false competition; enough time simply has not been spent sharing information with others.

Given the scarce resources available, Dr. Dodson maintains that every effort should be made to establish a cooperative program of acquisition, collection development, preservation, and sharing of resources. The whole notion of monopoly and the control of information in single depositories now is a thing of the past. In the past, the quality of a library was measured by the collections that one had. Because of the advances of technology and the responsibility to get the books off the shelves and into the minds and muscles of people, a rethinking of how this can best be accomplished is in order.

Dr. Dodson familiarized the participants with the capabilities of the Center. The Schomburg collections are online and part of the New York Public Library system. The collections are loaded into the research library information network database. Information of the collections from 1972 to the present is available at the OCLC terminals. The collections are on a separate system which can be turned into a database. The Schomburg recently completed a program to transform the Ernest Keiser index into a computerized database. Mr. Keiser was on the staff of the Schomburg Center for 40 years and created a card index of about 250,000 entries on different aspects of black life. The Schomburg received a grant from NEH to turn it into a computerized database, and is available on the periodical literature for research purposes. The Schomburg clipping file, 1926 to 1972, is now available. In addition to the book and serial collections that are online, a grant from NEH will enable the Schomburg to add the special collections; therefore, subject access to books, periodicals, film, videotape, artifacts, art, photographs and all other medium will be available.

Other offerings include: 1) a microfilm version of about 20 percent of the collections of pre-nineteenth century materials; and, 2) a fellowship program which provides a stipend up to $27,000 a year to four full-time or eight part time scholars to use the materials.

A major fund-raising capital campaign was put into place. The Schomburg has raised $15.2 million of its $17 million goal. An eight million dollar construction and renovation project will expand the physical space and provide more space for educational and cultural programs for a more general audience. Video and tape production for distribution will be possible.

Dr. Dodson asserted that the notion of libraries in the 21st century will have to change from the quiet repositories to more active libraries engaged in the education enterprise. The library cannot be thought of as a building, but the staking ground through which the programs manifest themselves.

DEVELOPING THE AFRO-CENTRIC CURRICULUM

In the introduction of Dr. Asa G. Hilliard, Callaway Professor of Urban Education, Georgia State University, participants were reminded that libraries were not complete if Dr. Hilliard's publications were not included in their collections.

Dr. Hilliard presented the concept of reality as defined by his friend and social psychologist, Dr. Wade W. Nobles of San Francisco, who on many occasions has pondered the problem of African existence. Dr. Nobles maintains that the problem of power which he defines as "the ability to define reality and to get other people to respond to that definition of reality as if it were their own," is critical. Dr. Hilliard asserts that this is the power of ideas, and anyone who draws the picture of reality subsequently has power.

Dr. Hilliard reminded the participants of all the people who draw pictures of reality, such as preachers, mass media, and movie directors. But perhaps the most powerful people in human culture over time always have been those who write books because that material is the foundation of pictures of reality--views of the world.

African people have been victimized by people who draw pictures of reality, because a "golden legacy" is omitted. Dr. Hilliard presented the golden legacy that is difficult to find. For example, in the ancient nation of Kemet (Egypt), a cabinet minister was designated as the governor of the House of Books, yet today students are told that the oldest library was in Alexandria. So, there was a national librarian in an African country, in the Fourth Dynasty which was around 2500 years before Christ. There are references in the hieroglyphic writing to this governor of the House of Books. During this time, pyramids were being built, and there existed high technology, shipping, astronomy, and libraries.

If one knows the history of Kemet, the Pyramid Age was a golden age for Africa. As there were libraries in Kemet, there surely were libraries in the southern area, Kush, however documentation is not available regarding those libraries.

The libraries maintained themselves through another golden age, which one might call the Age of Literature. Dr. Hilliard maintains that this second golden age should be called the Literary Age, because it was the time when African people's finest classical literature was developed. Again, this was approximately 2,000 years before Christ, in the Middle Kingdom before any invasion ever occurred. Many of these texts still are available, including the oldest book in the world written in the Pyramid Age. Since that time, there have been novels, short stories, poetry, epic plays, and biblical literature; an incredible array of all genre of literature is found in the classical library of the time, 2,000 B.C.

