Perspectives



To Your Health II From African-Americans

"Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health is the most shocking and inhuman."

Martin Luther King, Jr.

That quotation is the lead for the introductory section of Black Health: A Review of the Births and Deaths of Black Oregonians published in September, 1989 by the Health Division, Oregon Department of Human Resources (call center for Health Statistics, [503-229-5897])

Today's article, however, is not an assessment of this very useful and informative publication, but, rather, we carry on from last week our review of the Black contribution to medical science-from ancient times to the modern era. I feel that such an examination should serve as an inspiration and motivation for our youth--providing role models for the generation of African-Americans needed to intervene in the traumatic state of Black health. Our youth cannot reach or aspire if our generation allows the establishment version of history to dehumanize them with its deliberate omissions and usurpations.

We move now from the ancient Ethiopians, Nubians and Egyptians to the medical contributions of their descendents on this continent. Several intervening epochs are omitted because a detailed description would require more space than a simple column permits. Reference is to the African Moors who, beginning in the 8th century A.D., revived science, medicine, and philosophy--rescuing European mankind from the Dark Ages, culminating with the Renaissance, the peak of intellectual revival. These "dark-skinned" (Shakespeare) Moors also established in West Africa the greatest school of its day in the world, the University of Timbuktu. Europeans came there to study in the same manner that today's Africans go to Oxford and Cambridge. These European immigrants were later to return home and establish their own schools--Proliferating the knowledge of Africa but never giving credit where it was due; like the Greeks.

The African-American pioneers we honor here are by no means the only major Black contributors to 20th century medical science, but it is felt that their names and/or specific achievements should ring a bell that transcends the generational gap. We would keep in mind also that the African-American physician--like our ministers-has also been in the forefront of the civil rights struggle and other social issues, from discrimination to voting rights. Their time, monies and energies have so often been placed at the disposal of the community.

We have seen them as writers, publishers, philanthropists, businessmen, advisors and a score of other categories. Our selection for this week follows:

Dr. Charles Richard Drew (1904-1950): This world-renowned pioneer in blood research and the developer of the modern blood bank, was an African-American surgeon to whom millions in this world (and their descendents) owe their very lives. The quick transfusion of blood plasma is vital to the victims of traumatic injuries--household, traffic, industry, crime or war. It is the fruition of this Black man's lifelong labors and dedication that has saved so many lives. Conquering every conceivable form of racism and discrimination in both academic and the laboratory, he nevertheless managed to reach "The Mountain Top." Dr. Drew gained his BA degree from Amherst College and his medical degree from McGill University in Montreal, Canada in 1933 on his 29th birthday (Doctor of Medicine and Master of Surgery). His residency requirements were met at Montreal General, and from here he accepted an appointment at Howard University Medical School as Instructor in Pathology.

The turning point in Dr. Drew's career came when he was awarded a research scholarship by the Rockefeller Foundation-it provided the opportunity to pursue his lifelong interests in blood, shock and transfusions. This two years of work (1938-1940) at Columbia University and its Presbyterian Hospital paved the way for his many momentous developments in the field (It was in 1939 that Drew's doctoral thesis "Banked Blood," 245 pp., was accepted by Columbia University and he became the first Black in the country to be awarded the prestigious Dr. of Science of Medicine-at

Though his work was seminal to all further development and was the basic structure for blood banks throughout the United States and the world, it was only in Europe that Dr. Drew was given the high honor and position he deserved-that of "Medical Director for the Plasma Project of Great Britain." This permitted the American establishment to backhandedly accept his work as the Model for the United States Army. Ironically, Dr. Drew died from loss of blood after an automobile accident on a southern highway. There have always been rumors that his death was due to the unusually long transport to a hospital that would accept a Black traffic victim at the time.

The Color Line Along

The Legacy of **Martin Luther King**

Martin Luther King, Jr., has been dead for nearly a generation. The political environment which defined his activities, the oppressive conditions of legal segregation and political disfranchisement, no longer exist. It is easy, therefore, for those who had opposed the democratic social vision of Dr. King while he was alive, such as President bush, to provide platitudes about racial equality and justice.

