

Alliance

AN ETHNIC NEWSPAPER AT KSU

November 1984

"DIPLOMAT" DISCOVERED IN HAWAII

By Carol Oukrop

Outside a Safeway store in Honolulu one day last winter, I asked a courtly black gentleman if I could share the stone wall on which he sat enjoying the sun.

As we visited I found I was sitting by a former K-State journalism student, Frank Marshall Davis. Seeing that we had K-State and journalism in common, I promptly made arrangements to spend an afternoon at his home, tape recorder in hand.

Davis attended Kansas State University in the late 1920s. He left one term short of graduation, which perhaps explains why K-State had lost track of him.

He had intended to return for another semester and get his degree, "but the depression which hit with such force in 1930 left me a permanent casualty," he said.

Davis wrote a column for the Kansas State Collegian called "A Diplomat in Black." Some of those columns show that K-State had a resident fighter for civil rights in the 1920s.

"Frankly," Davis said, "I did enjoy rubbing some people the wrong way, particularly the athletic department, which did not allow black participation in varsity sports because of the 'gentlemen's agreement' in the conference."

He no doubt did rub some people the wrong way in a column from the fall of 1929, parts of which appear following this article.

Davis believes he was the first black student to study journalism at Kansas State, and he worked as a journalist until his move to Hawaii in 1948. He worked on black newspapers in Chicago and in Gary, Ind., before becoming editor of what he terms the first successful black daily, the Atlanta World, in 1931.

He did not like the idea of living in the South, Davis said, "but Chicago was so hard hit by the Depression I was willing to go anywhere." In Chicago, Davis said, "a check would not necessarily come back marked 'no funds.' It might come back marked 'no bank.'" He went to Atlanta for the "princely sum of \$25 weekly."



F. Marshall Davis

Davis remained in Atlanta until 1934, when he returned to Chicago. In 1935 he joined the Associated Negro Press, where he worked until moving to Hawaii.

While in Atlanta Davis again did some fighting in print for civil rights, and believes he was instrumental in changing policies of the establishment press in Atlanta.

For example, Davis said, in

southern Georgia in those days there was an annual festival of blacks, and it would always be written up in "a very partonizing, jocular way" by the establishment papers. "They would always mention that some of these people in attendance had shoes on and were in obvious pain because they had probably never worn shoes before in their lives, and all that kind of stuff."

Davis ran a front page editorial in the Atlanta World pointing out that there was no need for the black people of Atlanta "to put up with this situation, and that they had a newspaper that treated them with the dignity they deserved."

"The daily papers never ran that kind of ridiculing article again," Davis said.

Davis has fond memories of Kansas State, and particularly of Charles Elkins Rogers, who headed the journalism department when Davis was here, and of an English teacher, Ada Rice, who encouraged him to write poetry.

Three books of Davis' poetry have been published, and his poetry is included in 74 anthologies. He has also been a noted collector of jazz and blues, a disc jockey in Chicago, a teacher of the history of jazz and blues and a photographer whose work has been displayed internationally. He was active in the Chicago Civil Liberties Committee and a member of the Civil Rights Conference.

In Hawaii he has run a paper business and sold specialty advertising. Semi-retired now, he lives on Kapiolani Street in Honolulu.

When Davis left Kansas State, Charles Elkins Rogers asked him to return to finish his degree. "If anything good happens to you," Rogers told Davis, "I want Kansas State to get the credit." (Dr. Oukrop is an associate professor in Journalism and Mass Communication at Kansas State University. She spent 1983-84 as a guest professor at the University of Hawaii.)

Chicano LIT

A Growing and Changing Field

By Douglas K. Benson

"This past summer I had the good fortune to be selected to attend a National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Seminar on "Chicano Literature and Cultural Identity," directed by Professor Luis Leal at the University of California at Santa Barbara. Professor Leal has been a guiding force in the criticism of Latin American literature at the University of Illinois for several decades; now he lends his considerable talents to opening up the field of Chicano literature. The following remarks are an overview of impressions of how this field is changing and growing, impressions gathered during the course of the seminar."

