

Nimoy praises shuttle

By STEPHEN WHITE
Collegian Staff Writer

Leonard Nimoy, a-k-a Mr. Spock of "Star Trek," said the Space Shuttle recently named in honor of the series' Starship Enterprise could change the structure of the U.S. space program. Speaking before 4,500 people at Rec Hall, Nimoy said the Shuttle is re-usable up to 100 missions and lifts economic restraints on increased space exploration. He said this eventually could facilitate colonization on space stations. "Great new breakthroughs in space technology are coming," Nimoy said. He also attempted to explain the continued popularity of "Star Trek," which was cancelled nine years ago. "The show was a remarkable thing," Nimoy said. "The appeal of 'Star Trek' is still tremendous, largely because it's a hopeful show and shows that man indeed made it into the 22nd century. The characters interact very successfully and they're intensely human. People can identify with them very easily." He said the series operated on several

levels — magical for children and sociological for adults — as well as being a well-done drama. Nimoy said the series' cast were professionals who ignited each other's creative talents.

"I can't tell you how much respect I have for Bill Shatner as an actor," he added.

Nimoy said he would be interested in appearing in a "Star Trek" movie, providing there is a good script.

"I don't want to be in a rip-off 'Star Trek' movie. I want to be in a good one," he said.

Nimoy also said that:

— Every episode of "Star Trek" that was filmed has been shown on television.

— The series was cancelled solely because of poor ratings, not because it was "too good."

— The Vulcan greeting was taken from a Jewish Orthodox ceremony.

— His Vulcan ears were made of fine rubber, and the friction caused by their attachment was sometimes painful.

He said "Star Trek" has provided him with new opportunities.

"I've been able to go places, see people and indulge my curiosity," Nimoy said. "If you make life a curious thing, it can be very rewarding and fulfilling."

After the demise of "Star Trek," he joined "Mission: Impossible" for two seasons but said he left the series because his creative talents weren't being utilized.

Nimoy said he then entered UCLA to study black and white photography and began writing poetry to accompany his pictures.

Nimoy read several passages of poetry from his books, "You and I" and "Will I Think of You?"

He is currently host-narrator of "In Search Of . . .," a documentary series that examines unexplained phenomena such as the Bermuda Triangle.

Nimoy's appearance was sponsored by Colloquy, and the Panhellenic and Interfraternity councils.

Black author views Bicentennial

By DEBBIE SHEER
Collegian Staff Writer

Black Americans need their own view of the Bicentennial, according to one black author.

Playtell Benjamin, former professor of Afro-American studies at the University of Massachusetts, said at a reading last night, "I thought future generations should have at least one intelligent account of the Bicentennial."

He said he decided to start the book, "On Being Black in American Civilization — Reflections of the Bicentennial," after hearing Barbara Jordan talk about how good things are for blacks. Before that he had decided not to write about the Bicentennial, but "to pass over it in silence."

He said he thinks his book will be published when he finishes it, although he doesn't expect much attention. "I personally believe there is a ban on intellectual black people in the media," he said.

He said he wanted to make sure that Barbara Jordan's type of view won't be the only black one. "Let the white folks praise all the things that are good about America," he said.

"The auction block is not wholly purged from our midst," he said. He said the race issue is not settled.

In the portions of his book that he read last night, Benjamin asks why most blacks never had an equal chance to become famous and powerful Americans. He asks why the black teenagers he sees were not given the opportunity to enter "dignified, productive, work." He also follows black history in the United States from before the revolution.

Benjamin's book says slavery in Great Britain and in the British colonies ended much earlier than it did in America. Also, once slavery was abolished there, there

was no evidence of segregation or racial killings.

"Sometimes I'm not sure that a British victory wouldn't have served us better," he said.

He said, though, that this oppression created "the most unified, progressive and race-conscious community in society." It also has forced blacks into a unity which ignores class structure, he said.

He said he still sees, however, "a preoccupation with survival on the part of black people most of the time. Black people must interpret what the black experience means."

"One sees most clearly when one is most aware of the concept of being black," Benjamin noted. He said questions must be asked, but added, "We are not the first generation to raise these questions."

He traces this book to 1792 when a prominent black scorned Thomas Jefferson's "Jeckyl-Hyde" practices. Benjamin said that although Jefferson wrote in the Declaration of Independence that "all men are created equal," he clearly stated his belief in the inferiority of black people in his Virginia notes.

Benjamin praised men like Frederick Douglass and Booker T. Washington who greatly contributed to black awareness and civil rights. He said, however, that people are still ignorant of much of black history.

"The scholarly opinions of our professors are too often confined to the pages of scholarly journals," he said. This accounts for the historical ignorance of America, according to Benjamin.

At present, he also is writing a criticism of the television program, "Roots." His objection "is that it was done as if what happened then has no connection to what happens now. This is ridiculous nonsense," he said.



Playtell Benjamin

Photo by Joe Tort

Mankind must revamp attitude on gays, HOPS member says

By FRAN WEISBERGER
Collegian Staff Writer

Homosexuals have been condemned as outcasts in our society, and throughout their history they have been pitied and despised, Peter Sichel, secretary of the Homophile organization, said last night at a seminar on homosexual life.

Yet, mankind must revamp his present attitudes toward the acceptance of this "invisible" minority, Sichel said.

"The minute you start labeling people you begin to judge them, and we act on our judgement," said Sichel. Homosexuals have never been given a place in our society because of the intolerance of people toward

such a subculture, Sichel said. HOPS "provides a social outlet for gays in the community," Sichel said. The organization specifically functions as an educational and political resource for sexually oppressed minorities.

Homosexuality has always existed in all cultures. This counterculture has been subjected to psychiatric and medical "cures." Until 1953, male homosexuals have been castrated in hope to cure their "unnatural" behavior, Sichel said.

Major areas of gay discrimination today include housing, jobs, credit, insurance and licensing opportunities, Sichel said.

Year after year bills have been introduced into the Pennsylvania legislature which discriminate against homosexuals in state jobs, such as mental health clinics and corrections and law enforcement, Sichel said.

Before World War I, a man was considered a homosexual if he wore a wrist watch. Other stereotypes include those who use pocketbooks, penny loafers, and wear keys outside of their pocket. Today, the lambda sign worn on a necklace symbolizes gay liberation, Sichel said.

There are many different types of sexuality, including hermaphrodites, transsexuals, and transvestites, Sichel said. Yet, humanity must learn to deal with a changing society,

he said. "The gayness is not wrong, just societal opinion," Sichel said. "This is not a free country; we conform to certain unwritten laws," Sichel said. People must be open to complete freedom of choice, as "we are all really arguing about sexuality," Sichel said.

"Homosexuals are in French classes, and are bosses, yet when their homosexuality has been exposed, they are assumed as homosexuals first and last, Sichel said.

Americans feel "dropping bombs in Cambodia is okay, but sex between members of the same sex is the last straw," Sichel said. "I'm outside society, I am my last judge," Sichel said.

Rags, paint ignite

A box of paints and rags caught fire last night in a Nittany room, causing little damage and no injuries.

According to Mary Beth Hunter (6th-political science and journalism), a resident of Nittany 21, residents of that dorm smelled something burning in room 20 at 8:30 p.m. Suzanne Demmel, (11th-

art education), occupant of the room, was not at home, and a resident assistant opened the door, saw the smoldering box and called Police Services.

Hunter said campus policemen pulled the box out of the room, and it burst into flames. The officers extinguished the blaze, Hunter said.

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