The major city of the whole world at that time was Waset/Luxor/Thebes. Luxor also was at that time the beginning and initial center of the world's oldest university. Today, this center is called the Temple of Karnak, in the city of Luxor. This grand university was the world's first institution established in 1500 B.C. It had 80,000 students, and had the greatest library of the known world. That library is called the Waset Library or the Thebian Library. Therefore, the Alexandria Library was established in Africa by the Greeks, and was predated by a library with perhaps a million volumes written on papyri (papyrus), which are the world's oldest and most complete books. The Thebian Library was destroyed after the New Kingdom, and before the Alexandrian library was created. That New Kingdom was the imperial age when African people ruled the world. In fact, the mother-in-law of Nefertiti ruled the nation. At this time, Africa ruled Syria, Persia, Greece, and other parts of the Mediterranean, and that qualified Africa as an imperial power.

The university had a curriculum outlined as grammar, rhetoric and logic, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music as the seven liberal arts. This curriculum later was copied by the Greeks who came to study. They returned to Greece with the curriculum which became the foundation for western education. The Greeks took only three subjects; the Romans realized the Greeks omitted four subjects and added them to obtain the seven liberal arts subjects which became the foundation for western higher education and the bachelors of arts degree in the United States.

Waset was up river about 400 miles from the Mediterranean. There were 42 towns on the river, and every town had a major school or temple, and each one had a library.

Dr. Hilliard presented a chronology of the powers which subsequently destroyed libraries in Africa. These powers included Syria, the Romans, and the Persians. The Persians who came in the 500s allowed the Greeks to enter Africa to study in the great classical university tradition. In 146 B.C. another library in Carthage (500,000 volumes) which the Romans were attached to, also was destroyed. The Alexandrian library was developed by Alexander, who was a student of Aristotle and who also studied in Africa. Aristotle moved his university when his pupil took over Kemet. Aristotle became famous by being exposed to this library. The Alexandrian library of two million volumes was not the main library of Kemet, and it too was destroyed by the Romans, led by Caesar in 48 B.C. The moment that the church was established there was a war on African churches and educational institutions which meant the further burning of libraries. Consequently, the end of the classical library of Africa was marked around 400 A.D.; however, it was not the end of library, because African people were then and are now one of the most literate people.

When the libraries were destroyed, the scholars of Kemet went south into the Sudan, north into Europe, west into West Africa, into Ethiopia, and carried with them their academic and intellectual tradition. The Africans of the

West with their intellectual tradition were attracted to the Arabic intellectual tradition, and established the University of Sankore at Timbuktu. The beginning of the city of Timbuktu occurred around 1100 A.D., and it reached its peak around 1600 A.D. The president of the University of Sankore, Ahmed Baba, who had written some 42 books--26 of which still exist in Arabic--was known to have had the smallest library on the faculty in West Africa. As a faculty member, his library consisted of approximately 1,500 books. Dr. Hilliard suggests that his remaining books should be translated into English.

These Africans, carried their traditions into Europe, before the 1600s. The process started in 711 A.D. when the Moorish conquest of Europe began, in Spain and Portugal. Dr. Hilliard asserted that it was African people who established the great universities of Europe before the Renaissance, and it was out of these universities that the impetus for the Renaissance began. These were African Moorish people who were not removed from Europe until 1492. This marked the termination of the intellectual leadership of Africa over Europe in the West. Therefore, the European libraries, in fact, were African universities with African libraries, and most of those were either destroyed or taken over by European people.

The workshop participants were told that in order to make slavery, segregation, and colonialism work, new pictures of the world had to be drawn by scholars. Dr. Hilliard recommended that the participants read, *Black Athena*, by Martin Bernal, which contains a chapter that highlights the story of the distortion and the reasons for such distortion. The distorted story began at the university when the library was changed.

