



Communications

One of the more powerful institutions in our society is the communications establishment -- newspapers, magazines and the broadcast media. Like many institutions in the U.S., minorities have historically been absent from influential positions in communications.

In the past this lack of representation was compensated for through the creation of smaller minority controlled media usually referred to as the minority press. The minority press was created for a number of reasons: as a means of communicating news of importance to minority communities given the exclusion of minorities from mainstream media; as a means of generating a sense of pride and community; as a means of minority journalists being able to practice their craft given their exclusion from positions with mainstream media.

Conditions are of course improving. Our two feature stories in this issue of *Alliance* are symbolic of the past and the future of minorities in communications. We talk with a professor who has studied the history of the minority press from its beginnings to the present and we talk with a KSU journalism senior whose career aspirations, interests and enthusiasm are perhaps indicative of what the future may hold for minorities in communications.

We also, with this issue, say farewell to our readers for the semester. *Alliance* will take a summer vacation but will be back in print when classes begin again in the fall. Happy summer vacation!

Bontrager on the Minority Press... Is Anyone Listening?

Robert Bontrager has something to say but he wonders if this generation of college students can afford to listen.

Bontrager is a KSU associate professor of journalism whose expertise is the ethnic minority press and international communications. Like an increasing number of academics, this quiet, scholarly man has the misfortune of being an expert in an area that was considered important by the last generation of college students but that the present generation seems unable to "afford."

It has been said that we are living in an era of the "me generation"; that young persons today are more interested in exploring the frontiers of "self" rather than "others"; that this generation of college students' interests lie in good jobs, hefty salaries and classes that are directly related to jobs.

Where does this leave Professor Bontrager? It leaves him with years of declining enrollments in his ethnic minority press class until at present the enrollments are too

small to warrant offering the class. It leaves him with a scholar's desire to explain this curious shift of interests. And it leaves him with the fear that college students are not learning enough about the world's and their country's ethnic and cultural diversity.

For Bontrager, "prejudice is enhanced by a lack of knowledge." But it is not only the threat of continued racial prejudice looming in the future that causes Bontrager to promote the academic study of ethnic minorities. Says Bontrager:

"I think its study (of the ethnic minority press) is important just as any historical study is important. We need to study ethnic minorities to really understand who we are."

"Maybe if we could spend more time in serious ethnic studies we would find that what we know of our history as a people has huge gaps that need to be filled with knowledge. Its study could bring about more understanding and a kind of cultural identity that is more complete."

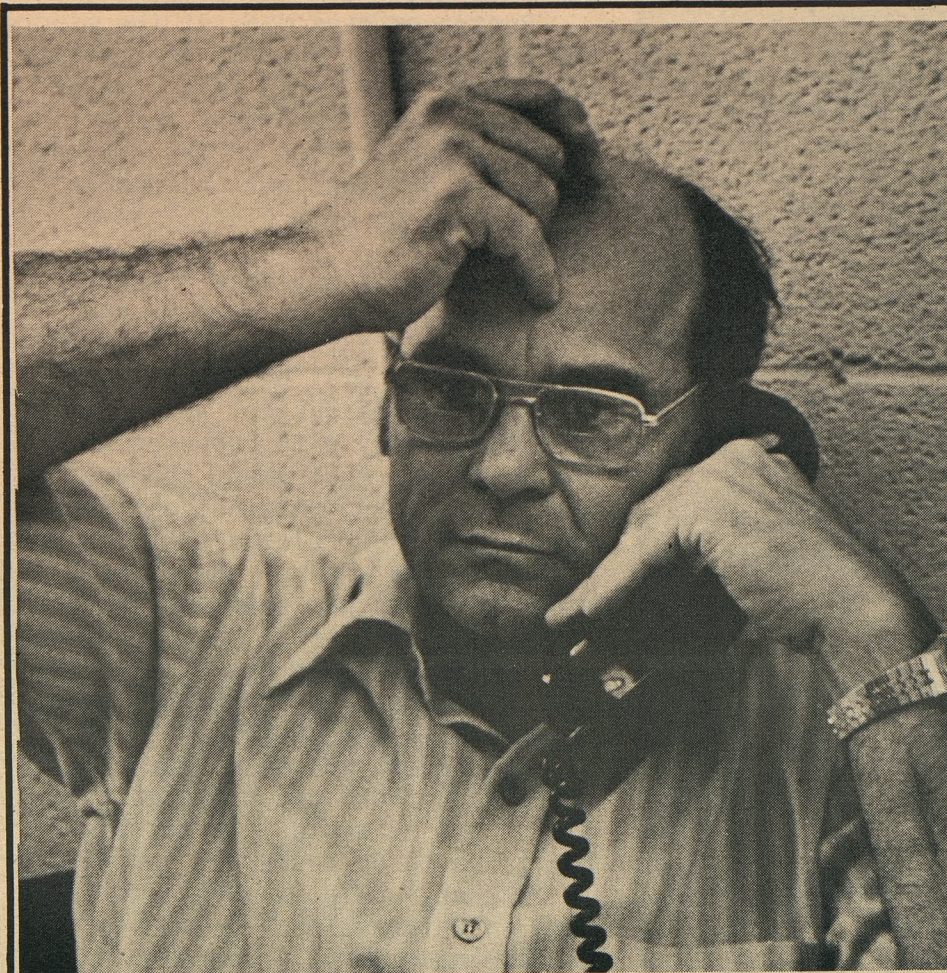
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Professor Robert Bontrager: How to get the "me generation" to learn about other peoples and cultures.

