

Alliance

minority affairs newsletter



KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

Jan./Feb. 1982

Eddie Rodriguez: Making Haste Slowly

Illusionists make elephants disappear from behind flowing, silk curtains. They put people in boxes, saw them in two and, maybe, even push the feet across the stage and tickle them till the head section laughs.

Stand-up performers go before crowds and pull rabbits from hats, do card tricks, or tell you long, involved stories while plucking coins from behind your ear.

Magicians do both kinds of magic: illusion and stand-up. Eddie Rodriguez, second-semester freshman in pre-law, is a magician. He performs "David Copperfield style" magic for large groups and he does stand-up routines for birthday parties, fund-raisers and restaurant crowds. And Rodriguez--at age 22 he is a 12-year veteran magician--can sit two feet in front of any skeptic and convince him he is sticking a cigarette through a Kennedy half-dollar, while he smiles and says, "this is impossible."

"Creating the impossible is what magic is all about," Rodriguez said.

Eddie Rodriguez was born in Puerto Rico in 1960. As a young boy he moved with his mother and three sisters to Philadelphia to join his father who had gone ahead to look for work. But life in America didn't pan out like the family had hoped. There was a baby brother, handicapped at birth from a medical accident. There was a divorce. There was never much money.

But Rodriguez doesn't recall his childhood as a grim march toward adulthood. His neighbor and new friend in Philadelphia was the great "Maldini" (Ed Muldonado), a professional illusionist. And young Rodriguez was enchanted. At 10 years old Rodriguez began helping Maldini with his act and, eventually, he began to learn some magic of his own.

GIBSON VIES FOR TRUMAN AWARD

Mike Gibson, sophomore in pre-law/political science, is in the final stages of competition for the prestigious Truman Scholarship. He will go to Boston in early February for a final interview, before the winners are announced on April 8.

The award carries with it a \$20,000 prize, to be used for the scholar's junior and senior years in college, and two years of graduate study.

Gibson went to high school in Wichita. His parents are now living in New Hampshire.



"My life wasn't the best, maybe," Rodriguez said. "But I wanted to make the best of it."

In high school Rodriguez said he began wanting to have nice clothes and see movies and plays. "I wanted to be able to spend money," he said. "I was never into drugs and didn't spend much on liquor--but I wanted a lot of things I knew I would have to earn." It was then that he began to look upon magic as a business.

Rodriguez said he practiced for five or six years before his first paid performance. If Maldini taught him nothing else, it was not to "hurry" his magic. "When you're creating something that's not there," Rodriguez said, "you have to know when you are doing the magic part." Make fast and flashy moves around the edges but do the magic "exceptionally slow." You can't be jerky and be successful. You have to be calm and confident to do a good show.

"Maldini told me never to do a trick until I could fool myself in a mirror," he said. "And it takes

time to get it right."

Rodriguez has a way to turn hardship to advantage. His love of entertaining, for example, was born out of his desire--and ability--to make his handicapped little brother laugh. Although his own brother has since died, Rodriguez likes to perform for handicapped children, and they are a special part of his life.

Rodriguez' sensitivity to the health of young children led him to write a "nutrition play" while he was in high school, called "The Wizard of Food."

"Everyone was trying to figure out how to get kids to eat right," Rodriguez said. "Everyone likes 'The Wizard of Oz'. I like it. So I wrote 'The Wizard of Food' based on it." The Wizard and his companions, the "Care Crow," the "Thin Man," and the "Calorie Lion," (not to mention the "Munchies" and the "Malnutrition Witch") were so successful that Rodriguez made it into a film and was honored by the Mayor of Philadelphia for his efforts.

At age 17, Rodriguez graduated from a Philadelphia high school with the distinction of being voted the "Most Talented" in a class of 1,200 (Kathy Sledge of "Sister Sledge" had received the award the year before). But, even with his growing writing and magical talent, Rodriguez wanted to go to college.

"No one in my family had gone past high school," Rodriguez said. "I wanted to know things and do things. Education is important to me. It is a stepping-stone to getting what I want."

Rodriguez knew he had to get away from the less serious influences available to him in Philadelphia; he knew neither he nor his family had the money to just sign him up to attend some far-away college; he also felt he needed "time to mature" before he could settle down to academics. So, weighing his needs and the pros and cons, he decided to

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BOOK REVIEW

Self-Help Program for Minority Students

The key message of a self-help program for minorities in higher education is that you can increase the amount of control you have over your life by learning some survival skills. By learning how to cope with and overcome certain academic and interpersonal problems common to college students, you can then favorably influence the attainment of your academic and personal goals.