Most of us who have lived in the Southwest or have worked at all in the rapidly growing field of ethnic literatures are aware of the historical events which led to the separation of Mexican Americans from their fellow Mexicans after the war

with Mexico in the middle 1800's. Most of us are also aware of the promises of that Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo--promises made by President Polk of the right to previously owned land, of the right of language and culture. We are painfully aware of how every one of these promises has been broken, by legal trickery or by outright oppression (as in the Medieval punishments imposed on children who did not speak English in our schools).

Generally well known, in addition, is the stridency of the political activism adopted by newly formed Chicano Power movements in the 1960's and 1970's. The image many outsiders still have of Chicanos is that of the militant fist in the air and the eagle of the United Farmworkers flag of Cesar Chavez.

The resentments remain, but most Chicanos (then and now) have been working behind the scenes in other ways to help their people: education, housing, voter registration, legal aid. The Chicano population

is overwhelmingly urban (89%), stable, English speaking and proud of its U.S. citizenship. At the same time, it questions why it is punished for also wanting to speak Spanish, for wanting to retain certain cultural values (as have all immigrant groups in this country), for wanting to be as proud of its ancestry as the Irish and the Polish are.

These frustrations and concerns produced a great outpouring of artistic expression in the 1960's and 1970's--graffiti, murals, music, street drama, literature. Much of early Chicano literature was highly motivated politically, and even among Chicanos it has become passe. But at the same time, a renewed pride in the Mexican artistic and literary tradition produced some small masterpieces even at the outset. The poetry of Jose Montoya and Alurista, combining Spanish and English as well as literary techniques from both cultures, contains

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Earhart Memorial

The Constance Varley Earhart Memorial Scholarship has been established with the Kansas State University Foundation to assist minority or needy students enrolled in the College of Education.

Earhart, who was assistant director of the Midwest Race and Sex Desegregation Center, a division of the KSU College of Education, died last March, at the age of 34.

Charles Rankin, Director of the Midwest Race and Sex Desegregation Center, said the scholarship is "dedicated to the memory of Connie Earhart and her achievements in the field of education. At the same time, it is a memorial to her dedication to promoting race and sex equity in both education and in American society as a whole. Her commitment to equality in education

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A Diplomat in Black
By P. Marshall Davis

M. H. Myers, star quarterback
of New York University, did not
play football against either Geor-

See page 2 for the entire column.

Literature

gems which are accessible to any reader not predetermined to see only European texts as models. I confess that, while I have long admired Montoya's work, I was a bit timid about admitting it, since both my Spanish teachers and English teachers told me that this new kind of bilingual poetry wasn't really "literature." I now beg to differ: the juxtaposition of languages produces many of the same effects as the juxtaposition of voices or levels of language, which (the people in semiotics tell us) is one of the distinguishing marks of modern poetry. Differences in tone, comic effects, distinctions between intimacy and bureaucratic impersonality, narrative vs. poetic structures and techniques--all are created at different times by interlingual code-switching. The

aesthetic effects are often stunning in the best Chicano poets. No, it is not English poetry. No, it is not Spanish poetry. Is it poetry? As a longtime specialist in Spanish and Spanish American poetry, I can state categorically that it is, and deserves to be considered as such. The fact that certain readers do not know the referents, the allusions, the contexts, does not make the poetry superficial. It simply indicates that the reader (myself included) needs to do a little background work to understand more fully, and at more levels, what is going on. Once I had done this, the impact of many Chicano novels, stories, poems and essays was as stunning as my first reading of Cummings or Lorca. I still do not like some Chicano works; they are poorly structured, or uneven, or trivialized by external ideologies, or badly written. But I can say the same for Anglo-American, British, Spanish, Mexican or Argentine literatures.