Photo by
Tim Bontrager

BONTRAGER...

Bontrager has a theory about why classes like his on the ethnic minority press have declined in popularity. His theory is that the world has become so uncertain for young persons today that they have turned inward for security. In these uncertain times students seem to have decided that they cannot afford the luxury of "superfluous" classes that do not appear directly related to their major or to obtaining jobs in a tight job market.

When Bontrager first came to KSU and began teaching what was then called the black press class, enrollments were large. "When I came here in 1970," says Bontrager, "the class was offered in the fall, the spring and intersession. Interest was high. Enrollment was usually split 50/50, half black, half white.

"A lot of class members came from communities in Kansas in which they knew nothing about blacks. Many of them had never sat in class with a black."

According to Bontrager, interest in ethnic minorities was greater at that time and students were more interested in finding out about other peoples and cultures. "It's not enough of a dominant interest today for students to select a course in it," says Bontrager. "Now students are more self-centered, they're interested in acquiring a skill and getting into the right career area.

"The interest of college kids has moved after the Viet Nam war to an interest in the good life syndrome; to careers that can assure the biggest salaries. Students are seeking self-fulfillment. They're moving in the direction of 'me,' not 'others.'"

"YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO BACK TOO MANY YEARS TO FIND THAT BLACKS WERE TOTALLY IGNORED BY MOST NEWSPAPERS EXCEPT FOR CRIME."

Students who took Bontrager's class in the past learned about the history of the black press, delving, for example, into pre-Civil War black newspapers. Because of a paucity of research in this area, Bontrager says he "always tried to get students to do original research."

Bontrager's past classes on the ethnic minority press also looked at the role and functions of the minority press. According to Bontrager the minority press differs very little from the majority press, with both having the same format. The major differences are that in the minority press, stories are written for and about minorities and there is a prevalence of "achievement stories" -- stories that highlight the achievements of ethnic minorities. According to Bontrager, achievement stories stem from the historic social and economic inequalities between minority and majority persons.

With the gains minorities have recently achieved in the economic and social realms, there are some who predict the demise of minority newspapers, magazines and broadcast media. But Bontrager disagrees. He predicts that even in the face of complete equality, the minority press would continue, but that its emphasis would shift toward more cultural heritage and history stories.

Bontrager first became interested in the ethnic minority press when he worked in a publishing and printing

establishment in the "Belgian Congo," now called Zaire. The establishment, which was affiliated with the Menonite Church, attempted to encourage the publishing of native authors and was involved in printing materials for adult literacy programs. According to Bontrager, works were printed in 25 to 30 languages.

