

Mizell Views Campus Life In 'Black at Swarthmore'

by Peter Webb

Don Mizell's *Black at Swarthmore* was published last week by the Admissions Office. The photograph-filled brochure gives potential applicants an interpretation of the Black experience at Swarthmore.

"Today, more than ever," says the brochure, "Black students have the opportunity to attend the college of their choice. This booklet attempts to assist you in determining which college might be most appropriate for you, as a Black student. It is an interpretation of what the Black experience often is at a white institution in general, and at Swarthmore College in particular.

THE BOOK

"Now, you've probably never heard of Swarthmore," continues *Black at Swarthmore*. "Swarthmore has been a small, serious, intellectual, selective liberal arts college having almost no contact with the Black community. But, it has been called the best."

The stylistic presentation of the

brochure serves both aesthetic and functional purposes for Mizell, who explained that the standard admissions literature of the college is meaningless to many blacks.

Describing his writing, Mizell said, "I just wanted to present the simplest facts as straight as possible and wanted to convey impressions. I didn't want to make it a personal vision of Swarthmore and feel I didn't feel it had to be representative. You can't say anything objective about this campus.

"I tried to present as many different Black feelings and positions of Swarthmore as I was aware of in a non-ideological, non-point-of-view reference point," he said. "I didn't say 'this' definitely is Swarthmore."

In the brochure Mizell says, "Swarthmore is coping with somebody trying to run a Black-Christian thing on you and forcing you to get your program together, which

(Continued on Page 4)

(Continued from Page 1)

ever it is . . . It is getting a C- or B-; on that very first paper and underlying Instantaneous (what ever happened to those A's and B's I was getting in high school) has come back strong from time around."

Initial reaction to the brochure has been favorable. While realizing that it would not be aware of negative comments, Whitt said that reaction has been "extremely positive." Mike Durkin described the brochure as "what it's all" and "together" that is, it says the things that people need to hear and puts thoughts together.

The Admissions Office was pleased with the result. Acting Dean of Admissions William Spenshure cited Black of Swarthmore as an example of how the College can react quickly to fulfill new needs. William F. Chao, Assistant Dean of Admissions and Black Graduate, said, "I think they did an excellent job of conveying a collective black impression of Swarthmore. He answered the many questions which I, as an admissions officer, couldn't answer by virtue of not being a student. The booklet is much more down to earth than the catalogue and other Admissions Office publications. It makes my job of presenting a valid picture of Swarthmore from a black perspective much easier."

The brochure says, "Many of us come to Swarthmore excited (compulsively or unconsciously) to be associated into this white culture, ready to relinquish the 'stigma' of being Black, i.e., 'acting like a nigger.' Ironically, we found that it was our intimate exposure to, and understanding of, this culture and society

that made us appreciate our own."

Discussing the need for financial support, the brochure says, "Some students get uptight about the 'stigma' of needing financial help, and some are actually ashamed. Fortunately, they soon realize that they have nothing to be ashamed of; indeed, it is America's shame that their schools failed them. The fact of the matter is, they can do the work."

Next is pictures of Turlock, Mich.'s brochure says, "The Black cultural center provides the Black community here with opportunities different from, but in addition to, the non-general social and cultural life of the College."

Although the brochure has not been turned upon, Whitt stated that the Swarthmore Afro-American Student Society believes that "a black cultural center is definitely in for" and that it will be physically separate from Turlock. Function of Turlock was used between the cultural center has not yet exist, according to Whitt.

The idea of a brochure was conceived by Black, and Whitt wrote the text last summer. The many photos were taken mainly by a professional photographer, although some came from other sources. Eric Marshall Gilman, director of the Swarthmore College News Service, assisted with the layout. The first copies will be sent to all Swarthmore Black students and their parents, black institutions for admissions, and many secondary schools.

if you've got the time.

—Continued on p. 11