

Head of NAACP to speak next Wednesday in Duke

In an effort to promote a dialogue on campus, the Union Board Speakers Committee chair asked committee member John Pitts to write a preview article for Julian Bond's speech.

By JOHN PITTS
Special Contributor

NAACP chairman Julian Bond is set to visit campus next week, and despite all the pomp and circumstance that surrounds the Reynolds lecture series, the Davidson College community should take care to examine hateful rhetoric Mr. Bond has been busily spewing for the past decade.

Take, for example, Mr. Bond's statement in a recent speech that, "Republicans appeal to the dark underside of American culture, to that minority of Americans who reject democracy and equality. They preach racial neutrality and practice racial division. Their idea of reparations is to give war criminal Jefferson Davis a pardon. Their idea of equal rights is the American flag and the Confederate swastika flying side by side." Bond went on to compare conservatives to the Taliban and pledged to "up-root the bigger Bush in 2004."

These sentiments are nothing short of shocking coming from the leader of a nominally non-partisan group that purports to represent all Americans, regardless of race, who believe in civil rights. How then should the thousands of blacks in this country who vote Republican and the millions who identify themselves as conservatives react a leader who characterizes them as enemies of democracy and racists?

His remarks are especially discouraging to successful, conservative black leaders like Condi Rice, Rod Paige, Norm Mineta and Colin Powell, whom Bond has deemed "black hustlers and hucksters, ventriloquist dummies" who are in the service of whites who are "buying blacks at a few bucks a head." It doesn't stop there: "the [Bush administration] has selected nominees from the Taliban wing of American politics, appeased the wretched appetites of the extreme right wing and chosen Cabinet officials whose devotion to the Confederacy is nearly canine in its uncritical affection."

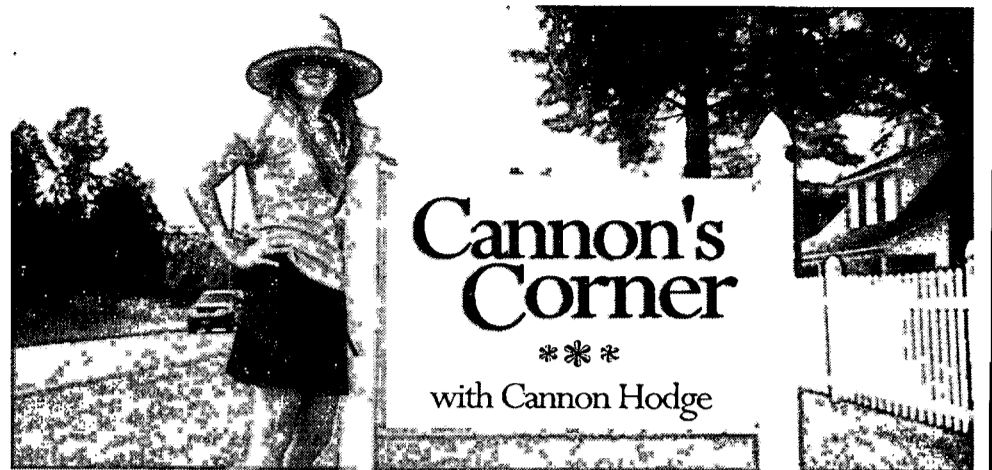
The leader of the NAACP, no matter his political leanings, should be supportive of any minority individual who has achieved so much. It seems that Bond's biggest fear is not racism; rather, it's that blacks will achieve positions of power in groups who don't buy into his politics. For all of Bond's criticism of those who practice the politics of division, his rhetoric places him squarely atop the heap of politicians who seek to sever the country along racial lines and erect ideological and partisan standards for racial groups.

Dick Armev put it best in a letter he penned to NAACP president Kwesi Mfume: "I believe there is a phenomenon in American politics today that could justly be called 'Racial McCarthyism' or 'reverse race-baiting.' In my opinion, it has become an all-too-common practice to spread unfounded, racially charged falsehoods against Republicans for political advantage. Deliberate or not, if left unchallenged, this practice will continue to divide our nation, polarize our political parties, and do untold harm in the lives of real people who are unjustly accused of conspiracy against the civil rights of African Americans."

Besides exacerbating racial tensions, Mr. Bond's comments do a real disservice to the traditionally respected and effective NAACP, an organization which has now become so severely marginalized under his leadership that three candidates in the Democratic presidential field did not even bother to show up for the national convention. Bond's leadership of the NAACP has of late been so embarrassing that even Kwesi Mfume has repeatedly distanced himself from Bond's remarks.

Concerned students should take this opportunity to attend the Reynolds lecture and challenge Mr. Bond concerning his hateful words and the politics of racial division. Bond has undermined the NAACP and the black community as a whole, both of whom deserve much better. With luck he will practice the self-control necessary to put aside mindless partisanship and deliver a substantive, uplifting Reynolds lecture.