When Bontrager returned to the U.S. in 1965 he began graduate work at Syracuse University where his interests in the black press continued, particularly because so little scholarly work had been completed on the subject. His Ph.D. dissertation was a study of the readership patterns of an inner-city population as they related to black newspapers and magazines.

Through his research Bontrager found that the minority press serves as "supplemental" reading for minorities who customarily also read and watch majority media. "It is supplemental reading mainly to fill in, not only on the information side but also on the comment and editorial side," says Bontrager. "You don't have to go back too many years to find that blacks were totally ignored by most newspapers except for crime. You would have had to conclude that blacks were never born, they never died, they never got married. That has been corrected to some extent. However, there are a lot of events even on this campus concerning minorities that are not reported on."

According to Bontrager many mainstream media began including news about minorities for political purposes. Bontrager points out that many media failed to realize that minorities should be included in their own right, not just to satisfy political pressures. "They didn't realize that minorities are an important segment of the audience," says Bontrager.

According to Bontrager one of the problems with covering minorities by the mainstream media has been an attitude that only a minority person could or should report on "minority news." This attitude has created a two-sided problem. On the one hand many minorities resent always being assigned stories that deal with minorities. But at the same time the work of majority persons who report on minorities is often suspect.

Bontrager says many of the minority graduates of the KSU journalism department have faced this kind of problem. "Will they work for a majority publication or for a black newspaper or magazine? Arguments can be made on both sides," says Bontrager.

Bontrager's research interests are now beginning to move in the direction of "international communications." He will begin offering a class in this subject and hopes it will fit nicely with proposed Arts and Sciences requirement changes that include an "international overlay." Bontrager claims that his research in the area of the ethnic minority press has been "dormant" for awhile, primarily because of the lack of interest in his class. He hopes, however, to revive his research endeavors in the subject.

Bontrager, who also teaches theory, research methods and magazine production, says he would like to return to Africa to do research, "particularly if there would be more interest here in international communications and the mass media in developing countries."

Students Receive Awards

Three Mexican American students have been awarded KSU Mexican American Alumni Association Academic Scholarships. The scholarships of \$400 each are awarded on the basis of academic achievement and community involvement.

This year's award recipients are Anita R. Bond, a K-State sophomore in speech, Joseph Eugene Varrientos, an incoming freshman from Wichita, and Paul Olivarez, an incoming freshman from Dodge City.

The scholarship program is in its fourth year and is supported by private donations. The awards are presented every year at the Mexican American Alumni Association's Awards Banquet.

Anita Bond is a 30-year-old student who attended high school in Greybull, Wyoming, where she graduated in the top 10 per cent of her class. She also attended Northwest Community College in Powell, Wyoming before beginning her studies at Kansas State in 1979.

In high school Ms. Bond was involved in numerous extra-curricular activities including band and orchestra, class plays, writing a newspaper column, drama club, forensics and poetry reading and writing.

Since coming to Kansas State, Ms. Bond has continued her interests in writing and poetry and is becoming a promising young poet. She is an outstanding academic student as reflected in her very high GPA. Her initial goal is to become a "good writer" of poetry, prose, plays and perhaps magazine stories. Her long range goal is to teach writing at the university level.

Joseph Varrientos is an 18-year-old entering freshman who is ranked fifth academically in his high school class at Wichita High School West.

At high school and junior high school levels he has lettered in varsity basketball, football and track and has played numerous parts in school drama productions. He has been an active member of student council, chess club, concert choir, band and orchestra and forensics. Varrientos is a member of the American G.I. Forum and the church choir at St. Mary's Cathedral in Wichita.

Varrientos' interests lie in "data systems design and repair" and electronics.

Paul Olivarez is a 17-year-old entering freshman who attends Dodge City Senior High School where he ranks academically in the upper 5 per cent of his class. He has been on the school honor roll, is a member of the Catholic Youth Group and has been an alter boy and alter boy instructor at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church. He also has been an assistant coach of Kansas Kids Wrestling.

Anyone wishing to contribute to the scholarship fund and thereby aid in the recruitment and retention of academically outstanding Mexican American students can do so by sending a check to the KSU Foundation, c/o Mexican American Academic Fund, Hollis Alumni and Endowment House, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas 66506.