College Achievement Through Self-Help, by Luis Nieves (1978) is a planning and guidance manual for minority students. It was sponsored by the Graduate Record Examination Board and the Office for Minority Education of the Educational Testing Service in Princeton, New Jersey.

"Some describe the minority student's experience in college in terms of culture shock," Nieves

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Self-Help (continued)

said. "They explain that as the minority student who comes out of a homogenous ethnic environment confronts the white establishment, as reflected on the college campus, there is a clash of cultures and social values. This clash, for some, results in a form of shock as they learn about the ways of the dominant white culture from the perspective of a student. For example, some minority students react in dismay to learn that many white students and faculty members expect the minority student to agree with their perceptions about the inferiority of nonwhite cultures and social systems. Other minority students tend to believe these perceptions are true and try to maintain a position of being a different kind of Black, Chicano, Puerto Rican, or Indian, one who is more like the traditional white student. "Both responses can be called forms of culture shock," he said.

College is often the first time "majority" students have come into contact with minority cultures, also. There is much to learn about people who have been raised with different values and under different conditions, Nieves said, and this learning can take place in college. However, it is sometimes "an incredibly difficult learning experience," he said.

"For a minority student, what is learned about the white American culture is often harder to accept than much of the academic curricula," Nieves said.

However, curriculum problems are an immediate hurdle all college students, "minority" and "majority", must learn to negotiate. The self-help program designed by Nieves is geared to approach them from a minority student perspective.

Nieves said that one of the major differences between a minority student and the bulk of the majority students relates to preparation received before college. By this he means psychological as well as academic preparation.

Children of current minority college students will not have this particular problem, but most of today's minority students are the first member of their family to attend college. This means, whereas majority students (whose parents were probably the first college generation) know as early as elementary school that they expect to go to college, minority students may not have anticipated college until mid- to late high school.

This difference in expectations and preparation has an effect on how the college experience is handled, Nieves said. There is nothing inherent in minority students that makes college difficult. What makes college difficult for many students, minority and majority, is incomplete learning of basic and necessary skills.

The Nieves program begins with "self assessment". Section one presents a system its author hopes will help teach minority students to better assess problems. "Part of the solution," Nieves said, "is knowing the problem." Sometimes problems are difficult to solve simply because they are too vague, so students need to practice identifying and clarifying problems.

For example, Nieves breaks down the vague personal problem, "I am

unhappy most of the time," into a list of more specific statements (which of course would vary with each person). For example: "I get depressed when I drink too much. I am unhappy when I get put down. I get depressed when I am rejected."

"If problems are clearly specified in terms of the events and circumstances that are cueing and maintaining behavior, the probability increases that techniques and procedures can be applied to lessen them." Nieves said.

A list of general problems Nieves said are common to minority students include: persistent thoughts that they do not belong in college; a conviction that they are not prepared for, or entitled to, college; feelings of loneliness and isolation; a lack of career goals and objectives; a generalized feeling of inferiority; a dislike for people in college; negative

feelings of being different; a fear of tests, term papers, evaluation; too much need for such recreational activities as partying; a conviction that they cannot control what happens to them; and so on.

After listing and clarifying specific problems that related to you as an individual, Nieves said to describe the things you do and the things that you do not do as a result of them. For example, if the specific problem is "I am afraid to talk in class," what one DOES because of this may be: I get mad at those who do talk, or perhaps, I begin to think I hate school. What one DOES NOT DO may be: I don't go back to class.

Every problem should be analyzed in terms of what or how (how much, how often, etc.), when, and where the problem manifests itself in behavior. After a specific problem is identified and you become aware of how it makes you behave and not behave, the next step is defining the desired change. "To get something from this manual," Nieves said, "you must be motivated to change..."

As soon as the desired change is defined, students go through a process of specifying actual behavior to increase and decrease to achieve their goal. If the problem is "feeling inferior", and the desired change is "Have good feelings about myself and develop self-confidence"--then the suggested behavior to increase is "Being active in class, socializing with people I don't know," and the behavior to decrease is "Remaining quiet in class, acting shy in social situations."

After that--it takes practice. This manual does not offer solutions to all possible problems minority students might face in college. In fact, it offers few solutions. What it does do is help students recognize and articulate potential problems and offer a strategy for changing behavior to overcome them.

Anyone interested in looking through this manual may do so in the Office of Minority Affairs, Holton Hall.