Bond will speak next Wednesday, Nov. 12, at 7 p.m. in the Duke Family Performance Hall. Tickets are required but are free at the Union box office.



Abbott's boyhood is 'Leaving'

"It's supposed to be real autobiographical," whispered the lady behind the bookstore counter. Of course, I hadn't the slightest idea what the book was about. No, it was assigned - or requested - yes, that's a better word: requested. The book had to be good, though, because there was a growing line of eager readers waiting for its arrival on publication day. The author, Dr. Anthony S. Abbott himself, requested that I read and review his first novel "Leaving Maggie Hope."

Right now, I'm nervous. I'm nervous because I've read this book, it's good and I haven't the slightest idea how to properly review or recommend it. I don't know how to make the "words come alive" - as Abbott writes and demonstrates. There is so much that I wish to share. You must chew, taste and digest it.

Circa WWII: Eleven-year-old David Lear has sidestepped into a cave after having witnessed his too-drunk mother (Maggie Hope) use her too-drunk husband's shoulder as a shotgun target. Naturally, David has told the police the truth and now feels guilty for playing Judas to his emotionally unsettled mother. There is no better hiding place than a cave stocked with half a dozen mayonnaise jars filled with water, one sleeping bag, Bible and a considerable amount of canned beans.

"Leaving Maggie Hope" is a swift coming-of-age novel that explores David's often tortuous progression from boyhood to early adolescence. The third-person narrative intimately follows the boy protagonist as he learns to leave, forget and forgive his mother's ever-fluctuating, alcoholic behavior and disillusion. David seeks independence in an all-boys, primary-level boarding school and learns to separate the accumulating home-based disappointments from the nurturing protection of the school.

At school he faces bullies, rules, sports, a physical disability, separation from his mother and sister, his own temper, crushes on cute lady teachers, alienation, friendships, morals and anxieties. School life rivals that which arrives during vacations: his mother's digressing health; his sister's economic difficulties; his abusive, almost-a-stranger father; his even more desperate step-father; and that strange "fairy" godmother who seems to cover tuition costs and appears during especially burdening moments. However difficult his odyssey is, David succeeds and achieves an insight that is beyond his boyish, pimple-faced appearance.

The novel materialized over 20 years ago while Abbott was on sabbatical in Australia. Today, the narrative contains literary influences ranging from Shakespeare's "King Lear" and Presbyterian minister/writer Frederick Buechner to echoes of Joyce's "A Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man." Abbott has created a "gospel of tragedy" filled with comedy and fairy tale.

Upon completion, the book clerk's words resonated within me. I continued to wonder about the separation between the author's true experiences and his imagination. During an interview, Abbott said, "David is me to some extent. But as I wrote the novel I found myself changing more and more of my personal experience with each revision" until it was impossible to divide David from his creator. David's adventures are vividly illustrated through Abbott's familiarity with vast dimensions of lexicon and his own imagination and memory.

If I piqued your interest, please attend Abbott's speech on Thursday, Nov. 6, at 7:30 p.m. in the 900 Room. Abbott is the Charles A. Dana Professor Emeritus of English and recipient of the 2003 Novello Literary Award.

ON THE CAT WALK

What did you dress as for Halloween?



"Native American Princess"

Hannah Hewgley '07



"Hawaiian gorilla with coconut breasts."

Andy Agcaoili '07



"White man."

Mbye Njie '04



"Ninja Turtle."

Graham Jaenicke '07

Open @ 11 a.m. 7 days/wk. - Rain or Shine - Serving Full Menu All Day!

NTN TRIVIA **MIDTOWN** **Now Hiring Experienced Wait Staff**
SUNDRIES • RESTAURANT • BAR
Lake Norman - Harborside
Voted "Best Waterfront Restaurant on Lake Norman"

Every Monday
1/2 Price Appetizers (dine-in only)

Every Tuesday
1/2 Price Wings
Buffalo, Barbalo, Barbeque (dine-in only)

Every Wednesday
Burger Madness
All Burgers: \$4.95 (dine-in only)

KARAOKE NIGHT
EVERY THURSDAY
10 UNTIL CLOSING

18665 Harborside Dr. - (704)896-9013
I-77 to Exit 28 - Go W. on Catawba to Harborside Dr. Follow to end.

Movie Extras/Models Needed
No Experience Required
All looks and ages
Earn \$100 - \$300 a day
1-888-820-0167, ex. U260

STSTRAVEL.COM
Join America's #1 Student Tour Operator
CANCUN
ACAPULCO
JAMAICA
BAHAMAS
FLORIDA
SPRING BREAK 2004
Sell Trips, Earn Cash, Go Free! Now Hiring
Call for group discounts
1-800-648-4849 / www.ststravel.com