



# GRIOT

VOLUME NO. 8—ISSUE NO. 3

## Civil Rights: Update

by Karen Vaughn

Black people have endured turbulent times in America, but perhaps the most difficult times are yet to come. The Supreme Court in two recent decisions has handed down decisions that could seriously set back the civil rights effort.

In *Grove City College v. Bell* the Court ruled that the federal laws prohibiting sex discrimination by schools and colleges that receive federal funds applies only to the specific departments that are recipients of that aid, not to the institution as a whole. Although this ruling deals specifically with sex discrimination, it has ominous implications for Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Essentially what this ruling means is that if the University of Illinois, for the sake of example, discriminated towards Blacks in their engineering department, the school can still receive aid from the federal government, but aid to the engineering college would be cut off. Thus lessening the federal governments restrictive monitoring of discriminatory practices in education.

The second case, *Firefighters v. Scotts*, originated with lay-offs in the Memphis Fire Department. The Court ruled that in lay-off situations lower courts may not order an employer to protect the jobs of recently hired Black employees at the expense of whites with seniority. This decision which was applauded by the Reagan administration could have a devastating effect on the Black community. Since many Blacks have been hired through affirmative actions programs, this decision promises to return them to the chronic plight of: last hired, first fired. The impact of this case will soon be felt in similar cases nationwide.

Clearly we can see that the two cases are significant to all of us in the Black community. It is also worthwhile to mention this as we celebrate the 30th anniversary of the historic Brown decision abolishing the separation-but-equal doctrine. Linda Brown-Smith, whose father fought for her rights to attend an integrated school in Topeka, Kansas, when she was seven years old is suing that same school system for not taking the integration effort far enough. Mrs. Brown-Smith, along with four Black lawyers and a group of parents, insist that is unconstitutional for mainly white schools to receive more funds because this does not allow for equal education.

Furthermore, while many would tell us

## Four More Years of Reagan

by Pamela Tate

It was an exciting summer. We saw the first black man accepted by a major political party to run for presidency. We also saw the first woman ever to run on a major party ticket. Many of the people that went around hoping for a miracle now know that there will be four more years of Reagan as president.

Just the mention of Reagan's name causes many minorities to wonder what they've done to deserve his presidency. Yet Reagan was reelected by a landslide, losing only three electoral votes to his opponent, Mr. Mondale. Should minorities expect the worst, perhaps hardships of greater severity with Reagan back in office? Prof. Michael Preston, of the Political Science Department at the University of Illinois, says yes! What should one expect?

Social implications are foremost in the minds of many minorities. With Reagan's cutbacks, social programs and benefits will not be restored. Some specific social programs are nutritional and employment training programs for the poor and general public aid. Approximately one-third of the black American population is poor. If public aid is eliminated there will be a larger percentage of poor in America. Consequently, there will be a larger dependent class in large cities. This class will become, as Prof. Preston puts it, a "permanent underclass" in America, having no hope of moving up in the economic scale.

Educational factors are just as important. Busing is a reoccurring issue. In many instances busing is the best way possible to provide equal education opportunities for poor youths in

not to worry, we should all be aware of the fact that the next president of the United States may get the opportunity to appoint as many as five Supreme Court Justices. By the end of the next presidential term five of the nine justices will have reached or exceeded the age of 80. The thought that the next president could attempt to pack the court with his own appointees is scary in itself. But what's even more frightening is the prospect of losing some of our most sympathetic. Thurgood Marshall, the first Black justice, along with Harry A. Blackmun and Justice William J. Brennan have been cited as possible candidates for retirement this term.

*Grove City* and *Firefighters* are perfect examples of what the Court can do to erode the progress of civil rights. Since our court system is based on the interpretation of the constitution and the laws, a conservative



Professor Michael Preston

decaying communities. Reagan's cabinet is against it, proving so by not taking a stand for it until they oppose it in court. Also, the Pell Grant which is used to help finance the higher education of needy students will be taken away from them. More aid will in turn be redirected to middle and upperclass students. Here again, the poor will suffer because even the educational system is beyond their grasp to better their economic condition.

"Black leadership will be more important than ever before," says Prof. Preston. He explained that black leadership is especially important now because, 1) the plight of the poor needs to be articulated and their need for programs for food, homes, better education, and jobs, and 2) it can be the unifying force to rally blacks around the issues important to them. During the last presidential term, blacks increased their political participation. Disappointments have come continuously, but Reagan's term has reemphasized the importance of political power, power that must grow within the black community.