In the wreckage of the destruction of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, the absence of enforcement for affirmative action and equal opportunity legislation, and the policy of ignoring the mounting tragedies of Black unemployment, homelessness and growing poverty, most white American politicians hid behind the soothing image of King as an advocate of racial peace. They fear the disturbing implications of King's economic and social demands for restructuring America's social order in the final years of his life, and pretend that this final, radical phase of his political career never

Black politicians have a different responsibility to be truthful within African-American history. To be sure, Martin symbolized the struggle to desegregate the racist South, to dissmantle the structures of civil inequality. His famous "I Have a Dream' speech, given on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial on that hot August afternoon in 1963, spoke for the democratic sacrifices and struggles of millions of African-Americans, from the abolitionists like Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth to the early civil rights crusaders like Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois, A. Philip Randolph and Ida B. Wells. Black elected officials and all Blacks who had gained some degree of success within the cultural, social and political hierarchy of white America owe part of their accomplishment to King and thousands of other nameless freedom fighters, who demanded a redefinition of democracy beyond the color line.

But civil rights was not the only issue to divide America in the 1960s. Under the Johnson administration, the U.S. had sent over one half million troops to southeast Asia. Black Americans represented one out of seven soldiers in Vietnam, and suffered disproportionately high casualties because they were unfairly ordered into combat units. While the NAACP and Urban League, fearing political retaliation, cautioned against civil rights involvement in the Vietnam War debate, King made the decision to align his political beliefs with his ethical hatred of war. Against bitter attacks, Martin urged Black Americans to reject American imperialism abroad, and the sterile logic of crusading anti-Communism. King inspired millions to oppose the U.S. war

But Martin's political legacy transcended the issue of Vietnam. He began to recognize that the political program of integration was insufficient to achieve the material basis of equality for people of color within the U.S. He began t call for the nationalization of basic industries, in order to guarantee jobs for the central cities. Martin favored a plan for a guaranteed income for all Americans, and expanded social programs. To finance this domestic reconstruction, massive reductions in the Pentagon budget would be required. American foreign policy abroad would have to pull back from its support for imperialism, economic exploitation and political domination.

Martin's political vision also makes sense for the 1990s. We must advocate certain socioeconomic prerequisites for full participation in a democracy, such as the human right to a job, the human right not to starve, the right to decent housing and free medical care. Martin would insist that the battle against racism today is being lost, and that all Americans lose when Blacks' median incomes are barely 55 percent those of whites. Poverty is directly connected with urban crime. And the answer to urban chaos, Martin would tell us, is not more police and capital punishment. The termination of drugs, crime and social unrest will come about only with the total reconstruction of the central cities, requiring the cancellation of billions of dollars from the military budget. The real legacy of Martin Luther King demands a rededication to the struggle to create both a political and economic democracy in America.

Statement on Multi-Cultural Involvement

We are a culturally diverse society. This diversity is our strength. To honor diversity, to affirm excellence in each tradition, and to recognize that excellence is defined by the people within all cultures the Metropolitan Arts Commission will respect and seek to achieve multi-cultural diversity in our programs and administration through: Ensuring culturally diverse represen-

tation in decision-making through:

- * attention to multi-cultural diversity among juror selection panel members and
- advisory bodies; * affirmative recruiting and hiring of
- permanent and temporary staff; and

* continual consideration of multi-

cultural candidates for arts commissioner appointments. Development of policies, guidelines,

formulas, and procedures which provide equitable distribution of funding to arts organizations, artists, and activities which represent the diverse, multi-cultural communities of the state, county, and city.

To Be Equal by John E. Jacob

The Housing Crisis

American enters the 1990s in a housing crisis that demands resolution. The poor and the near-poor are victimized by escalating rents, a pressing shortage of affordable housing, and the results of a decadelong government withdrawal from lowincome housing assistance programs.

Fortunately, the Bush Administration plans to reverse that withdrawal. It has announced plans for a \$4 billion, three-year housing program that includes encouraging first-time homebuyers, tenant ownership of public housing and other measures.

It would also create "housing opportunity zones" in low-income neighborhoods with incentives for affordable housing creation and rehabilitation.

The package is nowhere near the scale needed, and the focus on home ownership is questionable. If the housing crisis is to be solved, the first priority should be a vast expansion of the housing stock and this proposal doesn't add a single new housing unit to the limited supply.

Many also doubt whether converting public housing projects to tenant co-ops will do more than saddle the new tenantowners with maintenance and rehabilitation costs they can't afford. Isolated examples of successful conversions don't necessarily mean the process will work everywhere.

So while it is encouraging to see the federal government expressing concern about housing, realism suggests that its proposed solutions to the crisis offer too little, too

And crisis is the only word to describe the housing crunch that afflicts moderate income families.

Over the past decade the number of poor households increased by more than 25 percent, while the number of low-rent housing units declined by 20 percent.

