

DECK THE IVY RACIST HALLS: THE CASE OF BLACK STUDIES

BY

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## INTRODUCTION

~~Following Brother Karenga and the previous discussion,~~ I feel it best to make two introductory comments. First, like many Black intellectuals, I recently faced a crisis in my own life; and so, though I have to admit the fact that by training I'm a sociologist (and occupy an academic position), I speak really as an extension of the Black community. The other comment is simply that I think the symposium that's being held here is very impressive, but -- as many people feel -- I think there are many false issues being raised. I don't know <sup>IF</sup> ~~whether or not~~ these are consciously being raised as false issues, but I think ~~the question~~ whether or not the Black experience is ~~one~~ worthy of intellectual inquiry is ~~indeed~~ beyond ~~a question of a doubt~~ <sup>And</sup> everybody here, it seems to me, as intelligent human beings ought to recognize that if any human experience is relevant for intellectual consideration, the Black experience has to be included. And the notion that it would be questioned in such an audience is too grotesque to be amusing. This morning I was thinking, what would be the reaction at Fisk University if someone stood up and asked the question, Is it intellectually relevant, significant, or can one defend being concerned about the Black experience? Apparently, there are some people here who are having difficulty with that question. I also wondered what would happen if you were in China

and you raised the question about the Chinese experience -- or you were talking to a group of American Jews and you raised the question, whether or not it was relevant to be concerned intellectually with the Jewish experience. I don't know what the other brothers and sisters in the audience felt as some of you debated it, but then it was merely another typically sick American experience.

In beginning, it is important to understand that as Black intellectuals think on these issues more and more, things are becoming very clear. Basically this clarity has to do with a set of assumptions that Black people have made for a long period of time. We rationalize our various positions on the basis of those assumptions. I find here that people have different sets of assumptions and are asking Black intellectuals rather than to rationalize positions on basic assumptions Black people hold, you're asking that Black people make rationalizations of positions based on the assumptions that white people hold. I could also make the same point when we raised the whole question of science and ideology: the "race relations" debate that white people carry on about "science" and "ideology" is something that we feel, basically, is a closed question. Whatever you do, the fact is that this is a racist country and that the scientists who have operated in this country, by and large, have been racists. Intentionally or unintentionally, the fact is that they have functioned as such and <sup>So</sup> have their theories. This is something that we have reacted to

on the basis of survival needs. So, when Black social scientists speak, if white people are confused as to whether or not they are speaking ideologically or as "detached scientists," that's ~~not~~ **TOUGH**. ~~something that~~ **NOT** Black people are ~~concerned with~~. Rather, we are concerned with survival, we're concerned with prospering, we're concerned with living the life ~~we would assume~~ all human beings in human communities want to live. *And for this no white "permission" will help since its white oppression we must combat in order to survive.*

As part of my opening statement, I would like to refer you to an essay by the late Dr. DuBois (in What The Negro Wants, edited by Rayford Logan) where he reflects on his own experiences, where he talks about the way in which he really believed white people in institutions of higher learning. He ~~basically~~ says that ~~up~~ until ~~the point that~~ he really came to terms with Marx and Freud he thought that "truth wins." But when he ~~came to reflect on~~ **COMPARED** ~~his~~ **WITH** ~~set of~~ lived experiences ~~that he had~~, and the notions of these two men, he saw that if one was concerned about surviving, if one was concerned about progress, if one was concerned about "the good life" and moving any society toward that, then ~~you~~ **ONE** had to include **ACADEMIC** ~~a little~~ something other than an ~~interesting~~ appeal to "Truth" in some abstract, universal sense.

I would like to reflect briefly on five statements. The first statement is that the university has functioned as an agent of racism in the United States. The second statement is that the university can be conceptualized as a manifestation of focussed

powers, a set of powers. The third statement is that if the uni-  
versity is to live up ~~to~~ to its highest aims, it must be committed,  
to creative change in whatever society it finds itself -- and become  
involved in that change. The fourth statement is that the Black  
community in this country has matured, ~~in terms of this country~~ in  
an unanticipated way necessitating a re-examination of the peculiar  
historical dynamics of the Black community. And the last statement  
that I want to reflect on is that if the university is to be rele-  
vant for the Black community, it must be honest -- not only within  
itself, but within society -- and it must use the powers that it  
has for the kind of positive change that it must become involved  
in.