Supreme Court could turn back the hands of progress on the clock of history. Those who don't want to see Blacks get ahead in this country could have a chance to oppress us as a people once more. Imagine situations like:

—Public officials who feel like it's alright to set aside affirmative action programs when it's expedient to do so, will do so.

—School administrators who exclude Black faculty and students because they have large endowments and can live without federal aid will go virtually unrestrained.

—Private employers will move at a snail's pace, if at all, to integrate their corporations because they will not be punished if they don't. These Americans want business to go on as usual without a thought to the rights and privileges of their dark skinned

(cont'd on next page)

*A Soldier's Story:*

It certainly is refreshing to see a cast of rising black talent in a good film, particularly when its cleverly directed. *A Soldier's Story* is such a film. Directed by Norman Jewison, based on the screenplay written by Charles Fuller, it is much more than a murder mystery. It's about the ideological development of blacks in America, and that point of development reached in 1944. An outstanding performance by Adolf Caesar as the sergeant; (he's my pick for best supporting actor this year) it's both necessary and infuriating to the viewer. Also very strong support from the cast of soldiers. Pay close attention to both C.J. Memphis (Larry Riley) and Private Peterson (Denzel Washington), they are very important to the overall story line and underlying message. Howard Rollins was again an impressive screen figure, but his character was somewhat underdeveloped. At any rate *A Soldier's Story* is a must see for all of "us", it really hits home.

TFIII

(cont'd from page 1)

brothers. It's true that we've come a long way. But we need not get too comfortable with our positions. There are those who would like to see us get back into our "places." Our struggle isn't over yet. . . it's just beginning.

The time is yesterday and today. The place is Heavenly Heights, USA. The production is "Family Meeting"/"In the Tradition", directed by grad student Gilbert McCauley and performed by the Blackheart Players.

The production is the union of two separate plays, "Family Meeting" by William W. Mackey and "In the Tradition" by Amiri Baraka. The first presents a black bourgeoisie family's denial of blackness. The Love family—Mother, Father, sister and Brother have been socialized against their race. While the second is a poetic black historical account. Verse accompanied by slide pictures, really show what the Loves missed out on.

McCauley says of the union of the plays in his Director's Note: "They allow for the creation of an entirely unique form." This unique form is indeed created; McCauley and his crew should be truly lauded for their efforts in the creative undertaking.

Just as two children may see different shapes in the same fluffy white clouds on a clear day, two different people may inter-

pret any creative form differently. However, despite confusion surrounding the theatrics of the play, the message was loud and clear. For the most part audience members agree that the production was "deep".

In his Director's Note McCauley also says the production confronts the audience with some serious questions which they must share with others. He continues, "There is much about 'Family Meeting' /'In the Tradition' that must go home with you and be dealt with on a personal level." Middle class status is what most blacks strive for, and whether or not we sacrifice racial identification and/or consciousness for a higher income bracket, must be answered from within.

"In the tradition" of Gilbert McCauley and his Blackheart Players, the production was excellent. Novices for the most part, players—before and behind the scenes—all gave sharp and polished performances. If you didn't make the November 17th and 18th performances of "Family Meeting" /"In the Tradition"—you missed a profound theatrical experience.

*Editor's Note*

**Of Misunderstandings and Perception: Crabs In A Barrel**



Editor Taylor Fuller III

"mind set" (G. McCauley) from which you operate. If you operate from the set that has spurned Tracy because she has chosen a different path, perhaps that says a little about how desirous your approval actually is.

I'll admit that I became a little surprised when I read an article that described a black girl using words like "limiting" and "must. . . background". But being aware of how abusive reporters can be (smile) I went to her to hear a different side of the story. I must tell you that getting this interview was not easy, in fact Tracy declined to grant it at first. "I never meant to make anyone mad or anything," she said. "Basically, what was said was taken out of context."

She is a young woman driven to succeed, and as valedictorian of the 1984 class of Springfield high school she has been successful. Tracy, about your *background*; "I had a lot of different kinds and not very many close friends, my school was very cliquey," she said. She went on to tell about a particular friend that she went to see foreign films with or engaged in comparative discussions on Faulkner and Dickens (certainly atypical of black culture).

