

# Speaker: Ending racism key to peace

By BRAD DAVIS  
Staff Reporter

A reputable professor and author presented his nontraditional ideas for dealing with the often heated and sensitive topic of racism Saturday morning at the Nebraska East Union.

As keynote speaker for the "People of Color in Predominantly White Institutions" conference, sponsored by several University of Nebraska-Lincoln departments, Derrick Bell shared an excerpt from a book he is writing.

Now 66 years old and a professor of law at the New York University Law School, Bell was the first tenured black law professor at Harvard University. He has written five books, both non-fiction and fiction, and worked for 38 years in various areas of civil rights.

The excerpt from his current book was intended as a speech to be given by a fictional president of the United States. A friend of Bell's passed the speech along to President Clinton. Bell said Clinton has said he may use the speech in the future.

In Bell's speech for both his fictional presi-

dential character and President Clinton, Oct. 1 is named as "Racial Liberation Day." The day would launch a month-long crusade designed to "seek our independence from a set of historic beliefs, unacknowledged yet no less real, about property and skin color."

These historic beliefs are a major reason why the United States lags far behind smaller, less-wealthy countries regarding social programs, Bell said.

Bell said if Clinton were to recite the speech, it would mark a new era in American politics.

"Clinton would go down in history if he led a campaign that really hasn't been done," Bell said. "For the most part (presidents) have either ignored the racial issue or dealt with it using platitudes," Bell said.

The key to ending a wide array of social problems, Bell said, does involve the issue of racism — but it does not necessarily involve blacks. Bell's nontraditional approach calls for whites to realize the power they hold.

As the United States undergoes the transition to a global economy in which more goods and services can be produced than can be consumed, many people will be without work, Bell

said.

Often, however, social programs are met with attitudes of reactionary racism, and programs are called handouts to poor, lazy blacks, even though the majority of people on welfare are white, Bell said.

"It is a rationalization for reaction," Bell said. "Proposals to reform are seen as handouts — in these cases, the fear and resentment of blacks takes precedence over the social problem itself," Bell said. "The result, unfortunately, is that the entire society suffers from the results of a failure to correct social evils whose ill-effects refuse to obey the rules of segregation."

Although Bell acknowledges that not all white people participate in overt acts of racism, all people have to be involved in working toward a solution.

"There is no easy answer," he said. "No legislation or lawsuits or commissions are going to help this problem. Each white person needs to ask, 'What can I do to ease the danger of racial conflict that threatens us all?'"

"We can no longer afford whiteness as a property right and as a measure of worth and a

standard of normality."

He said that after discussing the issue of racism, standing up for one's beliefs once they are formed will be a worthwhile cause and help the plight of ending racism.

Bell resigned from the University of Oregon Law School in 1991 to protest law school officials refusing to hire an Asian-American faculty member. He said because of that incident, he understood fighting for a cause.

"There's kind of an uplift, when you're involved in a cause you think is worthy," Bell said, "even when it's a lost cause. There should be some time when you do something that you are generally proud of and may not be so popular because that's where your strength comes from. Those are the things that you remember."

"Whether you get people to change or get knocked down — you know that you were doing what you thought was right."

Bell said he will continue to fight against oppression in his work, no matter how difficult it is to overcome.

"Until white people get smart about race," Bell said, "black people will have a hard time getting free."

## Spring Safety Walk finds possible problem areas

By AMY KELLER  
Staff Reporter

UNL officials plan to shed a little more light on the campus after the Spring Safety Walk Saturday morning revealed a few areas on campus that participants felt needed better lighting.

To find unlit or dim areas on campus, 23 people toured City and East campuses at 4 a.m., walking the paths students take to and from classes.

Diagonal sidewalks near the Lied Center for Performing Arts were in question because they are not well-lighted. Jay Schluckebier of Landscape Services said that services officials will check it again soon to see if the problem is because of obstructive trees or if it just needs more lighting.