Examples were given of what was said by scholars about Africa and Africans. The Greeks and the Romans painted a positive picture of Africa. A single university in Europe (Germany) was the home of the beginning of the end of a positive picture of Africa that Europe had held from the time of Homer.

Students are taught that when one thinks of classics, Plato and Aristotle are the prominent scholars. The African and Asian classics are not projected. Dr. Hilliard maintains that the humanities are truly a human tradition and not the exclusive tradition of any one group of people.

This distortion suggests a need to draw new pictures of reality, to define reality, and to get other people to accept that reality as if it were their own. According to Carter Woodsen in 1933, in *The Miseducation of the Negro,* he maintained that the attack on African people had been an attack on the mind. Accordingly, the new pictures of reality which were drawn to distort the picture must be changed. In this regard, it is essential to have an African centered curriculum, and those responsible for providing the basis for that Afro-Centric curriculum are the repositories of our mental heritage.

There are many people around the country who have succeeded in bringing the question of an Afro-Centric curriculum to debate. Temple University has the first African Studies Curriculum and an Afro-Centric Curriculum, Ph.D. program. There must be courses which document the story from the beginning of the human family on this earth, up to the present time. There must be more than a Black History Month which translates into "hero history," Hilliard said.

There is a need to restore the wholistic picture of African people over time. Secondly, that picture must be taken and fit into every academic subject in the curriculum from kindergarten through the Ph.D. program. In this regard, the HBCUs have a special mission to restore this picture. There remains a need to have a guide to the collections of resources, because there are gaps in all the libraries. Dr. Hilliard mentioned a book written in 1884 by Mack Richie, *Ancient and Modern Britons,* which documents the African presence in Europe from the 700s to the time of Columbus. Unfortunately, this book is out of print, however it is vital to any collection.

Dr. Hilliard presented ten points in the story of African people, and related the efforts of the public school system of Portland, Oregon in conducting a project for eight years to devise an African-centered curriculum, as well as curriculum of other groups of people, i.e., Hispanics, Native Americans, Asians. Dr. Hilliard maintains that in order to accomplish the task of devising an African-centered curriculum, the following points must be understood and addressed.

- Africa is the cradle of early man; Black people are the seed people of the whole human family, and there is only one kind of people, light skinned and dark skinned Black people on the continent. Race was invented.

- Modern man is African--homo sapien sapien.

- Africa is the cradle of the world's first civilization--from Kush to Kemet, not Babylon. Writing was in place 3100 B.C. Hieroglyphic writing is first seen when it is finished, 300-500 years before Kemet got started, which is in Sudan, now under water behind the Aswan Dam.

- Africa once held the position as world teacher. The books which document this fact exist; they must be indexed and accessible.

- There was and still is a continent-wide cultural unity that overrides the superficial appearances of cultural diversity.

- The first movement of African people throughout the world came as a result of a series of migrations, which took place over thousands of years.

- African people have been under siege for nearly two thousand years, and only most recently from European slavery and colonization. The Asians disrupted Kemet, followed by the Persians, then Greeks, then other Asiatics under Islam, then Europeans, Arabs, then Europeans. There was East African slavery by the Arabs, and West African slavery by the Europeans.

- The African diaspora is all over the world today.

- African people wherever they are always have resisted domination, on the continent, or the African diaspora.

- Even under slavery, colonization, segregation and apartheid, African people have made monumental contributions in the arts, sciences, politics, and in every facet of the human experience.

Dr. Hilliard concluded his remarks by emphasizing that African people hav excelled from the beginning to the present. The picture that is drawn o reality by scholarship supported by our libraries must show this story, or els false pictures of reality will be drawn, and the power will not be in the hand of African people.