KSU Senior Combines Communications, Retail, Self-Confidence

Picture the average 21-year-old college student: soiled jeans, overworked, underfed, confused about what he or she wants out of life, experimental, rebellious, with an underdeveloped, slightly bruised self-concept.

Now focus on K-State senior Errol Cade: fashionable clothing, overfed, relaxed, jovial, knows what he wants out of life and is steadily working toward it, healthy self-concept, exuding self-confidence. In short, Errol Cade is an anomaly -- a rare bird. This 1980s student drips with individuality in everything from his double major to his disarming self-confidence.

It took Errol Cade exactly two months into his freshman year at K-State to realize that he was not the type to quietly carry out his father's wish for him to be a business administration major. Even at the tender age of 18 he knew his interests lay in a unique combination of communications and retail merchandising. So he transferred to the College of Home Economics and began work toward a B.S. in journalism/mass communications and home economics. He had expressed his individuality earlier by choosing K-State over his parents' desire to have him attend a community college close to his hometown of Kansas City, Kansas. Says Cade: "I love my parents to death but I needed my independence. I've never regretted it."

With his double major Cade's overall goal was to learn to apply communications skills, particularly promotion and persuasion, to retail merchandising. His long range goal is to own his own retail business.

Cade first became interested in retail merchandising in the ninth grade of high school when he began work part-time and summers for a Kansas City food specialty shop called Topsy's. Cade became intrigued with the whole field of buying and selling, display and promotion. Even though he was only a high school student he assumed increasing responsibility at the store, which sells popcorn and ice cream. He did purchasing and inventory, but perhaps his most interesting task was the making of displays to better sell the merchandise. Cade's displays were hardly lacking in creativity.

For example, one Easter Cade took a flower basket and put some greenery in it and brightly colored popcorn balls on sticks. A simple idea but thanks to Cade's attractive visual display the store sold out of popcorn balls on sticks.

Cade, who says he gets bored easily, was attracted to the retail field because of its constant change and variety and its responsiveness to trends, particularly fashion trends. "I've always been interested in buying and selling. Retail is an exciting and profitable business. I don't want a job where you do the same thing every day. I couldn't stand working like on an assembly line. There's no excitement, no chance to learn. I think working should be learning too." Cade became sold on Kansas State's retail merchandising option by two friends who were graduates of the program.

Cade's communications interests began to develop in junior and senior high when he worked for his school newspaper, but his first loves were always the broadcast media. In his radio-tv classes at K-State Cade has combined his retail and communications interests by developing radio advertisements for clothing and other goods and by working on "visual merchandising" using television. He hopes to continue in this vein in future employment by working in retail promotion, public relations and advertising.



K-State senior Errol Cade broadcasts over the student-run radio station, KSDB-FM on the third floor of McCain Auditorium.

Cade says he would initially "like to do things like design logos for a store, arrange preview shows for new designer lines, do public relations for a major shopping center, develop displays on a mall or fashion shows."

Cade anticipates he will be well-prepared for the work world. He claims he's been "trained very well" by K-State. He says his mass communications instructors were "the best instructors in the world." For Cade the most important characteristic of his communications training was its emphasis on "professionalism," which he defines as an "orderly, tactful way of doing things -- well-planned with no loose ends. You know what to do, how and when to do it."

Cade may have had a pretty good sense of "professionalism" even without his K-State training. He appears outgoing and friendly and he readily admits "I'm not shy. I never have been." He traces his lack of shyness, his friendliness and self-confidence to some unusual sources. Says Cade: "I've been fat all my life. And when you're fat you get a lot of jokes made about you. In about the second or third grade I decided who needs this? People shouldn't let things bother them that they really can't help. Everyone isn't perfect. I decided people must accept me as I am."

More importantly, says Cade, his self-confidence and forthrightness stem from his parents, particularly his father. "My father didn't bring me up to be wishy-washy," says Cade. "He wanted me to know what I want."

