

# We Salute Black History Month The Minority Voice

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## Sexual Exploitation Of Children In Kenya Is Real

NAIROBI, Kenya (PANA)-They come in droves, arriving in Nairobi as early as 6:30 p.m. and strategically position themselves along major city thoroughfares, ready for business.

They are all dressed to kill, and though barely 12 years old, they know their act and their customers very well.

Others, like Jane, who will celebrate her ninth birthday in January, comes in town very early in the morning in the company of a woman she simply refers to as "Auntie" and whose business is begging in the central business district.

She sits a few meters from her Auntie, chatting endlessly with other girls. When an opportune time comes, it only takes a nod from Auntie who had a hurried conversation with a man minutes earlier, and the young girl and the man go off to an undisclosed destination.

A good number of them are also housed in Nairobi's upmarket housing estates by their "employers," mostly the rich Kenyans and foreigners alike, where they serve their clientele for a fee.

Down at the coastal tourist resort city of Mombasa, the situation is no different, as beach boys and girls are slowly turning themselves into sex slaves, transforming the once beautiful tourist destination and a family get away resort center, into a commercial sex center.

Welcome to the world of child sexual exploitation in Kenya, a topic which government officials in the country concede is yet to be adequately addressed.

Officials of the Children's Department describe it as the use

of children for sexual purposes in exchange for cash or in kind or favors between a customer or agent who benefit or profit from the trade in children.

"The use of a child for sexual purposes or child prostitution is real and attaining alarming proportions in Kenya, but many people shun away from this topic and wish it away," Adelaide Ngaru, a senior children's officer in the ministry of home affairs told PANA.

Ngaru conceded that the cases of child exploitation in Kenya were rampant, explaining that they were rampant, explaining that they were not limited to only sexual intercourse but could also be viewed against backdrops of child labor, child marriages and female genital mutilation, or FMG.

Ngaru also singles out the child sexual exploitation menace at the Kenyan coast where well-run cartels operate.

She says the cartel, which operates with expert precision, has a string of clients both local and foreign who top their holiday with what is referred to as sex tourism.

The well-organized group consisting of pimps of both sexes also participate in child pornography and vigorously market it abroad. A good number of tourists, mostly from central Europe, have time and again fallen for the ploy and always book the next flight to

Kenya.

Ngaru says the root causes of this evil in Kenya are illiteracy, abject poverty, HIV/AIDS and retrogressive cultural practices such as FMG and gender discrimination.

Heritage Week.

In support of all cultures, the center and the committee conducted a Multicultural Holiday Open House in December. The committee also plans to focus on women's health issues as part of Women's History Month.

African-American firsts was chosen as the theme for Black History Month. An appearance by Herman Boone, whose experiences as a Virginia football coach provided inspiration for the film "Remember The Titans," is the signature event to highlight and recognize black achievement in the United States.

Boone is known for uniting the T.C. Williams High School football team. The team was developed when three schools were integrated. Boone was hired as head coach for the Titans and was chosen above a coach from a successful all-white school. He previously coached at the all-black E.J. Hayes High School in Williamston.

Racial tension provided obstacles, but Boone led the team to a 13-0 record and the state championship title in 1971. Academy Award-winner Denzel Washington portrayed Boone in the film. Though retired, Boone travels nationwide for speeches and presentations.

"Boone is our signature event because of what he did to bring together the Titans football team and community," Lewis said. "He would be one to understand what it is like to break barriers in order to reach a common goal."

"I wanted someone who can relate to being a first (in black history)," she said. "He is the kind of motivated person that can influence young people to keep a steady spirit...no matter what the odds."

Boone will be on campus Saturday. He is the special guest for a dinner in the Mendenhall Student Center and will speak at 8:15p.m. in the Hendrix Theater. Tickets for the dinner cost \$20; admittance to the speech is \$5.



Judge Janice Cole Campaigns For Eva Clayton's Old Seat

Shown above from left to right is long-time resident, D.D. Garrett, a Juvenile Court Judge, Judge Janice Cole and the Pastor of A.M.E. Zion Church. Judge Janice Cole is the Federal Judge of the Eastern District.

