

MAY 1982

EDITORIAL POLICY

The BENCHWARMER is the official student dais of Atlanta University's School of Library and Information Studies. The views expressed in its contents are not necessarily those of the editors, the S.L.I.S., or Atlanta University. This newsletter will appear monthly on the first Friday of every month. All manuscripts are welcome and are subject to editorial review. The editors, however, reserve the right not to print any manuscripts received. All submissions are to be typewritten and will become the property of the BENCHWARMER. Each article should not exceed 200 words and every book review should be kept within 150. The deadline for all material is two weeks prior to publication.

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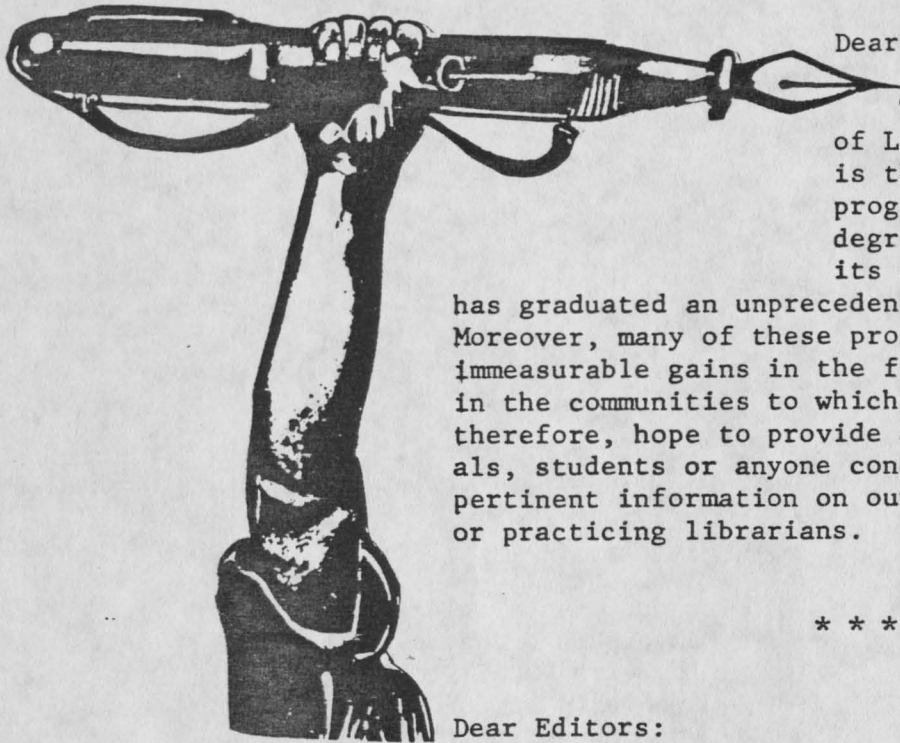
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Editorial Staff

Inga L. Summerville
Derryn E. Moten
Otis D. Alexander



Dear Readers:

The Atlanta University School of Library and Information Studies is the oldest black graduate school program offering an ALA accredited degree in Library Science. Since its inception in 1941, the school has graduated an unprecedented number of black librarians. Moreover, many of these professionals have gone to make immeasurable gains in the field of librarianship as well as in the communities to which they have served. The editors, therefore, hope to provide a platform from which professionals, students or anyone concerned, can provide viable and pertinent information on our roles and problems as potential or practicing librarians.

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Dear Editors:

Thanks are extended to John Bostick and Pauline Manaka (Benchwarmer 6, April 1982) for their input on the subscriptions to periodicals in the SLIS Library.

The subscriptions are reviewed and renewed annually. The two major elements which determine the subscriptions are the budget and the curriculum of the school. We can only employ the limited resources to select the most relevant titles to the curriculum of the school.

The subscription to the South African Journal for Librarianship and Information Science was suspended by the request of a faculty in 1980. However, the library is sent the title irregularly.

You are urged to recall the discussion or to prepare to have a thorough discussion in your classes of intellectual freedom, censorship, Library Bill of Rights, etc.

As a motto of librarians, the Library Bill of Rights has been hanging high in a significant place in the school. The periodicals in the SLIS Library have been tightly selected. The South African Journal for Librarianship and Information Science was not banned or removed from the library.

Hurrah for the strong stand. Speak up and fight with the arm in our hands. "Bury our heads in the sand, however, we will never deny the existence of a threat."

