



Ossie Davis watches as Ruby Dee relates one of many black folktales which pleased a near-capacity crowd in Schwab Friday night. The

stories recited were centuries old, having been passed down from generation to generation.

Photo by Joe Tori

Davis, Dee retell poetry, fables

Actors trace black literary roots

By KATHY RETTIG
Collegian Staff Writer
Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee delighted a near capacity crowd as they performed "An Evening in Black" Friday night for Black History Week.

Davis and Dee, both actors and writers with numerous stage and screen credits, became storytellers as they retold the tales of other black storytellers and writers from ancient times to the present.

"To have black roots, we must begin in Africa," Davis said. He and Dee dramatized African fables many hundreds of years old.

These stories, Davis said, have been told for centuries by certain African tribesmen, whose occupation it is to remember them.

The history, language, culture and religion is carried with care in the hearts of these storytellers, Davis said. Alex Haley, author of "Roots," one of the most widely-viewed television programs in recent years, found one of these storytellers in an African tribe who had

been told by storytellers before him what happened to Haley's ancestor, Davis said.

Davis and Dee became many different characters with many different voices and dramatized black folktales from the old South. Stories of the slaves were not about kings and jungle animals, Davis said, because the slaves had long since forgotten about them.

He related one of the many escapades where Bre'r Rabbit outsmarts the fox. The rabbit was a hero to the slaves, Davis said, because, while he was not the biggest and strongest creature, he was often the most clever.

Davis and Dee then dramatized recent literature. They read from some of the novels, poems, plays, songs and letters of Lanston Hughes, whom Davis called "a man for all seasons... today's version of the storyteller."

Davis read from one of Hughes songs of unrequited love.

"I'm gonna lay my head on that lonesome railroad track, When that train comes along

I'm gonna snatch my head back."

Paul Lawrence Dunbar, who wrote in the early 1900's, Davis said, elevated the black dialect to the noblest form of poetry. He dramatized one of Dunbar's poems about a preacher who was brave enough to tell the slaves they had a right to freedom and equality.

Dee read from the works of contemporary poets such as Gwendolyn Brooks and Nikki Giovanni. She and Davis closed "An Evening in Black" with a scene from the Broadway play "Purlie Victorious." Davis wrote the play and Dee starred in it.

In this scene, a woman is worried because she has to pretend to some rich people that she is a college student. The Reverend Purlie tells her to calm down.

"College ain't so much where you been," he says. "It's how you talk when you get back."

Presently Davis and Dee have a radio program in New York that is devoted to black and Third World literature.

College paper filling gap in Philly

By JOHN MARTELLARO
Collegian Staff Writer

The Temple News has become an important information source for Philadelphia residents in the midst of that city's newspaper strike.

The collegiate newspaper published an eight-page issue Friday, and distributed 25,000 copies at subway stations and other heavy commuter points throughout the city. The News usually prints four-page issues Tuesday through Friday and distributes them only on the Temple campus.

News editor Rich Leiby said his paper has changed its format as well as its

size. Although basically a campus publication, he said the News printed national news from United Press International on Friday and will attempt to cover city government operations.

The Newspaper Guild has been on strike since Tuesday against Philadelphia Newspapers, Inc., publishers of The Philadelphia Inquirer and The Philadelphia Daily News.

The city's third daily newspaper, The Philadelphia Bulletin, has been hit by a sympathy strike by Teamsters union members since Wednesday, when it published an edition bearing the names of all three papers. The Bulletin has

continued publishing but the Teamsters refuse to distribute it. The papers are available only at the Bulletin's office.

The News ran into some distribution problems of its own on Friday, according to Leiby. He said students trying to place bundles of the newspaper in some buildings were chased by police, but added that a member of Temple's Revolutionary Student Brigade, who called News staffers "scabs," was arrested when he tried to stop distribution of the paper on campus.

The Newspaper Guild has given the News its full support, according to Leiby.

Chief Justice calls for new judgeships

SEATTLE (UPI) — Chief Justice Warren Burger said yesterday it is imperative that Congress add 132 new judgeships to the federal court system to deal with increased caseloads that congressional action has helped to create.

Burger told the midyear meeting of the American

Bar Association the 5th and 9th U.S. Circuit Courts of Appeal are especially overloaded with work. He said the two circuits should be divided into three divisions each with a substantial increase in judgeships. The 5th covers a large area of the South and the 9th most of the West and on to Alaska,

Hawaii and Guam.

He noted Congress passed the "speedy trial act" which can sometimes allow a defendant to go free if he is not tried in 90 days. In 1973, Congress created an Emergency Court of Appeals and a special three-judge panel to deal with the Regional Rail Reorganization Act.

However, he said Congress has not provided the additional judges the acts require.

"Meanwhile, the Congress had taken no action on the obvious need for 65 additional judgeships. All this time the growth of new filings has continued."

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