Around The World

An Alternative to the Panama Canal: That's what Mexico is building--a railroad across its narrowest stretch that would unload ships at one end and load them on the other. The Mexican government says shipping firms can save up to five days by not sailing as far south as Panama and by avoiding the waiting there. The port facilities will be geared to the container. Cranes will lift them off ships, put them on trains and lift them back onto ships waiting on the opposite coast. The route between the Pacific port of Salina Cruz and the Gulf of Mexico port of Coatzacoalcos is actually a renovation of an old railway. It's 175 miles long, and the renovation cost the government almost \$100 million. It's billed as medium-speed, medium-cost alternative between transcontinental rail shipment and the Panama Canal.

*
A Blue Revolution? Fish farmers are optimistic about meeting the growing worldwide protein shortage more efficiently than any other food producer. The American steer, grain-fed to grow prime grade, marbled steaks, eats eight to 12 pounds of feed to produce one pound of meat. The broiler chicken, genetically engineered to grow to market size in just eight weeks, eats 2.15 pounds of corn for every pound of meat. A fish swallows only 1.5 pounds of soybean to make a pound of fillets.

*
It's Not Gasohol, It's "Cocodiesel": That what Filipinos call a mixture of 80% coconut oil and 20% diesel oil, now fueling Philippine government vehicles. The mixture came about because prices are low for coconut oil, grown in the Philippines, and high for oil, which must be imported. (U.S.A.I.D.)

HISPANIC MAGAZINE

Hispanic Business, a monthly publication of business and professional life in the Hispanic community, is available on a first come-first serve basis in the Office of Minority Affairs.

The publisher is sending approximately 25 copies to the office as a way of introducing it to potential subscribers and "contributing to the career development of Hispanic college and university students." Our copies are free while they last.

The California-based magazine offers timely news and features on many aspects of business life and professional opportunity. The January 1982 issue included articles on "How Managers (Mis) Manage Their Time," "Women and Economic Progress," "The Dallas Bilingual Yellow Pages," and many others. There is a good deal of career-related information in each issue.



SHUTTLE SERVICE

for

physically limited students

Inquire by calling 532-6436

Career, Grad Education Planning Time Is NOW

All students who will be receiving KSU diplomas within the next few months can start laying the groundwork for post-graduation plans, now! The KSU Career Planning and Placement office, in Holtz Hall, has many services that may help in your job search - and the Office of Minority Affairs also offers career-planning assistance.

Pat Green, Administrative Assistant for Career Education, Office of Minority Affairs, can help you prepare a resume, plan an interview, or simply explore career alternatives. Green's office is in 205 Holton Hall and she will be there to meet with you Monday, Wednesday, or Friday from 8:00 - 12:00 or by appointment (532-5642).

The Career Planning and Placement office reminds students that ALL degree candidates can benefit from their services and that ALL students are urged to register for their free help.

"Some persons erroneously conclude that our assistance is limited to the on-campus employment interviewing program," an official of that office said. However, "while that program is extremely helpful, especially to those in curricula presently in high demand, considerable help of other kinds is at hand: career counseling, letter and resume preparation assistance, interview workshops, career library, job opportunity bulletins, candidate employment referrals, employer contacts, salary information, summer employment assistance, credential services to support job applications, and career information speakers for classroom, club and living groups."

Registration forms, as well as employment bulletins and on-campus interview sign-up sheets, are available in Holtz Hall. The time to plan is now.

Minority Affairs Career Series Begins

A series of workshops on career and graduate education will be offered this spring by the Office of Minority Affairs, the Office of Career Planning and Placement, and several minority student groups.

The Internal Revenue Service of the U.S. Department of the Treasury will have a representative on campus Thursday, February 25, to announce employment opportunities at IRS for U.S. minorities.

Philip Gonzalez, Hispanic Employee Program Coordinator at IRS, and other experts in the field, will explain the process of government job applications and various positions that exist within the IRS, including professional and para-professional.

The IRS workshop will be in the Union, Room 209, 2:30 p.m.

The Series topics "Minorities in Mass Communication and Journalism," and "Hispanics in Government" will

be held in connection with the Festival Hispano-Americano, April 12 through 17. Watch future publications for times and places.

A special offering in the "Minority Affairs Series on Career and Graduate Education" will be practical, how-to tours of the Office of Career Planning and Placement. Besides touring the Career facility in Holtz Hall, students will be given suggestions about how best to utilize Planning and Placement services.

A sign-up sheet for the tours will be in the Office of Minority Affairs, 206 Holton Hall. Sign up as soon as possible after February 8.

If you have suggestions for future topics in the Minority Affairs Series, on any aspect of employment or graduate education, stop in and see Pat Green or Raul Guevara in Holton 205.