Another discovery that has changed my perceptions of Chicano literature is a direct outgrowth of readings in Chicano literary criticism. Dr. Leal and a number of other researchers have begun to push back the limits of what we consider Chicano literature. We all know of some of the works that grew out of the 1960s and 1970s. But, somehow, we assumed that those works had no historical antecedents. We now know that there were many, although since most were published in Spanish, they appeared only in Spanish speaking magazines and newspapers, or in tiny presses catering to the Spanish speaking segment of our population. The most surprising discovery is how far back it goes; in the middle 1800s stories, poetry and essays appeared with some regularity in Texas and New Mexico. We consider them Chicano works because, although their ties to Mexican literature are unmistakable, they clearly show an awareness of how they are being

changed by the new Anglosaxon presence in their lives in what they consider both positive and negative ways. The noted critic Juan Rodriguez of Texas has published a collection of literary essays and sketches by a newspaperman writing in the early 1900s, in Spanish, of a world in transition. Professor Rodriguez has since discovered three novels written in the late 1800s that he says show some promise. These are only scattered examples; as investigators proceed, our conception of the very field of Chicano literature is evolving.

Chicano criticism is also changing in other ways. Early critics of Chicano literature usually were not literary specialists; rather, they were sociologists or anthropologists or historians or political scientists interpreting texts as social documents. But as critics more familiar with the Hispanic and Anglosaxon literary traditions began to really look at these works, the field began to evolve rapidly. In the early years, it was almost heresy to denounce anything Chicano, even if it was atrocious. Chicano critics no longer hold to that unfortunate idea, and the literature has improved enormously as a result.

The most recent literature demonstrates a quality that makes it unique, but extremely valuable, in American literary studies (the same case can be made, of course, for Afro-American, Asian-American, Native American and other ethnic

literatures). It uses the most recent techniques of both traditions and in doing so creates metatexts (texts which comment on the writing of literature itself) that could come from neither the Anglo or Hispanic tradition alone. Ron Arias' recent novel The Road to Tamazunchale, written mostly in English, juxtaposes to hilarious and moving effect the realities of "laid back" Los Angeles with the mythic structures of the Latin American

Indian perspective (as can be clearly seen in the novels of Gabriel Garcia Marquez or the fictions of Jorge Luis Borges). Even Tomas Rivera's earlier The Earth Did Not Part provides us with a multiple perspective of migrant worker life by using a fragmented viewpoint and narrative structure that forces the reader to "create" his own novel. These examples represent only a small fraction of the high-quality literature being written by Americans too long ignored by the literary establishment. I look forward to its inevitable success. (Dr. Benson is an associate professor of Modern Languages at KSU.)

A New Play From Ebony KSU Players

by Barry Pearson

The K-State Players and Ebony Theater will be doing a joint production of Michael Weller's play Moonchildren. Auditions for this production will be on Nov. 26 and 27, and the playing dates are Feb. 15, 16, and 17, 1985.

Moonchildren is a play that examines how people of diverse personalities and backgrounds can learn to overcome those differences to form close attachments. The nucleus of the play is formed by six college students that live together through a school year. The cast is comprised of nine men and three women.

The play takes place in a large upstairs apartment during the late 1960's. The apartment is rented by

the six students. Dick is a self-centered and conceited philosophy major in his senior year in college. Ruth is also a philosophy major, but that is the only similarity between she and Dick. Mike, Ruth's close friend, is a sensitive person but shields that sensitivity with an outrageous sense-of-humor. Cootie (Mel) is Mike's fellow comedian in the group who sometimes forgets that life is not a constant joke. Bob and Kathy are lovers that break up during the course of the play when Bob decides to die while still alive. Norman is a person easily swayed by books and the people around him. This is so true that he tries to ignite himself on fire as a protest to the Vietnam War.

Moonchildren

These are the main characters but not at all the most interesting. Mr. Willis is the landlord that delights in describing his wild sexual dreams to the students as a way of identifying with the students. Lucky is another tenant in the building who constantly complains that the students use aluminum trash cans instead of the required plastic cans. Shelly is an aspiring revolutionary who takes refuge underneath the table. Bream

and Effing are two cops that do the "kids a favor". Ralph is a law student who sells encyclopedias on the side. Finally, there is the milkman who comes to cart away 857 two-quart milk bottles the students have collected throughout the year.