# I

Now, the first point about the university functioning as  
 an agent of racism is quite clear. ~~I think that many things that~~  
~~have been said conclude this (often implicitly), not only by~~  
~~speakers but in questions.~~ For example, to raise the question of  
 alternatives between universalism and particularism is really a  
 false kind of issue: the university has functioned in this country  
 like a table with one leg -- that is to say, its leg represents an  
 extension of the dominant community, white America, the WASP.  
 In essence, it represents a leg that is grounded in some community  
 other than the Black community, while the top of the table is

identified as being "universal principles that apply to all human behavior" without the additional legs. So, ~~indeed~~, that's fantasy, because I don't know of many tables of any size and scope that stand on one leg.

It seems to me that there are any number of ways that we can talk about the university as being an agent of racism. Simply reflect on the change that's occurred in colleges like Yale University and Harvard in the admissions policy, in the standards of evaluation, and in the body of knowledge contained not only in the libraries but in the people walking around it. The dramatic change in the last few years represents, it seems to me, an admission that the university has systematically excluded Black people -- systematically excluded them in admissions, systematically excluding<sup>ing</sup> them in devising standards of evaluation that have nothing to do with the styles of life and the indigenous culture of the Black community. And, moreover, when the admissions policy is changed, which indeed must reflect a change in their standards of evaluation, Black people are exposed to a body of knowledge which in effect excludes them -- not only excludes them, but defines them as being evil, illiterate, and not capable of taking over in this society. It seems to me that the important standards have not to do with the minimum acceptance in any society, but rather have to do with the maximum: that is to say, any Black person who wants to live as a man must think of himself as being a possible leader among men, and to

admit Black people into an institution like a university with the notion that we are going to send you out basically to be a minor person in society is racist. It has to do with saying that you have limited opportunities in this society and that you indeed are not as <sup>Free</sup> ~~equal~~ as somebody else.

## II

Let's move on to the second statement: ~~which is, it seems to me, more open to question~~ the university should be conceptualized or re-conceptualized in terms of a set of powers. I <sup>will</sup> ~~would like to~~ mention three such powers. One is the power of knowledge: the university is a reservoir of knowledge. The second is that the university is ~~indeed~~ a social and political institution. The third one is that the university maintains certain powers of socialization, that is, <sup>The UNIVERSITY</sup> ~~to make people certain kinds of people.~~ (In terms of the university being a reservoir of knowledge, there are at least two ways in which this is true. One way is that the university maintains a tradition -- that is, the accumulated body of knowledge of a community of people that it can transmit back to <sup>each</sup> ~~that community~~ <sup>NEW GENERATION</sup> and <sup>preserve this knowledge</sup> ~~maintain~~ over time. The second way in which it is a reservoir of knowledge is in terms of research: the university is committed to innovation and concerned with revealing new knowledge about the world and the people who live in it.

Now, in terms of tradition -- and this goes back to the whole question of racism -- ~~it seems to me that the~~ Black people have been excluded and/or defined as being evil. Black people have, until very recently, ~~in effect~~ gone through a process in the university where they have faced ahistorical images; that is, ~~to say, that~~ Black people <sup>HAVE</sup> had no meaningful <sup>BLACK</sup> history but simply a reflection of white people who've had them under their control. ~~I think~~ The second important point about this traditional body of knowledge is that white ~~people who have performed as~~ scientists, ~~and as~~ academicians, and scholars have indeed been apologists for whatever racist practices exist in society today. The one appropriate example I need mention is the renowned anthropologist of Yale University, William Graham Sumner, <sup>His</sup> ~~whose work was used to~~ support <sup>ed</sup> the belief that what white people ~~believed~~ had to be changed by the goodness of their hearts, ~~and that~~ The government (and other agencies of ~~change~~ <sup>CONTROL</sup>) could not produce any significant change, <sup>so</sup> ~~that~~ white people <sup>wasn't</sup> had to ~~cont of~~ naturally agree that everything would be cool, <sup>and only</sup> ~~then~~ Black people might be admitted to the society. Now, we find that at no point in time did the Black community accept this. ~~There are many other examples, a more recent one being the U. S. Department of Labor report by Daniel Moynihan on the Black family.~~ <sup>NEW</sup> (Just as a lot of people operate within the framework of the status quo, by and large, social science has been a normative science operating with implicit equilibrium models. What <sup>this</sup> ~~that~~ means is that basically it



it doesn't have anything to do with me -- anybody who's concerned with equilibrium, anybody who's concerned with the status quo, has basically defined me out, because ~~up until this point (and I suspect it will have to do with the rest of tonight and tomorrow)~~ this is a racist country ~~defined as being~~ totally against me.