THE COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN RETROSPECT

During the 1988 Black College Library Improvement Project workshop, "Networking for the Future: Developing Collections and Implementing New Technologies," a representative of each institution presented a brief report on accomplishments in the areas of collection development, library utilization, and staff development. This year, Ms. Francine Henderson, a member of the Black College Library Improvement Project advisory committee, assisted by Dr. Jessie Smith, prepared a display of flyers, pamphlets, and general information pieces disseminated on the campuses which advertised SEF/Mellon grant activities. She also provided remarks which summarized some similarities which she gleaned from the annual reports submitted by the institutions to the Southern Education Foundation.

Ms. Henderson asserted that it is evident from the reports that the project has given the HBCU recipients a financial means to develop their libraries in a manner that allows them to become more vital throughout the college community. In some instances, it has placed the library on the map in the college community. The library has become the focal point for study, for research, and truly has become an academic support system for the college.

One of the apparent outcomes has been the bridging of the gap between the faculty, especially in the humanities, and the library staff. This was evident in many different ways: the library advisory committees have functioned; there also was an effort on the part of the faculty to assist substantially with selection, collection assessment, and overall collection development. Librarians also have taken innovative steps to apprise the faculty of new acquisitions useful to their courses of study. These new materials have been used by the faculty and incorporated into the reserve and reading lists.

The SEF/Mellon funds are enabling librarians to be active agents in th area of outreach. During this past year, institutions documented tha librarians and library staff were invited by faculty to participate on panel which addressed issues of censorship. Faculty members requested assistanc from librarians in preparing bibliographies, and were part of the team plannir activities to be held in the library facility. Librarians also were initiatir programs, such as Black History Month quizzes, reading contests, writin contests, and book review panels.

In the area of library staff development, members attended seminars workshops, and annual meetings where they became more aware of new technologie and approaches. In the past, funds were limited for library staff to atten workshops, or even to sponsor in-house developmental workshops. Ms. Henderso pointed out that at one institution, a humanities library workshop wa conducted for the faculty called, "Creating an Interface Between the Librar and Humanities."

A few general observations were noted:

- collections in the humanities grew from approximately two to three times the size they were;

- bibliographic instruction included the actual teaching of the methodology of using research tools, and not the general information included in a freshman orientation bibliographic instruction class;

- secret bibliographic instruction workshops were held for the faculty with great success.

- SEF/Mellon books are being given prominent displays, and are receiving marked codes before being integrated

into the general collection (circulation documentation is good as a result of this process); and

- CCLC was being used and considered cost effective and efficient.

Ms. Henderson concluded her remarks by applauding the efforts of all participating institutions, and reminding the librarians to continue to devise methods of compiling statistics which can be informative to their respective institutions, SEF, and Mellon.

BUILDING THE FUTURE LIBRARY IN PRIVATE BLACK COLLEGES

Dr. Jessie Carney Smith, university librarian of Fisk University and a member of the library project advisory committee, highlighted the importance of the third year of the grant period with the representatives of the participating institutions. The support from the SEF/Mellon grant which represents the dwarf standing on the giant of the poverty witnessed over the years by the HBCUs has underwritten the present and has helped to begin the foundation for the future of the institutions. However, Dr. Smith warns that one is incapable of perceiving the future of libraries or the state of education at the HBCUs without understanding the past and dealing with the present problems.

The Black College Library Improvement Project has permitted the HBCUs to develop collections in the humanities as well as the sciences. Dr. Smith maintains that the private black liberal arts colleges have an equal concern for what will happen to their science graduates. She noted that the majority of Black scientists are in the traditional fields of biology, chemistry, zoology, microbiology, animal science, and mathematics, while fewer are found in the fields such as geology, astronomy, physics, entomology, and anatomy. Black engineers mostly are in fields of electrical and mechanical engineering

while almost none at all exist in bio-medical, petroleum, materials science, and engineering management fields.