SLIS Library Staff

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Dear Editors:

Recently I observed, much to my own chagrin, a rather bizarre sight in front of the A.U.C. Robert W. Woodruff Library. On its mast, and in addition to the American flag, flew the state of Georgia which bears along with the state seal, the Confederate flag. Now, admittedly, I am from the North and am a recent immigrant here so I will, therefore, concede my ignorance of this matter; but I find it odd that a Black institution of higher learning would identify itself with something that contributed and led to the enslavement of its own people.

Presumably, flags serve as idiograms denoting a particular idiom or dictum. Yet according to my research, the Confederate States of America, a comprisal initially of six southern states - Mississippi, Georgia, South Carolina, Florida, Alabama, and Louisiana, disengaged themselves from the Union due to anxiety they had over the Presidency of Lincoln and the possible "restrictions he may have had on their right to do as they chose about the question of Negro slavery."*

Surely then, we cannot afford to brandish any object that in itself represents a foregone oppressive regime. Doing so would be a flagrant condonation for the atrocities suffered by a countless number of African and American slaves. And albeit one may forgive, quips an old adage, one rarely forgets.

D.E.M.

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**IT IS TRUE THAT KNOWLEDGE IS
POWER, BUT ONLY WHEN IT CAN
BE USED. THE INDIVIDUAL WHO IS
KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT HIM-
SELF, HIS COMMUNITY, HIS PEO-
PLE, AND THE POLITICAL, SOCIAL
AND ECONOMIC FORCES THAT
CONTROL THEIR LIVES, IS A VERY
VALUABLE PERSON. HE CAN ALSO
BE A POWERFUL PERSON IF HE
CAN TRANSLATE HIS KNOWLEDGE
INTO SOMETHING MEANINGFUL
FOR THE PEOPLE IN HIS COMMUN-
ITY. BE A POWERFUL INDIVIDUAL!**

**BE
A
BLACK
LIBRARIAN**

(from OLPR, ALA)

* John D. Hicks, "The Confederate States of America," World Book Encyclopedia, Vol. 4 (Chicago: Fields Enterprise Educational Corporation, 1966), 754.

Perspectives of the Dean

In December of 1981, Dr. Virginia Lacy Jones resigned from the position of Dean of the Atlanta University School of Library and Information Studies. The person who was chosen to replace her, Dr. Lorene Brown, has the responsibility of preparing most of the nation's Black librarians to enter the professional arena. Dr. Brown realized the extent of this responsibility and is prepared to deal with it. She is a graduate of SLIS, has taught here for a number of years, and also held the position of Assistant Dean from 1978-1979. From this experience, she has gained a special understanding of the School's functions and needs.

In her own words, Dean Brown believes "the most visible strength in the curriculum is evident in the success and productivity of the students and graduates. This is indicated by the responses received from the supervisors of graduates." She considers the School to have many other strengths, among them, "the constant evolution of the curriculum to respond to the needs of the profession, course offerings integrated with experiential activities, and a concerted effort to offer internships or work experiences to a large number of our students."

Regarding her goals for the Library School, she is striving to increase student enrollment, raise funds through private sources, and induce the alumni organization to be more financially responsive to the School.

Dean Brown is optimistic about the job market for graduates of SLIS. She advises students who are graduating in May to try and obtain a position which will serve to enrich their knowledge of the profession as opposed to accepting a position simply because it offers a high salary.

Dale C. Easton

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NOTES

Thanks to the SLIS students, faculty and staff for the acts of kindness during my time of illness. The long distance phone calls and cards were all indicative of concern for my health.

Also, thanks for the wonderful gifts given to me at the baby shower. It is indeed a pleasure to be a part of such a caring group. May God bless you all.

Ruth Evans Aldridge

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Thank you all for your kind words of sympathy during the bereavement of my father.

Denise Dobbins

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Censorship Needs To Be Censored

The question of censorship has been around for centuries, but the fact is, if a person is to show the truth, he has to do it in the most honest way possible even if it hurts and the reader does not want to be confronted with it.

There have been many misunderstandings with the word - censor. What does it mean? According to ALA's Intellectual Freedom Manual (1974), censor means "... not only deletion or excision of parts of published materials, but also efforts to ban, prohibit, suppress, proscribe, remove, label or restrict materials ..."

With all the inconsistencies of the definition, problems would not arise if both print and non-print media were not involved. But such as the case may be, librarians are faced with a perplexing problem. As long as there are people to read the books and periodicals that are housed in libraries, then the battle of censorship will constantly be fought.

Books and periodicals are in their rightful places and should not be banned from any library. For all reasons why they should be censored, are reasons why they should not be. Furthermore, it is not the responsibility of the library to censor because it caters to a wide variety of folk. If you want to censor books then, everything would have to be censored because everyone does not agree or have the same personality.