### CONCERNING THE

The third point, ~~in terms of the~~ traditional body of knowledge, has to do with defining the Black community in pathological terms. This ~~again~~ goes back to the whole question of ideology and science, and ~~is~~ relates to the question of whether or not social science is normative, ~~or not~~. It seems to me that, beyond a question, the traditional approach is to define a community of Black people on the basis of standards ~~of the~~ white community -- and not only the white community in general, but specific white people in particular. Rather than an intelligent approach, that Black people are different so one must understand the way in which they live and try to determine their values and standards, ~~other values and standards~~ ~~the~~ white values and standards ~~are~~ have been imposed on Black people.

Now, ~~it seems to me all that's clear and most of you, I assume, would accept these points.~~ But also take the question of research, that is, innovation, creating new bodies of knowledge. **I** It wasn't until approximately the 1930's in Chicago, that Black people represented a group of folks that warranted any kind of empirical research. Robert Park, Charles Cooley, Louis Worth and others started moving to create an atmosphere that Black students

found possible to survive in, so ~~that~~ we had the first really  
 serious generation of Black social scientists coming <sup>OUT OF PROGRAMS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF</sup> from Chicago.

But, if you read the works of these men closely, you find that it reflects the racist American norms of the day: Robert Park thought of Black people as "the lady of the races" and wrote about our emotional make-up and what we liked and didn't like as if he was writing some kind of romantic racist novel. This should suggest that while empirical research started then, it falls far short of what the Black community today would accept as being <sup>reasonable.</sup> ~~respectable.~~

One must also mention in this concern with "race relations" the book by Gunnar Myrdal, An American Dilemma, which ~~to Black people~~ contains the white Myrdalian dilemma, not the dilemma of Black people. Here I want specifically to note the whole question of "race relations," because in the beginning period of empirical inquiry it was race relations that was a concern -- that is, people were concerned about the relationship of Black people and white people and not, not the life within the Black community. I suppose that's natural, since these people were concerned about the survival of the society which was white. Now, the Myrdalian dilemma essentially is that, even though he had tremendous contact with a significant number of Black scholars, he saw Black people -- basically the same way as William Faulkner, the white racist novelist of the South. That is, he said that white people presented all of the alternatives available to Black people, and if one ever wanted to understand Black people, you merely had to look at white people who were around

them, calculate the obverse of what you saw and you'd come up with what Black people are about. There was no inkling in his mind that over a period of time Black people could create a community, a culture, that would be functionally autonomous from the white oppressors who raped them from Africa. Again, it seems to me that this should be clear to anyone with knowledge of recent research who is listening to voices coming from the Black community.

The last point under research is the fact that there has been a beginning of basic research done by Black people. Here, one needs to mention four people that have been very significant. One is E. Franklin Frazier, Dr. W. E. B. DuBois, Charles Johnson, and Carter G. Woodson. These are people who were trained at the University of Chicago and Harvard University who decided to hell with white academic life -- and, I might add, in part this was because white society was saying very dramatically to them, to hell with you. They decided to create a body of knowledge. Carter G. Woodson: without his work much would be lost; he collected many documents and indeed set up an organization and participated in setting up a press in order to present this material. But, for the most part this material has not been included in any significant way in social science curricula that have been used in universities or public school systems. ~~I can only reflect, very personally, on an experience at the University of Chicago -- which has the reputation of being a "great liberal institution" and of being the kind of institution that includes a "very strong" emphasis~~

~~on race relations, and yet I know the state of Chicago and it leaves much to be desired. Not only does it leave much to be desired, it's practically non-existent.~~

The last point I want to raise about research is merely to make a few comments reflecting on the recent research on riots. ~~(Again, I have a very personal relationship with the University of Chicago, so I have to reflect on it; I'm sure that if I were a graduate of Yale, I could probably do the same.)~~ Morris Janowitz, chairman of the Department of Sociology, is part of a group called the Center of Policy Studies, a very prestigious group of scholars at the University of Chicago who meet to discuss relevant questions of the day. They had a long series dealing with the problem of China -- and I don't mean Formosa, I mean China -- and recently became concerned with "urban problems." The first paper published by this Center of Policy Studies dealing with urban problems had to do with "The Social Control of Escalated Riots." When I read that title, immediately certain things happened in my mind so I decided to read it. And when I did read it, I discovered that Morris Janowitz was following one of his major professional interests (which has to do with police and military concerns): he mentions in passing the interest of the Black community, but mainly his focus is how in the hell can police departments stop these niggers from raising hell? Basically, that's his concern. Now, he talks about how to civilize police departments, the possible benefits of having constables to walk around with billy