Discussion continues in the education community relative to the need to diversify faculties; the discussion focuses on how to enhance the pool of minority faculty members. The task remains difficult, and statistics continue to reflect the problem. For example, in 1987-88, only four black Americans were said to have earned Ph.D.s in mathematics. In recent years, the number of college students majoring in the humanities has fallen sharply. Between 1975 and 1985, the number of philosophy majors was down by 37 percent; foreign language majors, down by 45 percent; history majors, down by 49 percent; and English literature majors, down by 59 percent. Dr. Smith raised the question: "What does this do for the pool?"

For the most part, educators agree that the potential minority faculty member initially may come from a black undergraduate college. Therefore, Dr. Smith maintains that for library-molders the work must begin now in the sciences as well as in the humanities. Librarians must take a leadership role in providing for students and the institutions. Dr. Smith offered the following as challenges which the HBCUs will face in the future:

- Sophisticated students--Students will be older, and thus perhaps more serious, creating greater demands on the library.

- High technology--libraries must decide whether acquiring high technology is a reachable goal, and determine where it will be if underfinancing continues.

Dr. Smith concluded by presenting her wishlist of what private blac college libraries could do with additional funding. Her suggestions include hiring of a part-time bibliographic instructor to help students and facult learn how to better utilize library resources; funding to speed up th

cataloguing process; funding for technology, archival processing, collection and staff development, and library utilization; and funding to retain a traveling consultant to visit libraries and offer suggestions for making the most of available staff and funding.

EVALUATION

The participants were asked to complete an evaluation instrument during t evaluation session of the workshop. The form requested that the responde rate the overall workshop and each session specifically. In additio participants were encouraged to provide comments on any of the sessions or t workshop in general.

Workshop Evaluation

The Southern Education Foundation received 40 workshop evaluation shee from the participants: 32 respondents stated that the workshop was exceller and eight rated the workshop as very good.

The participants offered comments pertaining to the substance of t workshop sessions. The consensus was that the selection of speakers and topi was excellent. Some of the more detailed comments were as follows:

- I have attended workshops for some thirty or more years. It is upon that basis that I say, without qualification, that this is the best one EVER!

- As usual, the intrinsic value of the conference was in sharing ideas and networking efforts toward common goals...

- This year, problems have been identified more clearly, and solutions have been proposed more soundly.

- Through this workshop and the Black College Library Improvement Project, I have come to realize and appreciate the important role of the library in fulfilling the academic goals of educational institutions. As a faculty member, my intentions are to be a full advocate for the library among my colleagues as well as the students.

Several librarians and faculty members offered comments relative to the importance of the workshop and the SEF/Mellon grant. One librarian shared the following:

- I feel enriched and eager to improve the services and collection of my library. These conferences have provided the development and growth I needed when there are so many trends and innovations in the field of librarianship. The grant provided opportunities to create and extend the services we offer. The faculty and administrators also are showing more concern for the growth and development of the collection because of the activities coming from the Southern Education Foundation/Mellon grant.

Workshop Suggestions

All representatives of the 20 participating institutions expressed the need for refunding in the three priority areas--collection development, library utilization, and staff/professional development--of the project. Each acknowledged that collections were increased two to three times per year during the life of the grant. In addition, faculty members were able to request volumes which enhanced their teaching of specific subject areas.

Four participants offered specific suggestions for future workshops:

- The conference participants are themselves very practical resource people. Perhaps, more sharing of ideas and activities (dreams!) might be useful--on both a structured and an informal basis.

- Perhaps several simultaneous sessions on particular problems or issues might be done for the next conference. An example would be a session addressing ways of getting people into the library, and another session discussing the use of technology by faculty and students.

- The questions of which technologies for libraries of our sizes and budgetary constraints needs to be thoroughly and explicitly addressed.

- It would be interesting to include the policy-makers of the colleges in these sessions.

SOUTHERN EDUCATION FOUNDATION/MELLON
BLACK COLLEGE LIBRARY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
BUILDING ON THE FIRST CENTURY:
HUMANITIES IN THE BLACK COLLEGE CLASSROOM

August 30, 31-September 1, 1989
Ritz-Carlton Hotel
Atlanta, Georgia

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