Tracy feels she isn't being accepted by black students partly because of the DI article, partly because she's doing something different and lastly, "Because they don't know me," she said. "I'm ready to be friendly to anyone that's friendly to me. I don't care what color

they are." Now Tracy, that's all fine, but we're mostly from big cities where your friends generally have one common denominator. The difference between living in Springfield and Chicago is responsible for a lot of her differences in attitude from most Chicagoans. She agreed and added, "I don't have any idea what it would be like to have grown up in Chicago."

Tracy's parents however, attributed her openmindedness to the way that they raised her. Her father said, "I do not think that Tracy has neither denied her heritage, nor rejected her blackness. She know's she's black, but we never raised her to be limited in her thinking." It is interesting to note that both Tracy's parents are members of traditional black greek letter organizations, her father is an Alpha and her mother is a Delta. "We had to accept some things, but we were never concerned about her identity, we know our baby." they said. By her own admission, Tracy said that she thought her mother would be upset by her not pledging Delta, but Tracy's mother said that, "things are different now than when I was in school." Tracy's grandfather, who is an Alpha from Illinois also supported her decision.

Where most of us were raised as products of our environment, Tracy is no exception. Should she be looked on in a negative manner by other blacks who haven't had the same social luxuries?

There are several schools of thought that predominate black culture, those that are recognized by scholars and those employed by the masses. The overriding factor in this (like any) analysis is individual perception—how one may see a particular point. Perception. It's as individual as handwriting; yet when faced with a challenge, the result of its unification can be staggering. . .

Backlog notes; as you went through with me perhaps you may know where I'm going. The story: Tracy Meares, a 17-year-old freshman from Springfield, IL. Tracy's identity is under question by many black students on campus because she chose to join a "white" sorority, Kappa Alpha Theta. However for your perception of her activity depends on the



Lisa Thompson

## One of Our Own: Lisa Thompson Engineered for Success

by Lisa E. Lewis

All engineers are middle-aged white men with horn rimmed glasses, carry slide rules and have pocket protectors for their pencils. This is a stereotypical view. But just as all other stereotypes should be denounced, this image is being shattered. More and more, the engineering field is finding young black females at the helms of engineering firms. And if they aren't at the helm, they are now holding coveted positions within the firm. Six black female from the University of Illinois will soon join the ranks of this new breed of engineers.

One of the women is Lisa Thompson, and she offers her views on being a black woman in engineering. Lisa is a senior in mechanical engineering. She is a past and present participant of several engineering oriented activities, which more than likely will give her an extra competitive edge.

Lisa currently serves as vice-president for AMSIE, which is a co-ed organization that serves as a vital resource for minority students in engineering. She didn't just jump on the engineering bandwagon—she as one time wanted to be a doctor. But in high school she found out that medicine wasn't for her. "I hate blood," says Lisa. She was turned on to engineering when a lady came to her high school to talk about the field. "When the woman said if you like math and physics, consider engineering, I decided to give it a try," continues Lisa.

Ever since then she has been working towards a career in engineering. Lisa also participates in several programs that indirectly recruit minorities. Six is much better than zero, but compared to hundreds of other "dominant" students in the field, any effort to present engineering as a career option to minorities is necessary.

Lisa says there are two primary problems facing black female engineering students at the University of Illinois. First she says the lack of high school preparation is a key factor in making competition difficult. Many predominantly black high schools should beef up their programs to accommodate the engineering option, says Lisa. Lisa also says that the consistent reluctance of white classmates to work with black students is a major problem. She says it's as if the white students don't think the black students know enough to work on a group project. To be a black female engineering student, Lisa says, "a person just has to learn the system, and how to deal with it." Lisa Thompson has learned it and is engineered for success.

Not being the "girl" in black social circles is something Tracy has learned to accept. She admits to not having many black friends in high school. She explains it in this way, "I told my mother that they don't like me, because I'm 'smart,' or I'm 'pretty,' or I'm a cheerleader, or some other stupid reason. I'm not going to sit there and try to prove something to someone to make them like me. I said, there aren't that many people like me."

I asked Tracy if she felt that she was denying her black heritage. "I'm black and everybody knows it. I think it's obvious," she said. "But for me, I'm a *person* who's black."

Many people will take offense to this statement, but do we have the right to judge? Can we live up to the very strict standards that we so willingly impose upon others? Tracy told me that she had received some phone calls (in addition to the negative ones) by other girls encouraged by her action. She also feels that through becoming highly visible that she can be in a position to really help black people.

Tracy people call you a Tom. What do you say to that? "I don't wish I was white, I don't have to; there's no reason to. I mean, just because I can function better in the white community than some black people they want to call me a Tom. I'm not anyone to influence what you can say about me, if they don't want to like me that's their doing."