clubs and not guns because people do weird things when you put guns on them, how the symbolic meaning of a bayonet causes people to do weird things. He contends that what is really needed is efficient police action during the initial stages of a riot to prevent the escalation of snipers. The national guard and police departments aren't used to snipers, and, consequently, they do weird things when confronted with them. Basically, the riot escalates and that must be stopped.

The second point about riot research has to do with the Kerner Commission on Civil Disorders (and there are a lot of other government reports that also fit this kind of criticism). While the Kerner Report comes to the conclusion that this is a racist society that is racially divided, the alternative it opts for is still one of integration. It does not significantly accept the fact that the Black community -- whether or not it is now a viable community is beside the point -- is saying that we are going to be a viable community or we are going to destroy America. Or America will have to destroy us. Now, it seems to me that the "liberals" on that commission who seem to want to be relevant could have raised the whole question of <sup>class contradictions, showing the basis</sup> ~~how to invest resources in the Black~~ of ~~total societal change in race and class. By only dealing with~~ ~~community as opposed to how we can invest the Black community in~~ ~~over a false image is projected~~ ~~the white community.~~ But this was not done. I mention these things to indicate the shortcomings of the university as a reservoir of knowledge.

Viewing the university as a social institution, one can

raise the question of social dysfunction, <sup>i.e., the implicit</sup> ~~about most American~~  
~~institutions. That is to say,~~ <sup>contradiction in the way</sup> the university is concerned with  
 organizational maintenance over community service. Those of you  
 who are students of social change know that frequently an organi-  
 zation will become very static and concerned with maintaining it-  
 self as opposed to achieving those goals it was originally set out  
 to achieve. Indeed, this is the case with the American university.  
 In Chicago it was widely rumored that a man who was involved in the  
 urban renewal department actually suggested separating the university  
 community from the Black community with a retaining wall four feet  
 high. I'm really sorry that didn't happen making the position of  
 the university crystal clear. He then was appointed to an urban  
 studies program at the University of Chicago, which, I understand,  
 has several million dollars <sup>to support the program.</sup> In urban studies they initially  
 started out discussing issues like land use because of the relocation  
 of the packing industries in the stock-yards -- that was the most  
 relevant urban problem they could identify in Chicago.

Now, it's not even a question of community service, because  
 the university is concerned with community service -- before it's  
 concerned with cooperating with communities that are near it and  
 that it must relate to. Here...people feel basically that while  
 scholars generally are a pretty impotent bunch -- except when they  
 go to Washington and make that consulting money and then there's  
 a sort of psychological thing about power -- basically it's, We  
 have something that people need, so we're going to take it and put

it on them. Much the same, I agree very much with what Brother Karenga said about projects, that there's a real problem in determining what "expertise" means: involving not only faculty members but administration and students in the community is a very risky business. But by and large the university uses the model of, We've got something and we're going to put it in there, as opposed to dealing with some kind of cooperative arrangement.

The last point on the university as a social institution is that regardless of how it identifies itself in public it is indeed an institution which functions for the establishment. You only need to look at where university faculty get consultant checks from, who funds research, the secretive research that goes on in Defense Department relationships, etc. The real question is, how can the university go on defining itself as being apolitical or non-political when indeed it functions in relationship to these institutions which have in mind maintaining the status quo over and against various communities which exist in this country that are committed to radical change.

The last point concerns the university as an agent of socialization, and here the whole question becomes what does it mean to be a man or a woman? It seems to me, regardless of whether or not the university has intended this (though, again, in the history of higher education universities have intended various things, none of which have been Black), inevitably it comes out that what it means to be a man is basically what it means to be

white and successful. Though a lot of white people are discouraged because they're white but not successful, there is greater clarity in the exclusion of Blacks. The campus reality of role models, admissions policies, peer groups on campus and other aspects of student experiences have been completely white-oriented. And here, again, most of these comments I'm making also refer to predominantly "Negro" colleges, though they're not as successful in being as evil as most white schools because they don't have the money or the staff -- but they're just as sick since one must add the additional "Negro" colonial pathologies to this.