Auditions are open to all K-State students. Positions in technical areas are also available. Anyone interested may contact Barry Pearson at 776-5589, or leave a message at the Speech Department.

A Diplomat in Black

By F. Marshall Davis

By F. Marshall Davis

H.H. Myers, star quarterback of New York University, did not play football against either Georgia or Missouri in spite of the importunities of the Eastern press and follow-students...it seems that there was a "gentlemen's agreement" made with both schools. Myers, you see, is a negro.

Potential first string backs and linemen are constantly kept from playing at K.U., Nebraska, and Kansas State (famed for its democracy) because of the accident of color...made big by a standing "gentlemen's agreement" with Oklahoma and Missouri.

"Gentlemen's agreements" are, apparently, a last resort to keep a regular eleven from looking bad because of the ability of darker stars on the opposing teams...and the color superiority myth seems even more far-fetched when you have to legislate to keep it.

Iowa State is the only big valley school in recent years with guts enough to play a Negro on its team...Holloway Smith played tackle there in 1926-27...and made quite a name for himself although the gentlemen of the conference agreed not to play him in certain games...but if he contaminated the Ames team or ruined the high moral or social standing of opposing players they forgot to mention it.

I've often wondered what thoughts occur in the minds of the

gentlemen who make these agreements...obviously, when a dark student makes a football team over the natural prejudices of most coaches, he's exceptional...and when he does make it, there's a grave danger that he'll make the all-conference eleven in the place of your star...and maybe the All-American...Missouri and Oklahoma have a right to be afraid...they have no negro students.

Three colored lads are playing football in the smaller Kansas colleges this fall...however, as there has been no agreement made to bar any of them from participating in athletic contests, this might tend to show that the gentlemen, if any, at Kansas institutions have nothing to do with athletics.

I'll expect something more original than the hackneyed "If you don't like this place, why don't you go somewhere else" ... but anyway, it's something to think about...especially when the darker students are liberal enough to go to the games, attend pep meetings, and cheer for winning or losing Wildcats...and not a one of them allowed to play because of the "gentlemen" of the Big Six.

From a fall 1929 Kansas State Collegian

Combating Racism:

Combating Racism Resource Kit Now Available.

This new resource kit was designed to share information on the issue of racism and offer suggestions for what individuals and groups can do to combat racism.

Features Include:

- Combating Racism: An Introduction
- Racism Is
- A Short History of Civil Rights
- Guidelines for forming a Combating Racism Committee and Outreach Actions
- Public Opinion Polls
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Earhart (From p. 1)

was unparalleled. Connie set standards that continue to be followed and built upon."

Earhart's mother, Mrs. Charles Varley Jr., Menlo, Iowa, said, "Connie pledged her life to the service of minorities and ethnics at age 17 while serving as a state 4-H officer in Iowa."

Toward that end, she was a member of the People-to-People Mission to Europe, served as Iowa's representative to the President's White House Conference on Children, and was a presenter at the International Council on Education for Teaching World Assembly in Berlin, West Germany. Earhart also served as a review panel member for educational boards throughout the United States and was author of numerous equity articles for professional educational publications.

She taught in Iowa and Kansas and worked extensively as an equity consultant in Nebraska, Missouri, Iowa, and Kansas public schools.

"Connie's ideas, ideals, and ideology, all of which embodied a commitment to equity, live on in the hearts and minds of those she touched in her professional and personal life," Rankin said. "This scholarship, then, represents more than just recognition of outstanding academic achievement. It is a reaffirmation of hope in the human mind and the human spirit, and a renewal of the commitment to equity that Dr. Constance Varley Earhart cherished and lived." (K-State News)