Censorship needs to be censored.

Otis D. Alexander

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Censorship or Sensitivity

Censorship. The mere mention of the word creates negative connotations in the minds of many educated and freethinking individuals. These individuals realize that men make decisions based on the information they receive from the sources available to them. Therefore, the uninhibited flow of information is essential in a free society.

Yet, one should be able to adopt a sensitive attitude toward certain materials without being accused of censorship. For example, those individuals that felt uncomfortable with SLIS subscribing to a publication from a country that advocates the systematic destruction of the lives of Black people were showing sensitivity to the socio-political ramifications created by receiving such a publication rather than advocating censorship.

Another case in point is the recent controversy in Virginia where educators wanted to ban The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, calling it a racist book. Their contention was that this book reenforces some of the most damaging stereotypes ever perpetrated upon Black people through the character called "Nigger Jim." Surely these educators do not advocate censorship in its purest form, rather, they believe and should be commended for believing that the stance against censorship, however noble, must be tempered by an awareness of the society in which we live and a sensitive attitude toward the harmful messages that some material may send to its readers.



Reflections

Evergreen Promises

Leading my child along supposedly
Setting the pace I foot -
Lagged each little step, thinking.
Winking about laying down
Rest to sleep thinking
About sliding, actually
Winking about sliding.

Stepping up hard
When the props were hard
Pressed into hardening flesh
Winking: to lay down and sleep
Give up and welcome
Living over what I know.
I know
How close I can cling to my own
Head pieces.

My evergreen son, vigorous
Unconscious
Vigilant in the garden I fertilized
Just for him, my son
Alert
Swung his amber eyes wide
Open-ly searching for the berth
We share.
Electric eyes striding through generations
Undeterred: I see promises
I made
Promises in blood I
Sowed deep in that garden
A growing, ever -
Green promise
Never giving over the real
Life I gave
Reminding me I should have known
Better.

Stepping lightly
Past the stoop (that wasn't even there),
A lift above a falling,
I fly safe
Heart-strong in that amber light of my own
Best self.

Lynn Wheeldin Suruma
© 1982

Tennessee Autumn

Apple butter bubbles in zinc tubs over wood fires
Filled the air with apple cinnamon sweetness.

Morning light made the surface of the lake shimmer
Silver--turned the leaves to gold, bronze, orange,
Red--to paint the hills.

Great-gran stirs the pots and sits as majestic as
The mountains with brown cotton stocking knotted
At her knees, felt slippers cut to free the bunions
On her feet.

Lines in her face are as seasoned as the autumn har-
vest.

Her smile remains as sweet as the air. She is the
cornerstone of the house of the family closet to
the river bank.

The children who eat the apple peels that drop
from her knife listen to her parables and adore
her spirit. While the grown folk love her with
tolerance.

Embarrassed by her mistrust of the doctors,
they pretend her remedies are useless--when the
children ask what steeps in the pots and scents the
house with the smell of the meadows.

She makes the magic that old men talk about in
Market Square as they chew and spit while the old
women spit and dip and sit for the bus that goes
to the end of the line to the dirt road closest
to the river.

Malaika Adero
© 1982

Lynn Wheeldin Suruma is an editor for the Institute of the
Black World in Atlanta.

Malaika Adero is a freelance writer, poet, and dancer living in
Atlanta. She attended Clark College and Atlanta University.



IN REVIEW

BLACK MASCULINITY: THE BLACK MALE'S ROLE IN AMERICAN SOCIETY

By Robert Staples (The Black Scholar, 1982)

Review by Derryn E. Moten

Robert Staples' Black Masculinity: The Black Male's Roles In American Society, as the title may imply, is an investigation into the demise of the black man's identity and function within this society. The author outlines how certain social, economic, and political factors systematically take their toll on the existence of black men. Hence, such societal components as racism, poverty and homosexuality are given timely assessments as they are shown as part of the social forces faced by many black men.

The author's treatment of the topic and its integral parts is concise though, nonetheless, astute. The book's most obvious drawback, however, is that Staples, at times, refers to studies or other social scientists with whom the average lay reader may be totally unfamiliar. Inasmuch as Staples' examination endeavors to encompass much within a broad arena, Black Masculinity is essential for anyone seeking a better understanding of the black man's dilemma in America today.

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A.U.C's Dedication of the Robert W. Woodruff Library

The \$18 million Robert W. Woodruff Library in the Atlanta University Center, open since January 1982, was dedicated on April 23, 1982. The ceremony was attended by an estimated 2000 members, friends and affiliates of the A.U.C. community.