The east side door area of Avery Hall lab was dark, and Schluckebier said he and other officials will take another look at it to see what types of lights should be added.

A variety of lights were out throughout both campuses, and walkers recorded the location of each light, including city street lights, so that Landscape Services can fix them or ask the city to do so.

On East Campus, south of the

College of Dentistry, two lights were found not working, and Schluckebier said these, along with the other lights, would be fixed within a week.

Participants also were concerned about the narrow sidewalk south of the Delta Upsilon fraternity house on 16th and Vine streets. Landscape Services plans to talk with city landscapers about widening the sidewalk because it is used by many people.

Near Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, walkers noticed a cracked sidewalk Landscape Services is planning to fix.

A safety walk is conducted each semester to determine ways to make City and East campuses safer.

"Before five years ago, our emergency phone system was five phones," University Police Sgt. Bill Manning said.

Saturday's safety walk began at Parking Services at 1941 Y St., where participants rode a shuttle bus past some areas where lighting was in question.

The actual walk began in the Temple Building parking lot, wound around the Lied Center and Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery walkways and ended near Burnett and Andrews halls. Walkers then took a shuttle bus to East Campus and slowly drove around the loop, looking for areas that were unsafe.

## Habitat for Humanity lends hands, hearts to fix up homes

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of the house, trimmed bushes, put window wells on basement windows and did other smaller jobs.

"It's hard to believe how much Nebraska's young people do for us," Anderson said. "There is so much to do. It makes me so happy. I don't know how I will pay you."

Volunteers said the free effort was worth it.

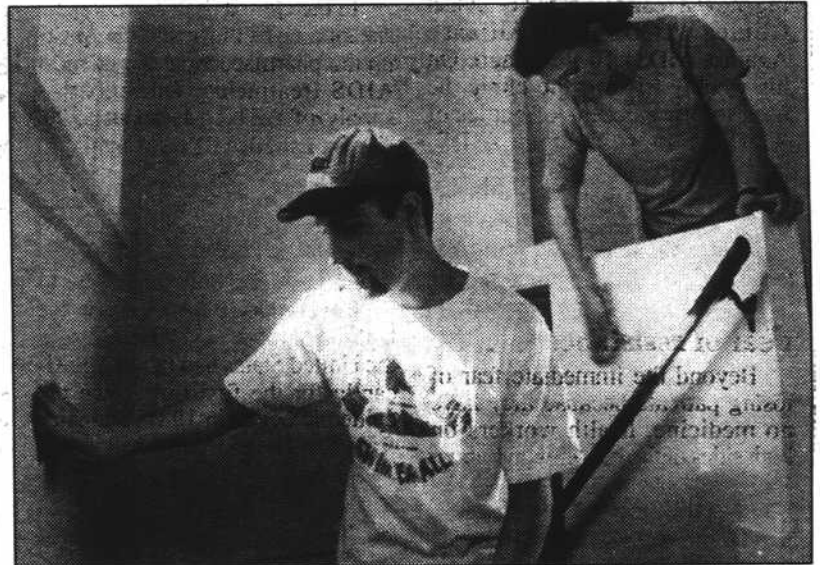
"I definitely feel like we're helping someone. I could be doing a lot less meaningful things today," Jaman Bass, a freshman pre-law major, said as he painted Anderson's porch.

Jennifer Dunn, part of a Campus Crusade volunteer group, said she thought the efforts Saturday would go a long way.

"We can tell it will go further," she said. "It put a spark in someone's life."

And spark it did, as the reactions from the homeowners were nothing but praise for the volunteers' work.

"Your hand prints are in my home," Anderson said. "It gives it a new energy. It makes me so happy."



DANIEL LUEDERT/DN

JOE BURGARD, a pre-dentistry student, and Audrey Carl, a biochemistry student, clean walls as the mid-morning Saturday sun shines through the window. Burgard and Carl volunteered their time for Habitat for Humanity's project on April 19.

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