### III

The third major statement is that the university must be committed to change and become involved. That is to say, I think the university has to be a place not only committed to what is in society, but indeed to what ought to be. There are three principles, among many, that can be mentioned here. One is that the university must "go to the thing itself," that is, make a radical turn to the experience that one talks about, free of assumptions, facing it, confronting it. The second point is that, in this going-to-the-thing-itself, the university must be concerned not only with knowledge, but with the utility of knowledge. As someone mentioned recently, "art for art's sake" is incest: the point is that we have to be concerned with the utility of knowledge -- what does it mean to know what we find out? It seems to me that



anyone who has followed the student movements since the sit-in through Berkeley 'til now, (and certainly anybody who's been concerned with the Black community) has to be aware that the utility of the knowledge the university possesses is an important and relevant question. The third guideline I would mention is that the university, in being committed to change and becoming involved, must conceive of itself as a servant of the community. This servant relationship to the community must be defined cooperatively, for only in that way can the university maintain a balance between relating to what is and relating to what ought to be.

#### IV

Now, the fourth statement is that the Black community has matured in an unanticipated way, necessitating a re-examination of its historical dynamics. Again, this seems to be a fairly self-evident statement. One need only think, for example, of the terms and definitions that people have used to identify Black people to know the limitations of what America's relationship to Black people is at the moment: as Brother Karenga has said, the word 'Negro' is something which in many quarters has taken on a very special negative meaning. Many of you might have noticed that Black people have chosen to call themselves by different terms during different historical periods. At one point in our history Dr. DuBois -- and in this he was joined by Booker T. Washington -- was concerned about using the word 'Negro' as opposed to using other

words that white people chose to use. Well, maybe this hasn't changed as a result of the peculiar character of American history, but the fact is that today people want to be called 'African Americans', 'Afro-Americans', or 'Blacks'. All that means is that people don't want to be called 'Negroes'. And it seems to me that this and other terms like Black Power represent a problem that white people face and that this country faces. The problem runs much deeper than simply the expedient use of language or the practical use of a term to communicate an idea; it represents the crying demands of an experience, a communal and historical experience, that white American has to come to grips with, has to listen to -- and has to listen to with open ears and closed mouth.

The second point I want to make about the Black community changing is the fantastic move toward new unity. Many Black people, particularly young Black people, have come to understand that Malcolm X and Martin Luther King met the same fate, that any ideological differences these people had, or seemed to have had in the white press, somehow were reduced to a common denominator. The movement in Washington, D. C. with the Black United Front and similar moves throughout the entire country should indeed strike the bell of alarm in white institutions, agencies and communities around the country, because Black people are getting together and they're getting together with ideologies that are more inclusive than perhaps ever before. Indeed, you seldom find a young Black

brother who will stand and seriously criticize any other Black man -- for the simple reason that to make appeals to "truth" as a value makes little difference, makes absolutely no difference, when you're dead. If you take a man, lock him in a cage, and keep food and water from him, he'll turn into an animal and do almost anything in order to survive. Black people have, in one sense, been reduced to that kind of unity, because we know that both Brother Malcolm and Brother Martin died -- and we suspect that they died at the hand of the same kind of assassin. This, again, is a fact that has to be recognized I might just mention this: I don't know how many white people here looked around in the audience as Brother Karenga was speaking, but I'm sure that a lot of people here laughed and responded in funny ways because they didn't really take what he said seriously; but if, instead of indulging yourself that way, you had looked around the audience at the Black people, you would have gotten a whole different vibration. (Think on it!!)

The third thing I want to say about the Black community is in terms of the set of alternatives being presented to America. (It seems to me they're very clear.) The terms of one alternative put forward by white people along with supporting social scientists are, "Well, you're only ten percent of the population and what can you do, you're located in these ghetto areas, etc., etc." There are two responses to that relevant to the concerns of this symposium. One is the census -- which to secular America is like the Bible -- it's something you have to believe in because it's the

