

# Howard U. Exchange Student Received Unfriendly Reception

by Steve Gold

What is Bucknell's reputation in the Negro community? Does it have one? Is it good or bad?

It may surprise many Bucknellians to learn that Bucknell does have a reputation of sorts; and it is not an especially good one.

But how can Bucknell have a reputation among Negroes when it has such little contact with them?

One contact which Bucknell has had with Negroes is through the Bucknell-Howard University semester exchange.

It is something of an understatement to say that this program has been rather inactive of late. In fact, Bucknell coed Barbara Beech, who is studying at Howard this semester, is the first Bucknellian to study there since the 1958-59 academic year.

That was also the last time that a Howard student studied at Bucknell; and it is that event which is primarily responsible for giving Bucknell whatever bad reputation it may have now.

The Howard student during that year wrote the following letter to the editor of *The Bucknellian*. It was published May 8, 1959.

April 29, 1959

Dear Bucknellian:

I have waited for quite some time before writing this letter, but I feel that it is quite necessary at this point in time.

This is the first exchange semester that Bucknell has had with Howard in quite a number of years, since World War II, to be precise. The question comes to my mind why should there be one at this time. I do not know why the exchange program was disbanded, but I do get the strong feeling that Bucknell is not ready for any exchange program with another college which at this time happens to be predominantly Negro.

Speaking for Howard, which I feel I am quite capable of doing, we feel that the exchange program was desired by the University body, which includes the administration, faculty and the student body, which wanted to develop better intercollegiate relations; that, by the way, can not be done in a mere weekend. Now that I have been here three months, I have come to the opinion that the student body is not in favor of the Howard Exchange semester program. Since the activities are for the purpose of the student body, I feel they, the student body, should be fully satisfied. I believe that the attitude of the students is exemplified by the various name-calling in the street that I, for one, receive either referring to my color or race, the various snickers, the "nasty" (pardon my terminology) looks received upon entering any building, and other things of this nature that do not need to be expounded.

In your issue of March 23, 1959, there was an editorial stating that the main purpose for an exchange with "Such a school as Howard" was to show Bucknell students that there is no "essential" difference between Bucknellians and Howardites. I, at the time, felt that this was such an insignificant remark or statement, for I, having such great faith in human intellect, thought surely Bucknell students knew this. Now, I am afraid that I am not quite so sure.

With a great deal of concern, I wonder if the administration should not look into this more carefully. It might save a great deal of tension, hard feelings, and finally it might save the breath of some of the "Young Men" on campus who feel that a derogatory remark must be made to new or exchange students.

Martha F. Brooks  
Howard Exchange Student