I would ask that we reflect on the true situation at hand. If a black girl wants to pledge a white sorority is it not her business? Perhaps it is our own feelings of inadequacy or even *jealousy* that are the real causes of our disapproval. This information is very personal and I appreciate Tracy and her parents for their candor. If she did not care at all then she probably wouldn't have granted this interview. I've heard of the "crabs in the barrel" cliché used in *certain situations*. It is the spurning of those that are different that is limiting, sad, and unfortunately common. Thanks.



Tracy Meares

# Deficits: Good or Bad?

by Raymond Hightower

The February 15, 1982 issue of "Time" magazine says that "The average American consumer may not be well versed in the fine points of economic theory, but he is worried about anyone, whether it be an individual family or the government, who spends more than he earns." This concept of allowing expenses to outweigh income is commonly known as deficit spending.

On the surface, deficit spending seems to be a backwards idea, but one must ponder the question thoroughly before reaching a conclusion. The fact that many governments intentionally maintain deficits might imply that deficits have their advantages. Both sides of the deficit question will be discussed here.

One theory suggests that deficits resulting from tax cuts are good because of the increase in the amount of money available to investors. Money invested within a firm tends to stimulate growth within that firm, thus creating jobs for the unemployed. Growth also means increased production, greater total revenue, and greater taxes paid by the firm to the government due to the tax cut.

But is the "new" tax cut money worth as much as the money lost due to the tax cut? Not necessarily. The new money may actually be worth less, because of one of the negative effects of deficit spending: inflation.

Commodities in great supply are not as valuable as rare commodities; money is no exception to this rule. If a government running a deficit decides to create "new" money to pay its creditors, all existing money decreases in value. Therefore, the government will receive less in new taxes than it gave to the investors in the form of a tax cut.

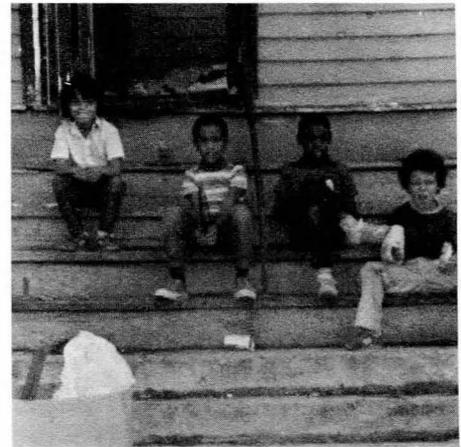
If the government decides against the creation of new money, it will have to raise money in some other manner. The creditors must be paid! The governments may decide to raise money through the sale of bonds. Who will buy the bonds? The investors. But wait. . . if the investors decide to buy bonds, how will they pay for improvements within their companies? They won't. And if there are no improvements within the firms, there will be no increase in productivity, and likewise no new jobs will be created. The investors will gain little, if at all; they will still owe taxes on the interest earned by the government bonds.

Deficits can have other effects, as well. When the government borrows money, it borrows *large* sums of money. The larger the deficit, the larger the sum. This increases the total demand for money, thus increasing the price of money, or the interest rate. High interest rates can prevent a company from taking out the loan it needs to re-tool its factories. High interest rates can prevent a family from getting the mortgage they need to buy the home or car they've always wanted.

In the short run, factories are forced to work with obsolete equipment, the real estate market goes into a slump, and car sales fall. In the long run, companies start to turn out inferior products, and construction companies and auto manufacturers are forced to lay off workers. These events are characteristic of a recession.

Some economists look upon recessions as positive, for the following reasons. First, workers who see unemployed people around them begin to fear for their own jobs. The result is increased productivity on the part of the worker; he will want to prove himself valuable so he won't be laid off next. Second, because the worker fears for his job, he is less likely to complain or go on strike. Third, as more workers are laid off, companies spend less money on wages, profits rise, and soon they have the money they would have gotten via the loan.

What the deficit questions boils down to is this. Deficits themselves cannot be labeled as "good" or "bad"; only the results of said deficits can be labeled. To take the point further, the same results can be positive for one group and negative for another. We, as Black people, must be aware of these effects, so that we may prevent the negative and promote the positive.



## Community Service: What You Can Do

by Eve Blackwell

Throughout the country, many colleges and universities are situated in small communities. While the school may contribute to the community, they could do much more. There are many opportunities for groups on campus to assist the community. For the fraternity, sororities, non-profit organizations and other groups on the University of Illinois-Urbana campus, some possible projects to help the community have been listed below.