Of A.U.C's various undertakings, the Robert W. Woodruff Library is the largest capital project to date. It is the unification of the libraries of six institutions that comprise Atlanta University Center: Trevor-Arnett, Quarles, Jordan-Thomas, Marquis L. Harris, Interdenominational Theological Center and Morehouse College libraries. The merging of the libraries were a true cooperative venture on behalf of the administration, faculty, library staff and students.

Dr. Virginia Lacy Jones, former Dean of Atlanta University School of Library and Information Studies, is the Director of A.U.C. Robert W. Woodruff Library.

Inga L. Summerville

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Special Libraries Association Student Chapter Activities

The SLA student group is completing a successful semester of activities. These activities included field trips to the Environmental Protection Agency Library, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change Library and Archives, the Atlanta Newspapers Library and the Alston, Miller & Gaines Law Firm Library. Students who attended the trips found them to be informative in terms of career options. Two colloquia were also sponsored by the Chapter: a presentation by Dr. Erwin Surrency, Director of Law Libraries at the University of Georgia in Athens, and a seminar conducted by the Institute of Scientific Information on Citation Indexing.

The final activity for the year will be a luncheon honoring Dean Virginia Lacy Jones, Emeritus, on May 21st, 1982 at the Picadilly Restaurant, Greenbriar Shopping Center. Luncheon cost ranges from \$2.00-\$6.00 and all SLIS students, faculty and staff are invited to attend.

Karen Reynolds

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HATS OFF!

Mary Sue Farmer, after graduation in May, will accept a position as an Information Specialist with the U.S. General Accounting Office, Atlanta Region. She began with GAO in an intern program in August 1981.

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SURPRISE!

In honor of motherhood, the ladies of AUSLIS surprised Ruth Aldridge and Karen Reynolds with a baby shower on April 21st. The mothers-to-be were showered with the unusual gifts of children's books based on the premise that these books would establish a library for each of the newborns. Titles given included Verna Aardema's Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears, Richard Scarry's What do People do All Day?, Ashanti to Zulu, African Traditions by Margaret Musgrove, and Donna Pope's The Peek-A-Boo Book.

Inga L. Summerville



FOR THE SEASONED MIND: A Reading List

HISTORY/SOCIOLOGY

Handy, D. Antoinette. Black Women In American Bands and Orchestras. Metuchen, N.J: Scarecrow Press, 1981.

Harding, Vincent. There Is A River: The Black Struggle For Freedom In America. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1981.

Joseph, Gloria I. and Lewis, Jill. Common Differences: Conflicts In Black and White Feminist Perspective. New York: Doubleday, 1981.

Staples, Robert. Black Masculinity. San Francisco: The Black Scholar Press, 1982. (see "In Review")

LITERATURE

Guy, Rosa. Mirror of Her Own. New York: Delacorte Press, 1981.

Sanchez, Sonia. I've Been A Woman. San Francisco: The Black Scholar Press, 1981.

