

Youth: Center of the Community

by Trisa Watson

Every other Wednesday evening, the Black United Front sponsors a meeting for the youth by the youth. The meetings are an extension of the Youth Care Project.

What takes place at these sessions are various conversations or rap groups concerning the individuals' feelings for his community and the youths' point of view of crisis that the average young person faces. Topics may consist of drugs, alcohol, sex, divorce, or any type of personal problem.

Wednesday, October 15, 7:00 p.m., at the King Elementary School, the guest speaker was psychologist, Jasper Ormond. The topic of the evening: youths' point of view of their community.

It was stated unanimously by the group that adults need to take more time out to talk to the youth. Not just to give advice, but to listen. It would also help the adolescents to achieve their goals if they were not put down so much or discouraged constantly. When you tell a child he is stupid and unworthy, he will grow to believe that. When you tell a young mind where he can go and how he can get there, you are building a wonderful personality. You are helping direct an unsure mind to dream toward the future, to plan on making their world a better place to live in. Guide us and help us eliminate the possibilities of becoming no one and having no dreams, looking forward to nothing. We all are special and can contribute to our community in our own individual way.

Some of the special qualities the individuals of this group said that they could contribute to their environment were: leadership, love, respect, care, compassion, honesty, endurance, positive attitudes, and intelligence. There are many other virtues and assets that we, the youth, contribute to our society.

Please remember that the youth of today are the adults of tomorrow. Whatever is taught to us (by our parents, relatives, school, church, and the media) or not taught to us, is what we will carry on for future generations. The youth are the center of the community.

(Trisa Watson is 15 years old and a member of the Black United Front Teenage Care Project.)

Ali Mazrui's "The Africans": A Short Analysis

by Herman Brame & Kamau Anderson

The nine-part television series, "The African: A Triple Heritage," written and narrated by noted African scholar Dr. Ali A. Mazrui, is being aired each Tuesday night through December 2nd on KOAP-TV, Channel 10, at 10:00 pm. Using historical facts and an analysis of modern African culture, Dr. Mazrui traveled much of the African continent in an attempt to explain Africa's present condition due to the influences of three cultural forces he calls "The Triple Heritage". These forces being indigenous African, Islamic and Western cultures.

The program has engendered both praise and sharp criticism from different quarters, but is nonetheless very informative no matter what position is taken on its objectivity or validity. Although one might question Dr. Mazrui's style in presenting his work, it is clear in his commentary that he has done tedious research in putting together a somewhat accurate picture of the contemporary African. Occasionally, he offers solutions to some of the problems that confront Africa today. Some of the criticism of "The Africans" series is that Dr. Mazrui is too harsh on the Western component of the triple heritage, mainly the European influence on the continent. Although he provides his own personal analysis of the modern African, he tells the historical story as it was acted out. Yes, the European influence was, and still is, for the most part, a negative phenomenon in Africa. It has taught the African to move away from his traditional African-based value system and adopt a hybrid value system based mainly on European values. This denial of self, that is, the denial of one's own historical and cultural values, has cost Africans and African descendants dearly. The first mother of the world was an African woman, thereby creating in Africa the first social structure called the family. The world's first concept of government and civilization rose out of African soil and was created by African minds. The oldest knowledge database of the human experience in the world is an African database. Why is it then that Africa has abandoned most of its rich heritage for alien value systems? Dr. Mazrui's "The Africans" provides some interesting clues to the answer to this question.

"The Africans" is a must-watch series, particularly for African-Americans. It is a very rare opportunity to see an African tell the story of Africa with a multi-million dollar financial resource on one of the major purveyors of information (and mis-information) in this country, the television.

The Sirius Study Group, a local study group with a focus on an afro-centric historiography, will sponsor a community discussion on Dr. Mazrui's "The Africans" on Wednesday, November 5, at the Talking Drum Bookstore, 1634 NE Alberta at 7:00 pm.

SEARS	OCT		NOV	
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