Rodriguez (continued)

join the Army. After that, he said he "began to get lucky."

Rodriguez was as successful in the Army as he had been in high school. First, he worked as a magician-recruiter (he entertained prospective recruits by changing a green silk scarf into twenty dollar bills, announcing that "Since I joined the Army, I've never been broke") and, eventually, as a drug and alcohol advisor with the rank of Sergeant.

Rodriguez was stationed at Ft. Riley, liked Kansas, and decided K-State was just the school he needed. He could get to the serious business of school without being pre-occupied by the bright lights of the entertainment world.

Still..... he had performed lots of magic shows in the state as a soldier; he had made many friends here; and he thought he might be able to supplement his \$225 monthly Army pension by performing as "Shamriguez," the magician, while

earning a degree in pre-law. (This is the kind of planning Rodriguez calls "luck".)

After he completes his degree from KSU, Rodriguez expects to earn a law degree and, somewhere in and around those pursuits, the dashing, mustached Rodriguez hopes to act.

"I plan to go to California over breaks," he said. "After I graduate I don't know exactly what I'll do--but acting will be a part of it. There aren't too many Puerto Rican or Hispanic actors in movies right now, and I think I have a chance."

"I'm in no hurry though," he said calmly, seeming somehow to have applied the Maldini principle of "not hurrying the magic" to his life. "I'm as successful as I need to be right now. I'm in school. I do magic. I've traveled. I'm where I want to be but," he smiled, "I'm a pretty determined guy."

Maybe planning is the real magic of Eddie Rodriguez. "I like doing something people say is impossible," he said.

Combating Racism, Sexism Course

Beginning Monday, February 1, and continuing throughout the semester, UFM will offer an informal, practical course on combating racism and sexism.

If you hear a co-worker joke about the "sexy fox" at the water fountain or catch a friend making an ethnic slur, or maybe you are aware of a serious case of discrimination--what do you do? How do you make a statement about your beliefs without coming off as a bore or a do-gooder, or without getting fired?

"Even if we attend rallies the rest of our lives, we will never get anywhere in combating racism and sexism until we can speak out, personally," said Sandy Coyner, Director of Women's Studies at KSU and co-leader of the class.

Coyner and Phil Royster, Associate Professor of English at KSU and the other class leader, want to "build a support group" in Manhattan. They hope to find a group of people (of all sizes, sexes, and colors) who can share the experiences unique to them and help the rest of the group.

Coyner said, "Eventually, such a group could promote actions of community significance. But right now the group will emphasize positive ways in which all of us can combat racism and sexism in our own lives."

Even if you have never participated in a group like this--maybe especially if you haven't, but you want to--you are cordially invited to attend. Call 776-3761 or 539-9152 for more information.

Nat'l Afro-American Museum Planned

A joint university degree program in archival administration and museology may soon be available under the auspices of Wilberforce University and Central State University in Ohio, and a new National Museum of Afro-American History.

The National Afro-American Museum is still in the planning stages but its future looks bright. The State of Ohio has already authorized an initial \$80,000 grant for the project; and, through the efforts of Ohio Congressman Clarence Brown and Ohio Senator John Glenn, the federal government passed legislation directing the Secretary of the Interior to prepare a feasibility/suitability study for a National Museum of Afro-American History and Culture Center at or near Wilberforce, Ohio.

When complete, Museum exhibits will highlight the Afro-American experience from Africa to the present as well as provide a major, national center of Afro-American scholarship and research. One goal of the project will be to encourage minority students to seek careers in the areas of archival administration and museology, a program which combines aspects of history, political science, anthropology, art, library science, and specific museum training.

The National Afro-American Museum and Cultural Center Project, The Ohio Historical Society, 1982 Velma Avenue, Columbus, OH 43211, can provide further information.



Global Alliance

Why bother publishing a newspaper like Alliance in a university with an established newspaper, a city with an established newspaper; a state and nation with hundreds and hundreds of established newspapers? There are several reasons, but here is one.

Have you ever noticed how similar conventional newspapers have become; how little international and domestic intercultural news is presented; how limited the definition of what makes "news" seems to be?

The June, 1981 issue of World Press Review contains an article that has a great deal to say for supporting media innovations, such as Alliance, in our increasingly information-based society, if indirectly.

The article, "The Next Economic Boom," by Peter Hall, uses examples from heavy industries, such as steel and automobiles, to explain an economic theory that can as well be applied to the newspaper industry.

