



## Forum discusses race, civil rights at Indiana U.

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(Indiana Daily Student) (U-WIRE) BLOOMINGTON, Ind. -- Acting, discussion and open opinion characterized a forum assembled Monday to discuss four major civil rights movements and their continued relevance. The forum was one part of "Unity in Love," a week-long event for the Gamma Nu chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority in conjunction with the multicultural sorority Theta Nu Xi and the Office of Diversity Education, which all sponsored the gathering.

The four movements discussed at the forum were related specifically to African Americans, Latinos, Asians and Native Americans. An audience of about 50 gathered in La Casa to participate in discussion, re-enactments and debate.

In a discussion of the "Trail of Tears," senior Margie Conely, president of Theta Nu Xi, set the scene.

"What would you do if you were at home relaxing, watching TV, and someone came in and told you to leave and not come back?" Conely said. "In modern terms, that is what happened to the Indians."

Some members of the audience were concerned with stereotypes of Native Americans included in history books.

"We're teaching this conception that their relationship with Anglo-Saxons and whites was good," said senior Mike Fuchs. "White men were cheating Indians out of property, but the aggressor is always made out to be the Indians."

Participants also discussed the plight of Asian Americans in comparison to that of other minority groups.

"Who had it worse, blacks or Asians? [Asian Americans] were paid \$20,000. We didn't get anything," senior Sirri Bonu said. "Even at Indiana University, diversity doesn't exist. It is almost like Asians are not a minority. No one acknowledges them, so it's like they are in a low corner."

Despite this lack of acknowledgement, some participants believe Asians historically have done something that other minorities could learn from.

"Other minorities have learned to take advantage of the things the country has to offer," said Delta Sigma Theta President Vanita Powell.

Powell mentioned business and home ownership as areas that many minorities can improve in, thereby helping to overcome the challenges of their race.

In a skit about the Brown v. Board of Education decision, participants expressed the feelings of the minorities who were denied admission to schools, as well as those who were ridiculed by their peers for attending predominantly white schools.

"It used to be that the black kids had to be bused from their neighborhoods to go to black schools. Now black kids are being bused from their neighborhoods to go to white schools," said Black Student Union President Crystal Brown.

For junior Jennifer Allen, the issues posed during the forum seem to represent a cycle of oppression.

"It's easy to forget when you are not the outcast," Allen said. "When the spotlight is on you, it's so easy to forget and try to blend in."

Even though the cycle may exist, junior Jasmine McCully, member of Delta Sigma Theta, said it is important that people acknowledge this ring and take steps to end it.

"It is important to know that even though we are different, we are still the same," McCully said. "Even though we had struggles, we all struggled together."

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