the only thing like it, every ten years and there it is, it's got all the data in it. Black people have said a lot of different figures because we knew the census wasn't true, but we didn't know what was true, so we just said what we wanted to say. The census finally agreed with us and admitted that they were wrong. We all have to accept the fact that we don't know how many Black people there are in this country, nor do we know what kind of Black people they are, nor do we know where they are. I suspect it's much like Nigeria where the Black people used to go into the bush and hide when the agents of the colonial regime would come around and count heads; then when the first Nigerian census came out, they were convinced that maybe census was a good thing. In any case, the whole point about the census being a basis of truth needs to be seriously questioned, if for no other reason than the white people who run it said that it was messed up. The second response is that I remember being at an international conference in Geneva, and white people from the West stood up and were very concerned about nuclear holocaust. But I was listening to the brothers from the third world who basically said that as far as they were concerned, in the bush (be it in Zimbabwe or be it in Vietnam), the whole business about a nuclear holocaust was a Western myth, that basically white people want to use the whole notion that they have bombs that they're threatening each other with to prevent people from participating in movements toward national liberation. Basically, they're saying, watch out or we'll

blow the world up, so you have to be cool; and basically we're saying, in the jungle of Vietnam or in the guerrilla groups invading Mozambique and Zimbabwe, we say, to hell with your bombs. All we know about are malotov cocktails and bullets, so if you have a bomb you'll have to drop it because we're moving toward national liberation anyway. It seems to me that this is what the Black community is saying; once again, it's saying that we're going to do it and if you want to exterminate us, then you'll just have to do that because we're moving toward liberation.

## V

Now, the last point I want to make is perhaps most focussed on the point of this symposium, or the needs of the people concerned with Black Studies. That is, how can the university, in the light of all this stuff, be relevant and use its powers for change? I want to mention a couple of ways in which I feel the university might be relevant. Take the whole problem of knowledge -- I would mention two things. In terms of courses, the most relevant way to deal with the Black experience is to first try to come to grips with the set of questions being raised by Black people. Let me give you an example: in economics, it seems to me that one could have a year course dealing with two questions -- Why don't Black people have any money? and, How can Black people get some money? It seems to me that in my talking with students at Fisk University that's what they're interested in: Why don't we have

any money? Well, obviously you would have to talk about the 'forty acres and a mule' kind of myth' as part of that myth you would have to talk about the Freed Man's Bank and how Southern racists and their Northern kin got to stealing money and checking each other, then tricked Frederick Douglass into taking the leadership position in before it folded. You have to talk about those kind of things in order to talk about the failure of an entrepreneurial spirit or delayed gratification becoming a factor in the values and life-styles of Black people. To talk about how Black people can get some money, you have to raise the question, how have Black insurance companies survived? -- I'm talking about North Carolina Mutual, Atlanta Life, Metropolitan. And how has Johnson Publications survived in such a vicious industry where great firms die every day? This is something that's immediately relevant to Black people. It's also relevant to white people: I assume that the body of knowledge relating to the experiences of white oppression have not been handed down, so that the sons and daughters of captains of industry in business school don't, in fact, hear lectures about how people have systematically excluded Black people from the economy, or excluded Black people from having access to resources to develop economic institutions. These are the kinds of basic concerns that are most relevant, and to try to move from the point of abstract, theoretical considerations that appear in other departments and immediately try to do the same thing with the Black experience would be perpetuating either the

same kind of educational system that white students are rejecting around the country, or at most would include the very, very poor literature that exists.

This leads me to my second point about what can be done. Take research: I believe that the Black curriculum cannot be created today -- not the Black curriculum and the Black university that I'm interested in being a part of. The simple fact is research does not exist, the findings do not exist when it comes down to the Black community. I notice that there are many social scientists concerned and involved in Black Studies: What do they know? What has been written about the Black community? Politics: The James Q. Wilson study of Chicago, Gosnell's study of Chicago, and a few very scant studies in the tradition of community decision-making. On the whole question of what's happening in the South there's one book by Matthews and Prothro which is an interesting exercise in methodological whatever, but in terms of coming to grips with what's happening politically in the Black community it simply doesn't exist -- it doesn't exist enough to build a curriculum on, certainly. Take the whole question of the cultural experience of the Black community. White America was gassed by Keil's study the Urban Blues, but the fact is that Keil merely attempted to develop a set of concepts or articulate the way in which Black people assign these concepts to white America. The significant kind of research that has to go on in terms of just exactly what's happening here, whether or not it's the experience of the Harlem