It's estimated that there are 8 million low-income renters competing for 4 million housing units. And that ratio is bound to get worse, as low-income areas become targeted for new developments aimed at the middle-income and affluent.

Minorities are hit hardest by the housing crunch. About a third of all poor African Americans live in substandard housing -about two-and-a-half times the proportion of poor whites living in such circumstances.

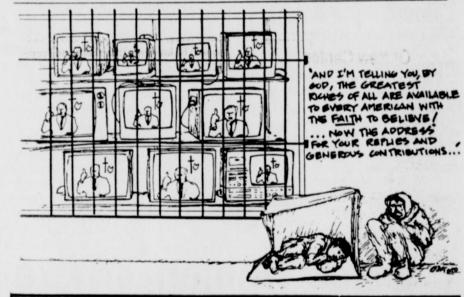
And as the poor got poorer in the 1980s, the share of their shrinking incomes devoted to housing costs rose sharply. A clear majority of all poor families spend more than half their income on housing, and two out of five of the minority poor spend at least 70 percent of their incomes on hous-

That doesn't leave much for other essentials--food, clothing, transportation. And the situation is even worse for poor single parent households with young children.

The most visible part of the housing crisis of course, are the homeless and especially the growth of homelessness among families with children. The invisible part of the homeless situation is the widespread doubling-up that's happening, as people who can't afford to maintain their own homes move in with relatives and friends. often shuttling back and forth among sev-

Policy-makers have to understand that the demand for affordable housing is double the supply, and that the housing crisis can't be resolved unless the supply is drastically

owenstein Paun Loan



Provision of technical assistance in designing steps toward greater diversity in board membership, staffing, and artistic programming of institutions and organizations which receive state, county and city

G·U·E·S·T E·D·I·T·O·R·I·A·L

Burnt Beans In Boston

by Ullysses Tucker Jr.

One thing I learned about my living experience in Boston was that, it was a culturally polarized town filled with "Ellis Island" ethnics full of nationalistic pride and self-imposed limitations.

The Irish in Southie, Jewish folks in Brookline, Italians in the North End, Blacks/ Jamaicans/West Indians in Roxbury/Mattapan/Dorchester, and the W.A.S.P.'s in the Back Bay/Beacon Hill. Each neighborhood has it's own set of values, morals, politics, and attitudes. Furthermore, each area has established a general perception or list of stereotypes associated with communities outside of their own. The bottom line, you stay out of my neighborhood and politics and I will stay out of yours.

As a youth, I can vividly remember watching on television a Black man being stabbed with the point of a flag pole, bearing our nations flag, during a anti-busing demonstration. Considering the nationalistic mentality that exists in Boston, one can see now how it may have been difficult to accept your third generation family member from Israel being bussed to a German area high school (the Holocaust all over again?) or any other ethnic area with a competitive attitude towards one another.

Actually, I had forgotten about the television incident mentioned earlier until a major corporation I worked for relocated me to Boston. Outside of Larry Bird and the Irish being King, I knew very little else about the city. As a Manager for a broad base of accounts, I had to travel all throughout Massachusetts, as well as the region, in order to take care of business. If I desired to eat and pay bills, I had no choice.

In mentioning to some of the few friends I met while there that I had gone to areas like Charleston, South Boston, Medford (Yes, there is another one . . .), etc. . . . I would get called crazy and kindly told to get a gun. I knew no limitations or even considered the notion that I was not suppose to be in certain areas after dark. Ironically, I moved to Boston on Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday (1986) because I thought it would be an excellent company anniversary date.

Granted, I was called "nigger' and "boy" several times but like boxer Mike Tyson, I took the punch and continued my progress forward. I had accepted within myself that racism, a cancer, is something that I have to fight with "chemo," my pride and dignity, for the duration of my life. A man can not ride your back unless it is bent.

So, it comes as no great revealation that Charles Stuart, the man who gained national sympathy and attention after reporting that his pregnant wife had been shot/ murdered by a black assailant, turned out to be a hoax. White, middle-class suburbanites, even tax paying ---- "No welfare gettin'" folks done wrong by them Black people, again. The city's attitude was primed for such an event.

Oh, Boston was hurting, crushed emotionally at such a cold-violent act, and many donated money toward a reward fund. The mayor said that Boston would capture this cold-blooded person and bring him to justice. The old racists pulled out the white sheets, rekindled the burning crosses, and tossed the old rope up on the hanging tree for this special occasion. The public lynching of an undesirable species -- a Black man.