Photo by Jim Rouse

## Not Our Children

Clergy, congregation fight for rights over children, religion  
By: Eric Ture Muhammad

The return of a 14-count indictment on Jan. 18, against Rev. Arthur Allen, Jr. and 10 members of his northwest Atlanta House of Prayer Church has laid the groundwork for a landmark court case that will debate the use of corporal punishment on children, parental rights, abuse of power and religious authority.

Fulton County District Attorney Paul Howard, who announced the indictments, called the congregation's alleged punishment of their children severe and extreme. "This is not normal whipping," he said. "These are severe and extreme beatings. We think that is a clear sign of demarcation." Mr. Howard said. The indictment charges the members of the church with aggravated assault and cruelty to children. If convicted, they can serve a maximum of 20 years in prison. Rev. Allen says his congregation is innocent of the DA's charges and the facts of the case have been grossly exaggerated. Like any loving parent, parishioners want only the best for their children, said Rev. Allen.

The saga began in February 2001, when a White teacher called the state Division of Family and Children Services (DFACS), reporting she found "thin red marks" on two children in her classroom. It is unclear whether the teacher spoke with other school officials before making the call to DFACS; however, the incident escalated into possibly the largest one-time seizure of children in state history. A total of 49 children -- all Black -- were removed from schools, homes and church grounds. They were placed in Atlanta-area detention centers pending hearings. Rev. Allen and some church members were arrested the following month and charged with conspiring to commit cruelty to children. Those charges were dropped as children were sent back home to their parents.

According to the accountants of the children, shared exclusively with The Final Call, they were harassed, brutalized, and threatened by DCFAS workers, Atlanta Police, and male detention center supervisors. "They pulled me off the couch and threw me to the floor," recalled 14-year old Diana Frazier. She along with her brother Quentin, were removed

from their home by DCFAS and Atlanta police in a fashion compared to a nighttime military raid. "They twisted my arms around my back, put handcuffs on me and placed their knees in my face and my back," she said, recalling how her face was banged into the ground as she pleaded for help from her parents. Her brother, handled in a similar fashion, received a busted lip and bruised to his forehead.

Both alleged constant use of abusive language by officers handling them, while in the squad car and in the detention center. They said they asked the officers to refrain from the foul language, saying their parents did not use such language around them. The officers became more abusive, directing their insults at the parents, said Diana and Quentin.

In recent months, DFACS has come under fire for their handling of the children, resulting in disciplinary action against case-workers. Calls placed to DFACS spokesman Andy Boisseau by The Final Call were not returned. Some of the children, who received similar treatment as officers removed them from homes and schools, were charged with assaults against police, resisting arrest and one was charged with trespassing after he was pulled from his own home.

The children spoke of horrible conditions in the Metro-Atlanta detention center for youth. Roaches and rodents were throughout the facility, they said. Bugs were frequently found in food and as they showered, the children charged, male supervisors would come in and watch.

"They would not let us talk to our parents, so my brother would sneak out to call them and tell them how we wanted to come home. We know we come from good homes," Diana Frazier.

"In some cases, DFACS is needed," said Sharon Duncan, who along with her husband David, is named in the indictment. "Some children are in abusive situations, but not our children. Our children are in two-parent homes. Homes that are loving, clean and where the children are kept fed," she said. "These are happy, well mannered, well adjusted children who did not need rescuing by DFACS. They need to be rescued from DFACS," she said. The couple will appear in juvenile court later this month, fighting to maintain custody of their children, some of whom

remain in state custody.

In an appearance before the juvenile court, parents were told they could have their children back, if they would agree to only hand-spank the children. The pastor was also asked to cease performing marriages of couples as young as 14-years old. The pastor and parents refused all the proposals. They look forward to their day in court.

"When the DFACS workers and Atlanta police came out to arrest our children, why did they slam them to the floor, twist their arms around their backs and brutalize them?" asked Rev. Allen. "Why didn't they just hand-spank them, like the judges said and tell them to get into the van. If that is the method he wants us to use, why did not he instruct them to use it?" he said.