Very briefly, the theory (created by economists Nikolai Kondratieff, Joseph Schumpeter, and Gerhard Mensch) states that capitalist economics everywhere--from the Industrial Revolution onward--have followed a regular growth-and-decline cycle. About every half-century they go full circle from bust to boom and back to bust again. Since the mid-1970's, our traditional, established, industries have been on the downward swing.

During the recession period of each long "wave" of change, however, there is an exceptional cluster of new inventions which seem never to be applied until the start of the next upswing. Inventions occur over a scattered period of time within a cycle but innovations (the word used to describe the application of inventions) occur in bunches within a short time--producing either altered or completely new processes, products, and industries. These

innovations keep the system vital.

Theorists predict that our next period of maximum innovation will start in 1984 and reach a peak around 1989. They also believe the locus of innovation, having shifted from Britain to Germany to the U.S. over the years, will continue to shift--with Japan playing a progressively greater role.

What Japan has been able to do within the past quarter of a century to draw the enter of innovation toward it has been to "systematically identify the growth industries of the next wave, pump the necessary governmental research and development money into them and wait for the private section to come in and exploit the results."

U.S. industries have not been this dynamic. Hall believes that the failure of traditional industries in the U.S. was caused by a failure to continue innovating. Pittsburg did not switch to specialized, high-quality steels when they needed to...Detroit failed to build small cars soon enough, and so on. The U.S. industrial Midwest will, as a consequence, be hard hit by the new wave.

The great Victorian economist, Alfred Marshall, said it all nearly a century ago: The spirit of enterprise, of innovation is something that is in the air of a place--and the air may go stale.

Our conventional press has been as successful as General Motors and Pittsburg Steel throughout the last economic wave. And it has succeeded, in large part, by meeting the information needs of the same population (audience) that profited by the steel and automobile empires. But the air is getting stale.

The world is changing, the information needs of a much broader-based audience are expanding, and the press must be innovative--or go by the way of other industrial dinosaurs.

Alliance does not have the resources of the Collegian, let alone the giant news agencies. It does, however, recognize a "growth" audience that can no longer be ignored and it is helping to "invent" an intercultural approach to news that, perhaps one day, the private sector will exploit.

(c Susan I. Allen, 1982)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Creighton University's Committee for Minority Group Education in the Health Sciences will have a representative on campus Tuesday, February 2, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., in Holton Hall, Rm. 206D.

Creighton is a private, independent, Jesuit university located in Omaha, Nebraska.

Prospective students may discuss admission qualifications, financial assistance, and so forth, for Creighton's programs in Dentistry, Medicine, Pharmacy and Nursing.

Creighton is making a special effort to recruit Black Americans, Mexican Americans, Mainland Puerto Ricans, and American Indians because of the disproportionate representation of these three groups in the Health Professional Schools.

Creighton will offer a Pre-Dentistry Summer Prep Program for seven weeks this summer, between May 24th and July 10th. It is for advanced undergraduates interested in a career in dentistry.

The program has been funded by a grant--and is offered at no cost to the student. Deadline for applications is April 30, 1982. You are welcome to visit with the Creighton representative about this program on February 2. Applications are available from Raul Guevara (Holton 206, 532-6436).

This announcement is tentative, but watch the Collegian for further word on an interesting art show that may be coming up. The Native American Indian Student Body (NAISB) is planning a traditional Muskawki Indian Arts & Crafts display for the end of February in the Student Union.

Original prints by Lenord Youngbear ("Black Eagle"), winner of the Northern Plains Indian Arts Festival prize, will be on display. Bead, moccasin, and feather work made by members of Youngbear's family will also be shown.

The University of Nebraska College of Law is interested in encouraging the entry of minority and disadvantaged persons into law schools and the legal profession. Information on the UNL program: law school application and admission procedures, scholarships, financial aid, the CLEO program, and a summer institute designed to assist disadvantaged students in law school study are available from Raul Guevara (Holton 206, 532-6436).

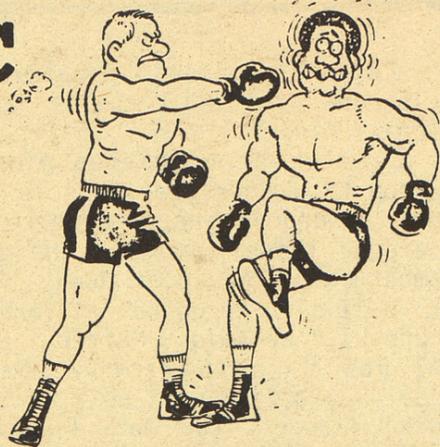
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