All the better, an excellent excuse to harrass undeserving Blacks, a reason to knock off some of the cobb webbs still on the "Nightsticks," or better still, another reason not to trust your well meaning, taxpaying Black neighbor, who just so happens to be a suburbanite too. No wonder the NAACP, the Boston Urban League, and other civil rights groups are mad.

When you consider that 43% of the male prison population are Black males, it only makes a logical person wonder how many William Bennetts, the accused, their are imprisoned unjustly in America's criminal justice (just us) system . . .? The mayor and many others have since apologized to Bennett for the incident.

I can only begin to imagine how the Mayor (Ray Flynn) and others on the "lynch mob" felt when they learned that Charles Stuart, who went so far as to point Bennett out in a police line-up, jumped off the Tobin Bridge shortly after learning that he had become a suspect. Stuart's brother, Matthew, came forth with Carol's Stuarts wedding ring to prove that no holdup occurred. Investigators are still checking accounts that Stuart and his brother were after \$600,000 in insurance money. A sad story, indeed, at the expense of the Black community and a innocent Black man.

Unfortunately, the general perception held among white people is that Blacks are basically criminals and on welfare. By the same token, many Blacks feel that they can't get a decent break in this political/ economic system. It's also easy to see how the media can serve as gasoline on an existing fire by reinforcing existing attitudes towards each other. Be it Boston, Washington, D.C., New York City, Chicago or Portland, there is a great deal of hatred between races. All it takes is one incident like Howard Beach, Tawana Brawley, Norfolk, VA, and now Boston for that cancer, racism, to rear it's ugly head.

As people in these United States, we have a long ways before achieving what Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. desired for all mankind. He wanted truth, justice, and equality for all. Let us use his birthday, not just as a day off work, as a day to reflect on our attitudes, values, and committment to keeping his dream alive. Stop the madness.

Problems Plaguing Businesses Today!

Drugs in the workplace, employee theft, unethical business practices, job related stress; these are some of the problems plaguing businesses today. The time has come for business to move beyond the old work paradigm into the new. New Thought Network has recently been founded to assist employers and employees in creating healthy work environments by promoting ethical business practices that acknowledge human value, foster personal growth, and produce "win-win" situations.

Terry Rahm, president of New Thought

Network, has found that many employees, and their employers, are expressing a strong desire for shared vision and ethical and supportive workplaces. With 20 years experience in the business world, the last 11 in business and financial management, Rahm believes "Work and pleasure can be one and the same; career and convictions go hand in hand; personal values and ethics are compatible with successful business."

New Thought Network is an association of businesses and individuals who share similar vision and values. Members meet

monthly to exchange ideas and develop strategies for positive change. Classes and workshops are offered which are designed to assist in practicing ethics in the workplace, gaining enjoyment and satisfaction from one's current job, increasing self-esteem, and improving interpersonal communications. New Thought Network facilitates networking among members offering employment and those members seeking employment. Additional services are offered dependent upon the needs of the

Leon Harris/Goneral Manager Alfred L. Henderson/Publisher Joyce Washington **Gary Ann Garnett** Sales/Marketing Director **Business Manager** PORTLAND OBSERVER Is published weekly by Exie Publishing Company, Inc. 4747 N.E. M.L.K. Blvd. (503) 288-0033 (Office) Deadlines for all submitted materials: Articles: Monday, 5 p.m.; Ads: Tuesday, 5 p.m. The PORTLAND OBSERVER welcomes freelance submissions, Manuscripts and photographs should be clearly labeled and will be returned if accompanied by a self-addressed envelope. All created designed display ads become the sole property of this newspaper and can not be used in other publications or personal usage, without the written consent of the general manager, unless the client has purchased the composition of such ad, 1969 PORTLAND OBSERVER, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED, REPRODUCTION IN WHOLE OR IN PART WITHOUT PERMISSION IS PROHIBITED. Subscriptions: \$20,00 per year in the Tri-County area. The PORTLAND OBSERVER -- Oregon's oldest African-American Publication-is a member of the National Newspaper Association -- Founded in 1885, The Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association, and The National Advertising Representative Amalgameted Publishers, Inc., New York.

Portland Observer Newspaper 4747 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr., Blvd. (Formerly Union Avenue)	
New Subscription Renewal Gift Subscription	
Name	
Company	
Address	-
City	
StateZip	-
Phone	
1 Year - \$20.00 2 Years - \$35.00 (Allow 2 to 3 weeks for Delivery)	