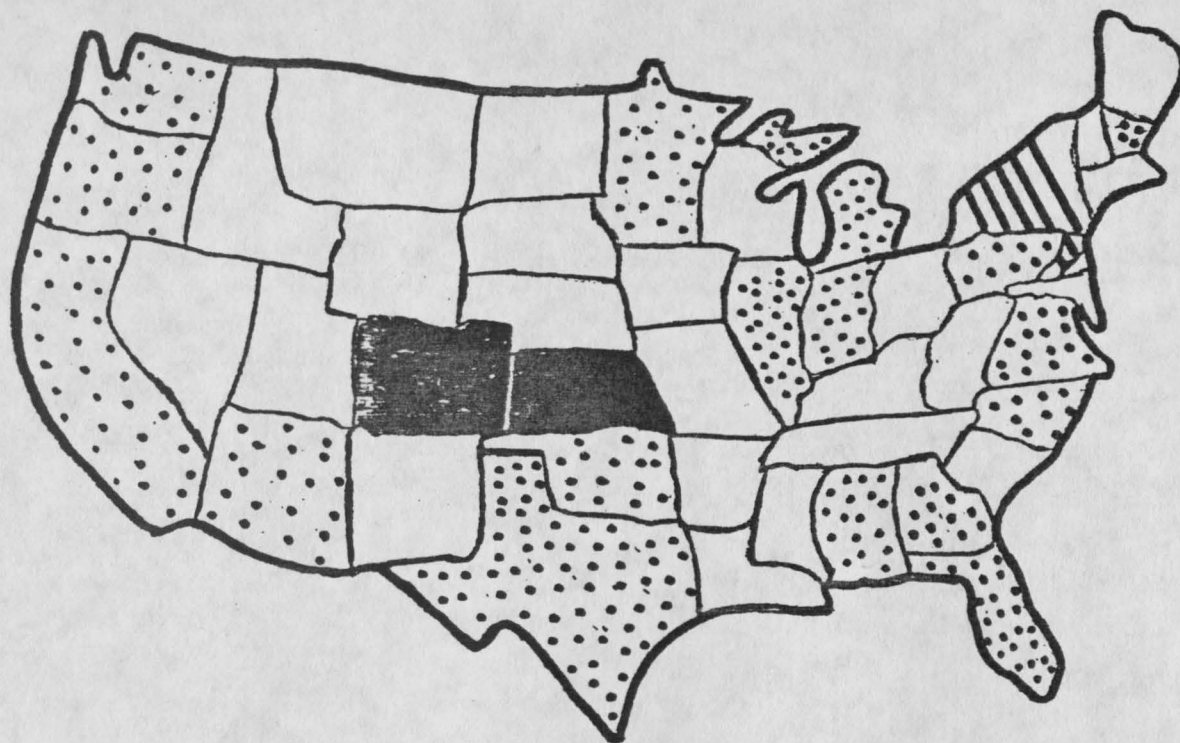
Shange, Ntozake. Three Pieces. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981.

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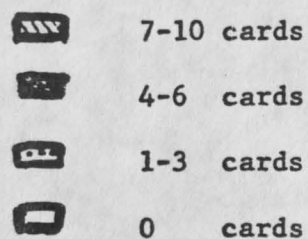
Basic, Basic, and BASIC
(A warmer word to those who have warmed the bench)

10 BASIC is not really basic,
20 And no matter like it or not,
30 Vigorously we had to work it out.
40 REM A\$ and B\$?
50 The strange character strings,
60 Did bring us lots of excitings.
70 DIM but down; up THEN INPUT,
80 FOR ... NEXT runs a loop.
90 LET READ, if not PRINT,
100 No delete, no STOP, no END.

Anonymous



WHERE THE
JOBS
ARE



The School of Library and Information Studies maintains a Placement Service Bulletin Board for its students, aiding them in securing positions in the field of librarianship and related professions. This cartograph reflects the location of the job opportunities based on the 85 cards posted as of April 23, 1982.

Academic libraries had 70 cards; public libraries, 10 and there were 5 cards for the special libraries. For the past two months there have been zero listings for positions in school librarianship.

What's Going On at A.U.C.

Atlanta University - Commencement

May 24, 1982, 11:00 a.m., Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial International Chapel, Morehouse College.

Clark College - Senior Worship Service

May 23, 1982, 11:00 a.m., Davage Hall. Speaker: Rev. Thomas Grissom, Jr., Salem United Methodist Church, New York, New York.

Commencement

May 24, 1982, 9:00 a.m., Vivian Wilson Henderson Center. Speaker: Rev. Jesse Jackson, President of Operation PUSH (People United to Save Humanity).

Interdenominational Theological Center - Commencement

May 15, 1982, 10:00 a.m., Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial International Chapel, Morehouse College. Speaker: Samuel DeWitt Proctor, Ph.D., Distinguished Professor of Education.

Morehouse College - Baccalaureate

May 22, 1982, 3:00 p.m., Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial International Chapel. Speaker: Rev. Harry Wright, Cornerstone Baptist Church, New York, New York.

Commencement

May 23, 1982, 3:00 p.m., Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial International Chapel. Speaker: Honorable Parren J. Mitchell, House of Representatives (Baltimore, MD).

Morris Brown - Baccalaureate

May 16, 1982, 3:00 p.m., John Lewis HPER Complex.

Commencement

May 23, 1982, 4:30 p.m., John Lewis HPER Complex.

Spelman College - Baccalaureate

May 16, 1982, 3:00 p.m., Sister's Chapel. Speaker: Mayor Andrew Young, Atlanta, Georgia

May 23, 1982, 9:00 a.m., Atlanta Civic Center. Speaker: Honorable Shirley Chisolm, House of Representatives (New York, NY).

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Waddell Art Gallery, Atlanta University - An art exhibit of Folk Artist

Nellie Mae Rowe, born 1900 in Fayetteville, Georgia, will open May 1, 1982. A reception will be held May 16 in the Gallery.

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