renaissance, the experience of the WPA project, or the current cultural revolution going on today, is simply not known. Moreover, the "Negroes" that white people have created perpetuate what they do, and not in the interest of Black people. So, the simple fact is that the literature doesn't exist, it just doesn't exist. I remember sitting and talking with some blues musicians and they told me some things that just completely blew my mind. Otis Span, the pianist with "Muddy Waters," told me that in 1940 they were writing protest songs -- blues wasn't always singing about resignation and disaster, this cat was writing some protest music. And he said, we never used to sing them in the Delta of Mississippi, but everybody knew the songs. Now, I didn't get a chance to follow that up, but I'm interested in what he was talking about -- he was talking about human experience and translating it into melody, and that's something Leonard Bernstein hasn't dealt with in discussing jazz. It seems to me that this is the kind of Black knowledge, the knowledge about the Black experience, that is important and relevant. And frankly, I'm speaking out of an extension of communal respect and love for the brothers and sisters at Yale who sponsored this symposium. I couldn't really give a damn whether white people are concerned with that body of knowledge or not, and to talk about "the intellectual validity" of this seems to me to be absurd and grotesque and very much a reflection of the white experience in America.

In any case, the whole point about research is very, very



important. It's just now, with books like Tally's Corner, with books like The Urban Blues, that certain kinds of psycho-linguistic studies talk about the fact that Black people speak a different language from white folks. If a man doesn't speak French, and you put a French book in his face and he can't read it, you don't say he can't read, what you say is that he can't read that language. It seems to me that people concerned with Black Studies are talking about the curriculum and how we want to rush and do this or that, but not with new knowledge in mind. I know why it's being done. There are pressures, the country's burning down. If the country wasn't burning down, the people controlling higher education wouldn't be a damned bit concerned. Secondly, there's the whole business about Black students. White people made the mistake of letting them in and now they're raising hell; Black Studies wouldn't be here if that wasn't going on. So, let's don't mince business and act as if we can afford to raise all kinds of theoretical questions: America is catching hell and that's why white folks are interested in Black Studies. Don't talk about "the intellectual validity of the Black experience." Go to Yeshiva University and you talk to them about the validity of the Jewish experience and see what they tell you -- you can just take that as an answer, whatever they give you.

Now, viewing the university as a social institution, again, let me raise the question, that Brother Karenga raised about providing funds and facilities. I understand that there are some

foundation people interested, and also Yale and other similar universities. All are sources of wealth (I know university people think they're not wealthy, but I come from one I know is poor, so I'm in a good position to say). When major problems come up in this society, the way people handle them, first, is to amass a certain amount of resources. The University of Chicago wants to concern itself with urban studies, and several million dollars is made available. Other people come up with problems? -- big corporations are established. In fact, at one point when white people were concerned about the race problem, the Carnegie Corporation got enough dust together (I don't have any idea how much it was) to support Myrdal's thing. (And, incidentally, some Black people got a little mileage out of it, Charles Johnson among others.) The same is true for one of the most gigantic studies of all time, the Coleman study dealing with the educational experiences of Blacks and whites. The question I raise is really a challenge. The challenge is simply this: there are a number of Black people in this country who have taken the time and suffered whatever they had to to be licensed by institutions of higher learning, and some of these have kept their minds on the needs of the community that they represent and are linked to, both out of a positive affirmation of self-identity and because they are forced to by this society. The question is this: Is it possible in this great country that a few million dollars -- which is not a lot of money -- could be made available to Black social scientists

to investigate the whole question of the Black experience and the body of knowledge that must be amassed, knowledge that is authentically an extension and reflection of the Black experience. It is possible that these great American institutions and agencies, with all of these resources, could see their way to do this?

Let me give you my rationale for this kind of request. There are a lot of colleges concerned about Black studies programs, and everybody is in search for a Black person to be associated with that program -- whether one admits it or not, everyone realizes that somebody at each school has raised that question. Now, from the interests of the national Black community I see this as eventually producing diminishing returns. If we spread ourselves thin all over the country, and each school has their Black man who can be sent to deal with those unruly students and who can deal with the white liberals both professionally and at white (non-molotov) cocktail parties, this merely means that we're not getting the job done. Again, it's a matter of incentives: you have the jobs and the money so that you can make some of us do things that we might not feel comfortable doing. But if you're the good guys, as much of your PR says you are, I put the challenge to you: Can you postpone the personal, individual, institutional needs you have right in through here as major institutions? Can you group up and encourage foundations to facilitate the kind of Black group and Black host institution to spend two years, three years, however many years are necessary, to at least try to seriously investigate