27th Annual

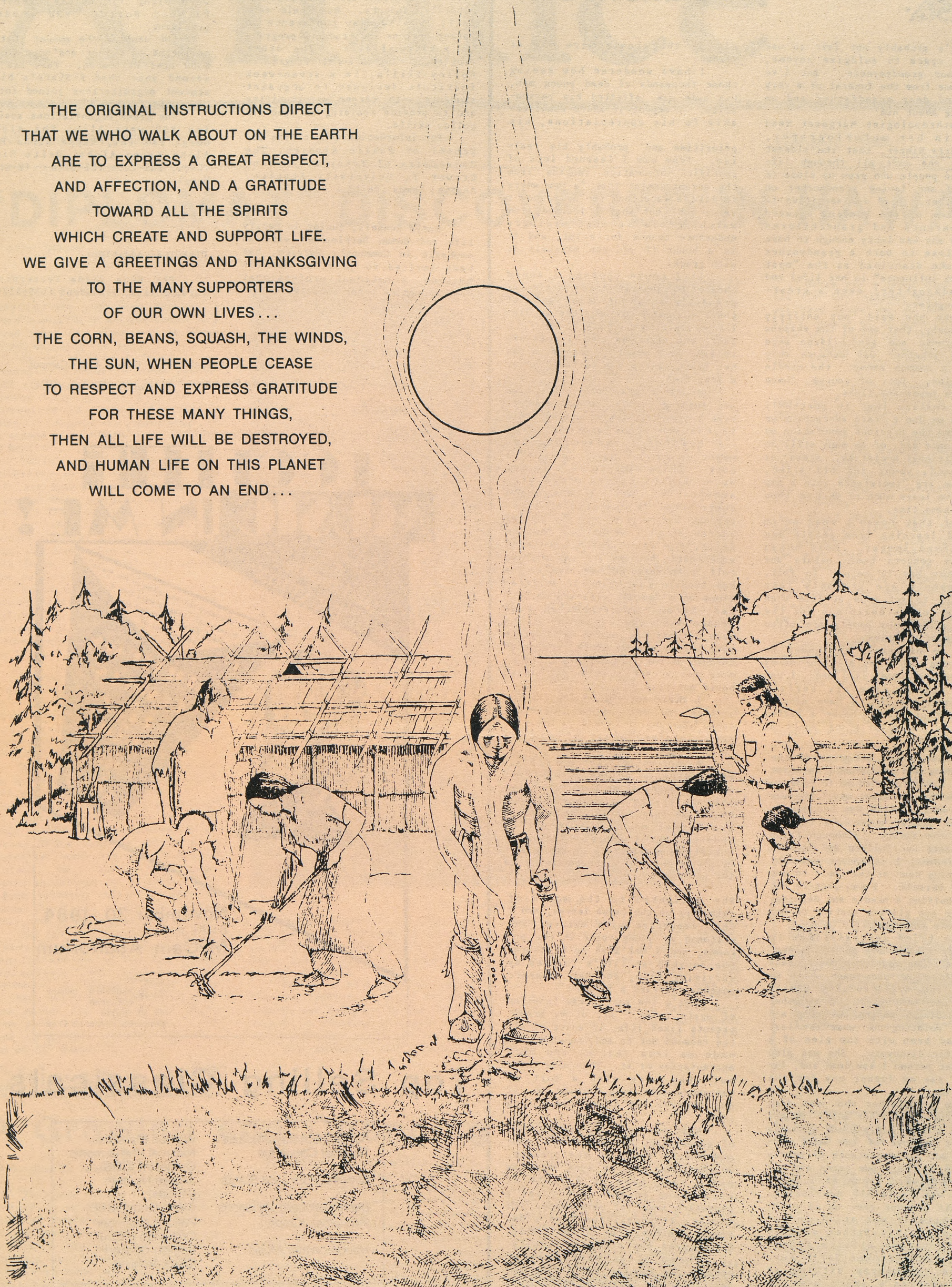
"EBONY FASHION FAIR"

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Contact a member of Delta Sigma Theta for ticket information.