For Cade, having a healthy self-concept becomes particularly important for college students. He claims that many persons begin to rebel when they come to college; that "they don't feel good about themselves" and "they forget who they are and how they were raised." Cade cautions: "I would recommend that they always remember their upbringing. Don't change and do things you've normally never done. Don't do something because so-and-so told you to. Know what you want to do and what you want out of KSU."

As a graduating senior Cade also recommends that students think of college as a total life experience, not just studying and classes. Education meant intellectual growth for Cade, but he says it also meant social growth. "College is a lot more than studying," says Cade. "It's socialization, friendship and activities. This all makes up school. College is meant to be remembered for the rest of your life."

In addition to his studies, while at KSU Cade has played piano for K-State's United Black Voices, he was music director for Ebony Theatre Company's recent production of "Amen Corner," he is a member of Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity, he has participated in Black Student Union activities and is vice-president of Black Greek Council.

Cade is now beginning his post-graduation job search. He wants to begin his work experience in his home area of Kansas City. He says his plans are to start out close to home, "get my feet planted, then branch out." Cade claims that Kansas City is becoming an increasingly important retail marketing center.

In summing up his college experiences, Cade says he's always felt that "by being black I had to compete more. I feel like I've had to work a little harder than everybody else and I attribute that to being black. But I happen to be black and if that's what I have to do, then that's it. I'd rather do that than just slide by."

JOB HELP

The Newsweek ad shows twenty typewriters all in a row. Twenty sets of hands are typing at the typewriters. Nineteen of them are white, one set of hands is inked in. The ad's copy then begins: "Today only 1 out of 20 daily print journalists in America's newsrooms is nonwhite."

This recent Newsweek advertisement concerned a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation called Institute for Journalism Education. It calls itself "the largest single source of minority newspaper talent in the country." The institute's mission is to help recruit, train and place racial minorities in newspaper and magazine jobs across the U.S.

The institute is supported by foundations, private industry and other contributions. It sponsors three programs: 1) a summer program for minority journalists at the University of California at Berkeley which trains and places 20 beginning journalists a year; 2) a "job net" which helps place minority job seekers at all experience levels; 3) an editing program which prepares 10 experienced professionals each summer at the University of Arizona at Tucson for copy editing jobs.

For more information about IJE, we urge you to write: Institute for Journalism Education, 1523 New Hampshire Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. PH: (202) 462-5939.

EDITOR'S NOTE: FAREWELL

This is the year's last issue of Alliance and regrettably, it is the last issue for which I will be Alliance's editor. My husband and I will be leaving Kansas this summer to move to California.

Alliance was begun almost two years ago. It went through many format changes until we settled upon its present form -- a four-page tabloid on newsprint. Like many campus offices we do not have unlimited funds so we save money by typing our copy rather than having it set in print. Given our funding limitations we have tried to produce the best looking product possible.

Alliance has a mailing list of approximately 1500. It is mailed to all ethnic minority students, all ethnic minority classified personnel, all deans, department and division heads and selected faculty on campus.

Alliance has a number of purposes. Its primary purpose, however, is to serve as a vehicle for positive news about ethnic minorities. Too many times people only receive news about ethnic minorities when it is negative. Our purpose has been and will continue to be to focus on positive accomplishments and happenings that are taking place at KSU every day but frequently are never seen in print. In the long run our goals are to generate pride in minority accomplishments, to change some people's attitudes about ethnic minorities, to educate and to provide good, interesting reading.

The feedback we have received on Alliance has been heartwarming. I have a bulging file folder of letters complimenting us on the newsletter, stories from Alliance have been reprinted in local and national newspapers and copies of Alliance have been circulated to Florida, New York, Nebraska, New Jersey, Missouri, Alabama and Washington. These examples only include those we have learned of. There may be more.

Given the overwhelmingly positive response we have received, our office will definitely make every effort to continue publishing Alliance after I am no longer its editor.

I leave Kansas State with a mixture of melancholy and excitement: melancholy because of the friends and colleagues I leave in Kansas, excitement because of the professional opportunities available to me in California.