The quickest and most efficient campaign is to sponsor a fund-raising program. The benefits of this program will then be donated to a pre-designated association. It is important to contract the designated group before raising the money. The administration may not need the money, or they may want to let the donating organization know exactly how the money will be used. Often, the people you help, want to thank you; this is a special part of the process.

The most needed assistance in the community takes time, not money. These activities can be divided into two categories. The first category is best for groups with a large membership, or who like to work together. The second category is best for groups that like to rotate duties among members or work in groups of twos. Notwithstanding, there is plenty of work to go around.

For the large groups, housework and repairs are necessary for the upkeep of Senior citizen's homes. Some handicapped citizens also need assistance in house repair. In addition, raking leaves, mending fences and general maintenance of property can be an invaluable service to those who cannot complete tasks, which most people take for granted. But helping others does not mean it must be hard labor! So for all the entertainers, there are plenty of nursing homes and children's homes that will welcome you. Also, many youth centers need volunteers to help supervise recreation or provide guidance and counseling for children and young adults. Another activity generally sponsored by large groups is providing nightly recreational activities for the city youth. A favorite in Champaign is the seasonal parties given by fraternities and sororities.

These are just a few of the many services that the community of Champaign-Urbana needs. There are so many more. The importance of these services cannot be overstated. By taking care of those people who made this city what it is we are helping to build a better future for the children of tomorrow. And, by taking care of our youth, we are helping to preserve our society.

For further information, contact your local United Way Service Center, Boy's Club or Salvation Army Service Center. In Champaign, the United Way Service Center is located at 1201 W. University, or call 328-5151.

## Students Speak

WHAT DO YOU THINK CAN BE DONE TO INCREASE BLACK UNITY ON CAMPUS?

LILLIAN MOORE, FR. IN LAS/GEN.

(1) Make Black students realize that there are very few of us here,

(2) We should interact with each other more, not saying that we should isolate ourselves from other race groups.

REUBEN BERRY, SR. IN MATH/CS

Students need to be made aware of past struggles and accomplishments. Freshmen do not realize or appreciate these past accomplishments or struggles, and it tends to sometimes create apathy.

STACY WALKER, SR IN SPEECH COMMUNICATIONS

Black organizations should sponsor free events for all Black students on campus. Also, Black upperclasspersons should relate more with Black underclasspersons.

PET PEEVES. . .

The thing that upsets me the most is when a black person (or group of black people) are trying to make it in the big times and we (black people) struggle to help them. Then, when they finally reach the top they claim to be everything but black. They suddenly become a concoction of all sorts of races. . . anything but black! What's so wrong with being black? After all *anybody* can be caucasian and make it big, ahh but to be *black* and make the big time, that's a true accomplishment.

P-OUI

## Letters To The Editor

To The Editor:

Re your article in Vol. 8, Issue 2 of your newsletter: a point of information—the term you use in your GRIOT editorial is *not* “Orioles”, but OREOS, like the cookie (chocolate on the outside, white stuff in the middle).

And what’s so bad about Oreos? You try to make it seem so awful that a person could have a heritage that comes from more than one culture. As a matter of fact, nothing could be better for a person to be well-rounded and adjusted to today’s society and future society.

Grow up, Mr. Fuller. Face the facts that more and more people are ignoring the Them/Us separation in their social life and their career. Integrated marriage is on an upswing. And as a child from an integrated marriage, I am *proud* to

be an “Oreo”. I embrace any and all cultures that both my parents have to offer. I couldn’t think of life without my grandmother’s black southern cooking, or my mom’s polish-style noodles. My parents are each mixed race, also, so I get a taste of Mexican and American Indian culture, too, from my mom’s stories of her trips to Mexico, and my dad’s remarks about my great-great grandmother. I am also Jewish, and my life is enriched with the customs and the people that I know from my synagogue.

I grew up in a predominantly white, but integrated, neighborhood, and went to integrated schools. I have never given a moment’s thought that I was “denying my heritage”, or developing a “whitey” attitude”. My friends are who they are because of our similar tastes in music,

clothes, food, and because I can just look at them and smile. I am attracted to guys of any race, and have never once thought of myself as denying my heritage. In fact, I’m blossoming out of it.