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 THAT WE WHO WALK ABOUT ON THE EARTH
 ARE TO EXPRESS A GREAT RESPECT,
 AND AFFECTION, AND A GRATITUDE
 TOWARD ALL THE SPIRITS
 WHICH CREATE AND SUPPORT LIFE.
 WE GIVE A GREETINGS AND THANKSGIVING
 TO THE MANY SUPPORTERS
 OF OUR OWN LIVES...
 THE CORN, BEANS, SQUASH, THE WINDS,
 THE SUN, WHEN PEOPLE CEASE
 TO RESPECT AND EXPRESS GRATITUDE
 FOR THESE MANY THINGS,
 THEN ALL LIFE WILL BE DESTROYED,
 AND HUMAN LIFE ON THIS PLANET
 WILL COME TO AN END...



Alliance is most grateful to artist John Fadden (Kahonhes) and to Akwesasne Notes Mohawk Nation at Akwesasne near Roosevelttown, New York for permission to reprint "The Original Instructions" poster. A series of posters reproduced from the centerfold of Akwesasne Notes is available on heavy paper from Akwesasne Notes, Mohawk Nation, via Roosevelttown, N.Y. 13683. Akwesasne Notes also publishes an annual products catalog featuring local hand-made crafts as well as books and posters featuring Native American Indians. Anyone interested may look at a copy of the catalog in Holton Hall-201 (ask for Susan Allen).

A Joyous Thanksgiving Season To Everyone



Grand - parents

It's probably not fair to use public space to eulogize anyone, even your grandparents. But I've just come from the funeral of a very near and dear grandfather and am thinking about him.

Anthropologist Margaret Mead said in her autobiography, *Blackberry Winter*, that the closest friends she made all through life had been people who grew up close to a loved and loving grandmother or grandfather. Mead was sensitive to the value of the bonding between grandparents and grandchildren because she was lucky enough to have been close to both a grandmother (whom she described as the "most decisive influence" in her life) and a granddaughter; even a great-granddaughter.

Once she said, not entirely facetiously, that one of the reasons grandparents and grandchildren were aligned together was because they shared a common enemy: the middle generation. But, of course, there are more important links.

I realize that in post-WWII America we don't learn everything we know from the previous generation as people once did, or as many still do in traditional societies. Again, as Mead said, young and old alike, today we are "immigrants into a new era." We learn much of what we know at the same time.

But that doesn't mean we've stopped learning from people who have lived longer. Most human dilemmas concern human nature and experience has to help. In fact, most people are probably just beginning to get good at life when they get old. Sociology and the cosmos aside, old people are often simply good examples.

I am extremely fortunate to have known and loved all four of my grandparents. And, like Mead, I can trace pretty directly certain characteristics that I have adopted from each of them. Maybe a better word than characteristics would be appreciations.

I have vivid memories of the grandmother who died when I was nine because she introduced me to life and death in a very direct way. She was a farm woman and it was her job to tend the nests, nurse the calves, nurture the family. Although I can still taste her chicken and noodles in my dreams, I can never remember her sitting down at the table to eat with us herself. I can picture her asleep holding a needle and darning-egg, her eye glasses resting on her nose, late at night.

She tried several times to teach my sister and me to "clean" chickens. She would cut their heads off with an ax and laugh while we chased the still-running bodies around the farm yard. I remember her especially noting the crop and gizzard pointing out what the last meal had been with the glee of a scientific discovery. She was also the first person I saw dead and, for her, I saw my father cry for the first time.

The grandfather who just died was nurturing in other ways. He was kind of a tough old guy and probably wouldn't approve of the word nurture. But his acceptance of nearly everyone on their own terms and his straightforward sense of duty to people was certainly nourishing.

This grandpa grew up in Oklahoma while it was still Indian Territory. His father settled in what became Alfalfa County during the Cherokee Strip run. Grandpa remembered sitting at Carrie Nation's skirt hems in saloons while she lambasted the patrons for drinking. He went off to World War I when he was 17 years old. Six weeks after signing up he was in France working in the pay master's office, a duty he held throughout the war and until

all of the graves were dug at Verdun.