the Black experience? I understood very much when Professor Kilson said, look, I have enough time preparing three lectures a week than to try to draw up a curriculum dealing with the Black experience. And I also understood it very much when Brother Karenga said, well, if each of you are interested, then hire me as a consultant and I'll come and talk to you individually. The fact is that if you think of the national community, it seems to me crystal clear that we can't afford to have the brothers and sisters who can do the job spread out on the basis of a distribution you create, as opposed to a distribution that's in the interests of our community. Here again I repeat the plea: it seems to me that there are a lot of young Black social scientists who are capable of doing the job. A minimum descriptive statement would be that they're licensed at the best schools in the country -- they have degrees and their reputations are secure, so it's not strictly a risky business; I can't emphasize this point enough. As a Black social scientists I read the life of DuBois and I wondered about this whole country, I think about the fantastic innovations of the conferences that he held at Atlanta University, and those he planned to have. But, Dr. DuBois couldn't get funded for that, and at least part of the motivation for going back home to Mother Africa was that he couldn't get anybody to fund his work. Now, here, suddenly everybody is interested in doing this and doing that; and I say to you that if you want to continue the racism that you've been accused of, then go ahead and set up your Black

Studies program, get yourself a Black man or Black woman, maybe two or three. But the few Black students that you're going to put your hands on aren't going to handle it, because there's not enough time. And that's going to remain a fact no matter what you do. But I would suggest that a much better risk for you is to group up and say yea, we've all been guilty, so let's create something really new in higher education by cooperatively setting up some kind of a program where Black intellectuals can come together to really do the work that's needed. There's no literature to build a Black Studies program on. Do it if you want to -- but do it with these criticisms in mind, because the Black community is going to be thinking about them, as will Black students.

Now, the last point I want to mention is about socialization, the 'is' and the 'ought'. This is something that has to do not only with the inside of the university, but with the relationship that it has with the community. The 'is' function requires that the university create within itself a microcosm of the society. That is to say, if there are all kinds of people in this society, you've got to have all kinds of people in the university. If there are Black people in this society that live in segregated situations, that's exactly what you have to create on the university campus. So, I would fully support the demand by Black students at Northwestern University to have their own living quarters, to have cultural events that speak to their needs, etc. Also, related to this notion is the question of who you consider an expert. Now,

we all know the joke in that -- that we're called upon to do all kinds of things, and that while our conscience prevents us from doing some things, we do other things that are questionable for expedient reasons -- money, time, prestige, what have you -- and that few of us ever really transcend that expediency. Speaking from the context of the Black community, it seems to me that expertise is not something that's defined on the basis of diplomas or on the basis of the traditional kind of curriculum vitae that we relate to academic life. For example, if one wants to learn about social welfare, I would suggest that there are people out there representing three generations on welfare and these people might have peculiar kinds of insight into the way in which welfare operates. We must bring these people together with social workers and other people in schools of social work to get a more complete reality. Only by having all of these people interact can we come to try to understand this very perplexing phenomenon. So, the point is to create a microcosm on the campus, a microcosm of the society at large

Now, of course, this runs against much of what some people believe in terms of the exclusiveness of the university, or how important the university is in terms of who's there and who isn't there. But I'm sure the people at various foundations and major business people who suddenly realize they have to sit down with people off the block and listen to all kinds of things, feel all kinds of emotional vibrations that they're not used to feeling

can be helpful here. I'm sure that when the community people leave and these executives sit around and talk to each other, they raise questions about what in the hell was going on and what do these people mean, what did he mean by that or this, or why did he accuse me of that or this? I would suggest that these executives, while in school, would have benefited by coming in contact with these kind of people, just as people have reflected on the positive experience of the young man who's going on to become important in one government going to the same kind of school as another man who's going on to become important in another government.

The second point about socialization has to do with the 'ought'. Once the university deals with creating what is on the campus, only then can it move to the point of seriously being concerned about what ought to be. To think about recruiting some Black students and some white students who are special types, getting them together and creating a new model of man that's going to go out and relate to the world, it seems to me, is fantasy. Black people have to relate to the Black community. If you develop a physicist who goes off and works with white people, then that's what he is -- white. But anybody else who goes out, who has to relate to the Black community, is Black. It seems to me you have to create the 'is', and then the creative challenge of how to mold a man, a universal man.

CONCLUSION

Let me conclude with this thought. The voice of change in the Black community comes in many forms. Some brothers have chosen to make it the crack of rifle or the clash of broken glass. People participating in this forum, as most Black students, are choosing to use words, the concepts and ideas based on the same communal experience as those brothers who are using guns and other things. The simple fact is that you are among those who might be able to help choose between these two alternatives. But your choice is not one that we're going to wait on, because time is moving on -- and so are Black people.