There are many people I have come to love and respect during the eight years I have lived in Kansas. I have benefited personally and professionally from my fellow staff members here at Minority Affairs and I have particularly enjoyed working for my direct supervisors, Anne Butler and Veryl Switzer. In the last few years I believe Minority Affairs has become one of the more dynamic units on campus in terms of innovative programming ideas and serving students and the community. I consider myself fortunate to have been associated with this office.

During my tenure at Kansas State I have had an enduring concern that began many years ago and which has been reflected in most issues of Alliance. My concern is that all Kansas State students learn about different peoples and cultures. There are too many students obtaining college degrees who I find it difficult to say are "educated" in the true sense of the word. It is especially important that this university's students be exposed to this country's and the world's human diversity given the smalltown, homogenous backgrounds of many students.

I believe the "international overlay" of the proposed arts and sciences curriculum is a step in the right direction. I hope the university will continue down this path and I hope Alliance will continue in the future to help teach people about our country's and our campus' ethnic and cultural diversity.

Engineering Students Awarded

Foutteen minority engineering students at KSU have received scholarships from the National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering (NACME).

The NACME donated \$8,350 to KSU's College of Engineering for use by the students during the 1980-81 academic year.

Students sharing in the scholarships:

--Michael S. Granada, senior in industrial engineering and Marvin Lee Thomas, sophomore in electrical engineering. Both Granada and Thomas are Salina natives.

--Joseph M. Avila, sophomore in electrical engineering and Ruth A. Fletcher, sophomore in civil engineering. Avila and Fletcher are both from Kansas City.

--Benjamin F. Moore, junior in civil engineering and Anivette Y. Garcia, freshman in general engineering, both from Fort Riley.

--David W. Douthit, sophomore in architectural engineering from Baxter Springs; John P. Lujan, senior in mechanical engineering from Elkhart; Mark V. Ortiz, freshman in industrial engineering from Wichita.

--Nesby E. Bolden, junior in mechanical engineering from Schenectady, New York; Keithian L. Arnold, freshman in architectural engineering from East St. Louis, Illinois; Kenneth V. White, junior in electrical engineering from Trenton, New Jersey.

--Maria M. Munoz, freshman in industrial engineering from Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico; Hamlin A. Ortiz, sophomore in engineering technology from Cabo Rojo, Puerto Rico.

Five Want Gibson

Greg Gibson, senior in pre-medicine, has been accepted by five different medical schools. He was accepted into the medical schools of the University of Rochester, the University of Virginia, the University of Kansas, Meharry and Creighton Universities. Gibson, who has a 3.6 grade point average, will begin his medical school education at the University of Rochester this coming fall.

Turner Only Freshman

Shirley Turner, freshman in speech, was the only freshman from Kansas State to participate in the American Forensic Association's national competition in Baltimore, Maryland, April 9-11.

Award for Ian Smith Story

Denise Harvey, sophomore in journalism/mass communications placed twentieth in the Inter-Collegiate Writing Competition sponsored by the William Randolph Hearst Foundation of San Francisco.

Harvey's Collegian story on the controversial visit to KSU of former Rhodesian prime minister Ian Smith placed twentieth out of 156 entries in the campus events category of the competition.

The writing competition is held monthly. Seventy eight major colleges and universities enter two stories each, which are chosen by the institutions' journalism departments. Professional editors serve as the competition judges.

Faculty, Staff Recognition

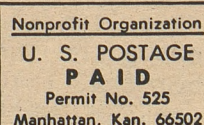
A recognition program for black faculty, staff and advisors will be held Saturday, May 9 from 7 to 9 p.m. in the K-State Union Main Ballroom. The program is sponsored by the Kappa Pi Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., a service sorority with 80,000 members nationwide.

The program is meant to recognize KSU's black faculty and staff and to provide an occasion during which faculty and members of the Manhattan community can get to know one another. Entertainment and refreshments will be provided.

For more information, call Roberta Hanks, 539-4242.



Office of Minority Affairs
Holtz Hall
Kansas State University
Manhattan, KS 66506



Alliance is a monthly publication of the K-State Office of Minority Affairs. Joann Hamick is Alliance's editor. We welcome your comments, letters, announcements or contributions. Contact Joann at the Office of Minority Affairs, Holtz Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506 Ph: 532-6436.