In case you missed my point, let me state it. You have a bad attitude about *real* relations between black, white, oriental, hispanic, and other groups. If you get a chance, listen to a few songs like “Ice Cream Castles” by the Time, or “Original Sin” by INXS, and realize that Oreos are *not* a derogatory term, they are people like me and my friends who are glad to have the interaction with any culture or race. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,  
“Oreo”

## Just When You Thought It Was Over. . .

by Duane Price

Where the devil did all the Sox fans go? Alright, it’s a fact of like that in Central Illinois only the Cubs and Cardinals are logical choices when deciding which team to back. The White Sox have always been null and void. And now, even in Chicago, the White Sox get no respect.

How did all this come about? It started, back when the world was flat, when the White Sox developed an undying determination to not only lose, but lose big. And no doubt, they invented ways to lose games that seemed favorably out of reach. You remember, don’t you? Like letting a 7 to 1 lead evaporate in the ninth inning? Losing has been the Sox’s trademark. It’s been a way of life on 35th Street as far back as anyone can remember. . . and still is.

Last year, they started “Winnin’ Ugly,” as Texas Rangers manager Doug Rader once described it. And sure enough, he had a point. Largely due to no abundance of expertise on their part, a whole busload of Chicago runs would trickle across the plate at the most opportune times. Maybe the other guys fell apart, lost their nerve. . . I don’t know. But they were nasty, lucky runs that somehow put the Sox on top in most of their games. Not even Sox manager Tony LaRussa knew why they were winning. He would often stab in the dark by saying that the sudden success was largely due to putting Carlton Fisk second in the batting order. But that doesn’t wash. If it did, they would have won again this year—right?

But they didn’t.

It’s no accident they didn’t win. Nobody on the whole team played to win, and LaRussa didn’t know what to tell them when his band of losers hit the skids. And that same LaRussa, whose baseball playing experience was merely a miserable three-week flop in the minors, was just given a new contract to the tune of \$200,000 a year, making him the highest paid manager in the American League. Boy, those Sox owners are idiots. . .

So tell me—where did all the Sox fans go? I think they went out with prohibition, petticoats, and the pony express. Or maybe they grew up, brushed themselves off, and chose between the Cubs and the Cardinals. . .

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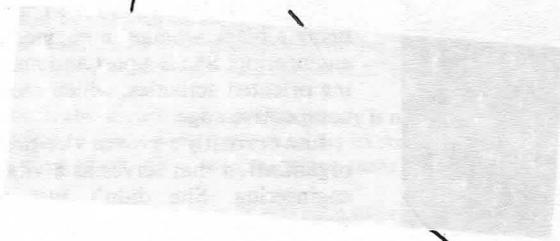


Omnimove on the move during rehearsal.

—Merry Christmas—  
—Happy New Year—  
—Jam on Exams!  
—Griot



MSM  
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# GRIT



## IF IT IS NOT YET

Believe if you will my brothers  
a story of love and pride,  
alone in a cold dark forest  
with animals by my side.  
A mystic coach with curious quotes  
the euphemic flight and the quotes of me  
and you

Maybe I've just got heartburn or maybe  
it's too much sleep,  
They say that it's a problem,  
I say it can be beat,  
They wonder if I am human  
or if I am just unique.  
Decide if you will my destiny,  
for I have got to compete.

This is my plight  
a most unusual night,  
In the forest now  
without even a light.  
She was warm and wonderful,  
a change for my whole life,  
Who in this world can claim to be sane,  
with one's finger on the bomb.  
Her name,  
If It Is Not Yet.

*By Kevin Walter McFall*

## The Griot "Groove Mood Top 20" as of 11/07/84 By Kevin W. McFall

	Title	Artist
1	Moments in Love	Art of Noise
2	I Just Called To Say I Love You	Stevie Wonder
3	Purple Rain	Prince
4	Last Time We Made Love	Jeffrey Osborne & Jayne Kennedy
5	Hey Yeah	Kids At Work
6	Send Me Your Love	Kashif
7	Suddenly	Billy Ocean
8	Perfect Love	Patrice Rushen
9	I Can Love You Better	S.O.S. Band
10	You, Me and He	Mtume

"Gotta Dance"  
Wax To Watch: The Word Is Out / Jermaine Stewart  
Like A Virgin / Madonna  
(Love Is Just) The Game / Peter Brown

Listing compiled from data provided by Billboard, the Better Music Group (B.M.G prods.), In The Mix prods., WBML, WLRW (Bruce Cook), WPGU (Rod Sawyer).