I have wondered how seeing those thousands of dead young men, his same age, affected his personality. I expect it added considerably to his appreciations, his

priorities and probably his realism. From him I learned lots of specific information ranging from the encouragement that "a new worry is like a vacation" to "never buy a valve job" but what I learned from watching him is that ordinary endurance counts for a lot, and it is a bonus if you can maintain it with grace.

If I could choose, I would choose to inherit this particular grandpa's sense of humor and, if there's a place to go after we die, I hope I get to go where he went. In fact, the night he died I told him to save me a seat. My niece, bless her heart, asked him to save it for a long time.

My other grandfather is alive and running circles around younger type A personalities at age 93. His is the story for another time.

My other grandmother has memories for me now. She was a poet. She wanted to be a career woman before career women were acceptable. And, although she contributed to hundreds of lives through her writing and by taking scores of girl scouts on camping trips, she was miserable in many ways mostly because she was what we call "born ahead of her time". She had trouble conforming to expectations of a "normal wife and mother" and, because she rebelled some people said she was crazy. She wasn't crazy but dozens of doctors gave her dozens of shock treatments throughout her life as they tried to make her accept a role she simply could not play.

I think some of my longing for justice and most of my wanderlust come from her. I know my rage at pre-determined ideas of what is normal exist because of her.

A year or so after she died, I wrote kind of a lament about her when it dawned on me that no one was able to listen to me the way she could and that I still needed to be heard that way. That's pretty obscure, but I wrote: "She discussed the possibility of UFO's with bright eyes, and I heard faith in the unknown;

She delighted to the sound of raindrops on the canna leaves, and I felt connected with nature; She welcomed my young voice in her old rooms, and I was glad to be there. She laughed at life's follies by surviving them, and her presence somehow conveyed a future".

That's the part I was thinking of again today. All of my grandparents liked life, in spite of all the reasons not to and, somehow, they made me less fearful and more appreciative of it. They were roots but they were also a sort of testimony that life carried on, if not forever, at least for a long time.

Mead said that in the presence of grandparent and grandchild, past and future merge in the present. Grandparents give us eyes into the past; they give us a sense of attachment to the world, and a necessary sense of permanence. Of course, grandchildren lend older people their visions of the future. Each gives the other continuity.

Those attachments matter because by knowing and loving one particular old person or child it is possible for us to understand and better care about all old people and children. Both give us something beyond ourselves to be a part of.

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NOTES

The Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin has announced two special programs for undergraduate minority students. One, held each fall, is a two-day conference on career options and graduate programs in public affairs. The other program, the Sloan Summer Program in Policy Skills, is a seven-week institute designed to acquaint students with career opportunities and to provide training in specific policy skills.

For information contact the LBJ School of Public Affairs, The University of Texas at Austin, Drawer Y, University Station, Austin, Texas 78713.

Endya Runnels, junior in Family Life and Human Development with an emphasis in Community Service, has been invited to join Phi Upsilon Omicron, a national professional home economics honor society.

Members of the Kansas State University Black Student Union and Greeks collected \$383.63 on Halloween Night for UNICEF, reported Richard Horton, BSU student president.

"We doubled the amount that we collected this year and hope to top \$500 next Halloween. This was the second year that K-State's black student organizations joined forces to support UNICEF", Horton said.

The greek organizations assisting BSU were Alpha Phi Alpha, Omega Psi Phi, Kappa Alpha Psi, Alpha Kappa Alpha, Delta Sigma Theta, and Zeta Phi Beta. (K-State News)

DIRECTORY addition:

Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity--Taiwo Fokaya, President (539-5379).

From

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Wynton Marsalis,
National Philharmonic
Orchestra (CBS)
Jessye Norman
(Phillips)
Glenn Gould (CBS)
Paillard Chamber
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English Concert
(DDG Archive)

Source: Billboard Publications

ETHNIC STUDIES

Kansas State University has a new Ethnic Studies Program. For information contact Dr. Phil Royster, Program Coordinator, through the English Department.

Alliance-An Ethnic Newspaper at KSU
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Holton Hall, Kansas State University
Anne S. Butler, Director ESS
Susan L. Allen, Ph.D., editor
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