The pastor, and many in the community, see the move on the pastor and congregation as racist and politically motivated. A recent poll conducted by an Atlanta-based CBS-television affiliate found 74 percent of those polled favored the pastor's actions

and believed the parents have been misrepresented.

Corporal punishment, the beating of children, is not illegal in Georgia as a disciplinary tool. Since integration, said Rev. Allen, it has been discouraged in the school system because Whites did not want Black teachers beating their children. He also said church beatings of children were not only extremely rare, but were used as a last resort. Armed with biblical references, the congregation defends the right to discipline its children, referring to corporal punishment as an act of love.

"If our children were so abused in the homes, why were they seen throughout national television while being grabbed and snatched by DFACS workers and police pleading to stay home? If they were abused they'd be happy to leave," said indicted parent David Wilson. The case has received national and international attention, as well as support from clergies around the country.

"Faith is not our strength," he said. "Our strength is found in the power of God."

### ELIZABETH CITY STATE UNIVERSITY ALUMNI

Elaine Hopkins, Class of '68 of Elizabeth City University, is busy with the recruitment efforts to reunite the 60's class. As a member of the 60's Decade Planning Committee, Elaine, specifically, is helping to co-chair the plans of bringing together the class of '68 by Homecoming 2002.

While enjoying early retirement, Elaine frequently travels to the campus of her alma mater for numerous alumni affairs.

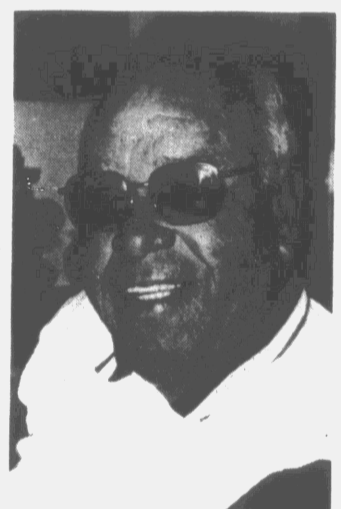
In addition to serving as co-chair for the 60's Decade Reunion, she was recently appointed to the Board of Directors of the General Alumni Association. She is a longtime member of the General Alumni Awards Banquet and the Homecoming Committee.

Locally, she is serving as recording secretary of the Eva J. Lewis Alumni Chapter of ECSU. Some of her community involvement include being a member of the Millennium Committee (sub-committee of the City Council) and a member of her sorority.

Most importantly is the life Elaine shares with neighboring friends and especially family and her church family at Cornerstone Missionary Baptist Church.

Elaine feels that being a former educator tends to qualify one to be a lifetime teacher. Therefore, she expects to return to the classroom again this year as a tutor for the end of grade testing.

Meanwhile, she continues a vived search for ECSU alums who will commit to the tremendous task on the campus of her alma mater.



HERITAGE HONORED BY EVENTS

By Jana Clancey  
The Daily Reflector

East Carolina University has slated events throughout February to commemorate Black History Month and African-American firsts.

The Ledonia Wright Cultural Center on the ECU campus is sponsoring the events in conjunction with student organizations, university departments and the Greenville Museum of Art.

"The reason we do this is to promote awareness of the richness of the African-American culture and heritage," Nell Lewis, cultural center director, said. "And to celebrate the contributions of African-Americans to our society."

Events begin on Monday with an opening reception at the Cultural Center and end Feb. 28 with a candlelight vigil at the steps of Joyner Library.

Each year, major events are planned to highlight the unique experiences and traditions of diverse populations on campus, officials said. The cultural center and ECU's Diversity Cross-Cultural Communications Committee sponsor and observe university groups, such as the deaf population by having Deaf



"POWER OF URBAN RADIO SYMPOSIUM"

Shown above is M'Bula Rouse, Vice-President of WOOW Radio Station/Minority Voice Newspaper. She is posing for the M'Voice camera along with "Inspirations Across America" host Walt "Baby" Love.