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Forums:

Black generations, portrayals

by R. Carl Campbell III
News Editor

With a little help from the Fund for the Improvement of Undergraduate Instruction, the Office of Student Activities and the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences sponsored a forum in which the thoughts of three generations of African-American women were presented on Tuesday night in Reed 117.

Majorie Podolsky, coordinator of the program said, "We were particularly interested in putting this together because professors are interested in what students are thinking. We're putting together the ideas of three generations of black women to see how their views differ. This is not one voice we're hearing, but a variety of voices."

"Students seem to be more interested in talking about these issues on an academic level."

Ngozi Mbotto stated that the program was developed to establish and open communication, information, connections, and history.

"The insight," Mbotto said, "may be where Erie is heading and how women may play a part in that movement."

The women began the forum with descriptions of growing up in Erie. Ellen Curry, the first vice president of the PA State Federation of Negro Women's Clubs, informed the diversified audience on growing up prior to the Civil Rights Bill. In talking about her experiences she said that she is not bitter and does not carry a bitterness.

"If we do not know history," Curry said. "We are sure to repeat it."

"I don't know how far we have come," Curry continued, "I'd like you to give it some



Photo by Sheila Bickel/Collegian Photographer

GENERATIONS: Compiling three generations of history, Judy Spangler, Ellen Curry, and Nicole Miller were on the panel during Tuesday's night forum.

thought."

Nicole Miller, the Director of Community Initiatives and Minority Participation of United

Way of Erie County, was next to speak.

"Women have the same

potential as men," she said. "We should earn the same as they do."

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"Representation of the Black Male"

Joneatra Henry
Collegian Staff

Last night, HRPC presented an open forum on the topic, Representation of the Black Male. The panel consisted of two Behrend students, Israel Jenkins and Shannon Jones, Assistant Director of Undergraduate Studies Betty Brooks, professor of geoscience Eva Tucker, and Andre Horton, a local resident.

The panel and audience discussed different portrayals of the Black male. Panel member Jones "believes the media portrays the Black male as devious, not as a doctor or lawyer. They portray us as jimps or drug dealers. We should be portrayed as individuals, not as a group of devious persons."

According to Brooks, "Black males sometimes get a raw deal, on the other hand, sometimes the Black male lends himself to the negative ideals presented upon him."

Tucker stated, "Black males have played an important part in wars, in addition to the philosophy of the this nation, and have played a significant part in the development of this nation, despite the obstacles faced. If we think we are victims, then we will be victims."

One important Black male discussed was O.J. Simpson. Some of the audience comments were, "O.J. has to watch his back - Black men have to keep their identity - The case would have been handled differently if O.J. hadn't supposedly killed two white people - The case is a 1990 version of a lynching."

An audience member, who wished to remain anonymous, stated, "O.J. entered the good black boy category of the white people. But now that he supposedly committed a crime, he is no longer the good black boy. He is considered a typical black male in the media and in some white people's eyes, who had considered him a crossover before the event happened."

According to Horton, "Our responsibility is not to be victims. We should look at the doors that our open. Racism is not declining in the near future, so we as a race have to accentuate the positive."

Jenkins, a resident advisor in Lawrence, stated, "Black men have been stripped of a lot of things, especially self-knowledge. We have to figure out how to educate youth about the positive and not the negative."



Photo by Jennifer Bernier/Collegian Photographer

THE PANEL: Israel Jenkins, Shannon Jones, Betty Brooks, Eva Tucker, and Andre Horton composed the panel for the open forum last night.

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