Clayton Robinson given maximum sentence in Pope murder case

By Sue Williams
AFRO Staff Writer

Instead of a sense of justice having been served, there are feelings of ambiguity in the Eastern Shore city of Denton following the maximum 10-year sentence given a white youth for the murder of a black classmate.

Clayton Robinson, 18, was sentenced by Caroline County Judge Thomas Evergham this week to 10 years in prison for the murder of Leonard Pope last February.

Pope's bullet-ridden body was found in a shallow ditch dug by Robinson and a friend the day before the murder by the assistant principal of the high school the youths attended.

Following a controversial trial, Robinson was convicted of manslaughter instead of first degree murder, much to the anger of Pope's relatives and civil rights leaders.

Mrs. Barbara Douglass, mother of the slain student, was bitter about the outcome of the trial.

"I feel like he (Robinson) got away with murder," Mrs. Douglass said following the sentencing.

"Ten years from now, Junior (Pope) will still be dead," she said, "and Robinson will be free."

Mrs. Douglass has maintained throughout her ordeal that had the situation been reversed, and her son had shot Robinson or any other white youths, things would have been different.

"Murder is still murder," she said, adding that it should be treated as such regardless of who has committed the crime. She says injustice still rules, however, when race is involved.

Dr. Emmett Burns, regional director of the NAACP who garnered support of other county branches of the civil rights organization in the case, agreed.

"If the thing had been the other way around," he said, "there would not have been a jail in Maryland big enough for Pope."

Burns said the 10-year sentence could only be slightly regarded, as Robinson will be eligible for parole in January of 1983.

"The worst mistake we made," he said, speaking of the NAACP, was to believe that justice would be served." He said he felt earlier involvement of the organization would have produced a difference in the outcome of the case.

"I am convinced, and people have to realize," he said, "that there is absolutely no substitute for community pressure." It was such pressure, he feels, that created an awareness on the part of Caroline County law officials that the people of Denton would not stand for less than the maximum sentence for Robinson.

But, Burns feels, the pressure came too late. Earlier involvement could have made the difference between the conviction of murder in the first degree as opposed to manslaughter.

"It was premeditated," Burns argued, adding that too many questions had been ignored or glossed over during the course of the trial.

Burns said this week that there may be grounds for reopening the case, but he said that those grounds are still being investigated. The mother of the slain youth expressed hope that the case be reopened as well.

"A lot of evidence," she said, "was just taken too lightly."

Mrs. Douglass said that Robinson seemed to treat the incident and his involvement in it "as though he had broken a window."

"He said he didn't intend for (things) to happen the way they did and he said he was sorry," Mrs. Douglass said, "but he didn't seem sorry.

"He's sick. He needs help. He's a danger to society, and I do hope he gets the help he needs, whether he's sorry or not.

"But the thing is," she said, "is that he robbed Junior of his future. He dragged him to a rural area and shot him six times. I can't forget that."

What remains most unclear in the minds of almost everyone is why Robinson, who said during testimony that he shot Pope "out of fear and self defense," committed the crime.

Conflicting testimony during the trial revealed Robinson at one point saying drugs was the motive behind the slaying, but later testimony, and statements made at the sentencing, revealed that the youth was concerned about Pope's relationship with his (Robinson's) girlfriend.

According to Mrs. Douglass, the girlfriend at one point said she hardly knew Pope, but later said he had made advances at her.

No evidence of drug involvement was ever uncovered.

Dr. Burns said his organization will continue to "press for justice" in the case.

Delores C. Brown of Mary Knoll Rd. in West Baltimore (L) and Stephanie Morris of North Augusta Ave. in southwest Baltimore (C) thanks Reva Tiedman, R. N. for a great year at the South Baltimore General Hospital School of Practical Nursing. Brown and Morris were recently graduated from the school which Tiedman directs.

How 'Black Encyclopedia' was compiled

By Portia E. Badham
AFRO Staff Writer

The Encyclopedia of Black America took nearly 10 years to complete, contains more than 900 pages and according to its editor, "fills a long-neglected need."

The editor, Dr. W. Augustus Low, professor of history at the University of Maryland Baltimore County, worked with nearly 100 authors, writers and contributors on the encyclopedia, which made its debut a few months ago.

Thick in size and rich in history and information, the encyclopedia covers the entire history of Afro-Americans from the colonial trade period to the contemporary civil rights movement. It is the first comprehensive encyclopedia on Afro-American history.

Low, raised by sharecroppers in the Mississippi Delta, has been in Maryland since 1948. He taught history at the Maryland State College, now the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, for 18 years before going to UMBC when it opened in 1966.

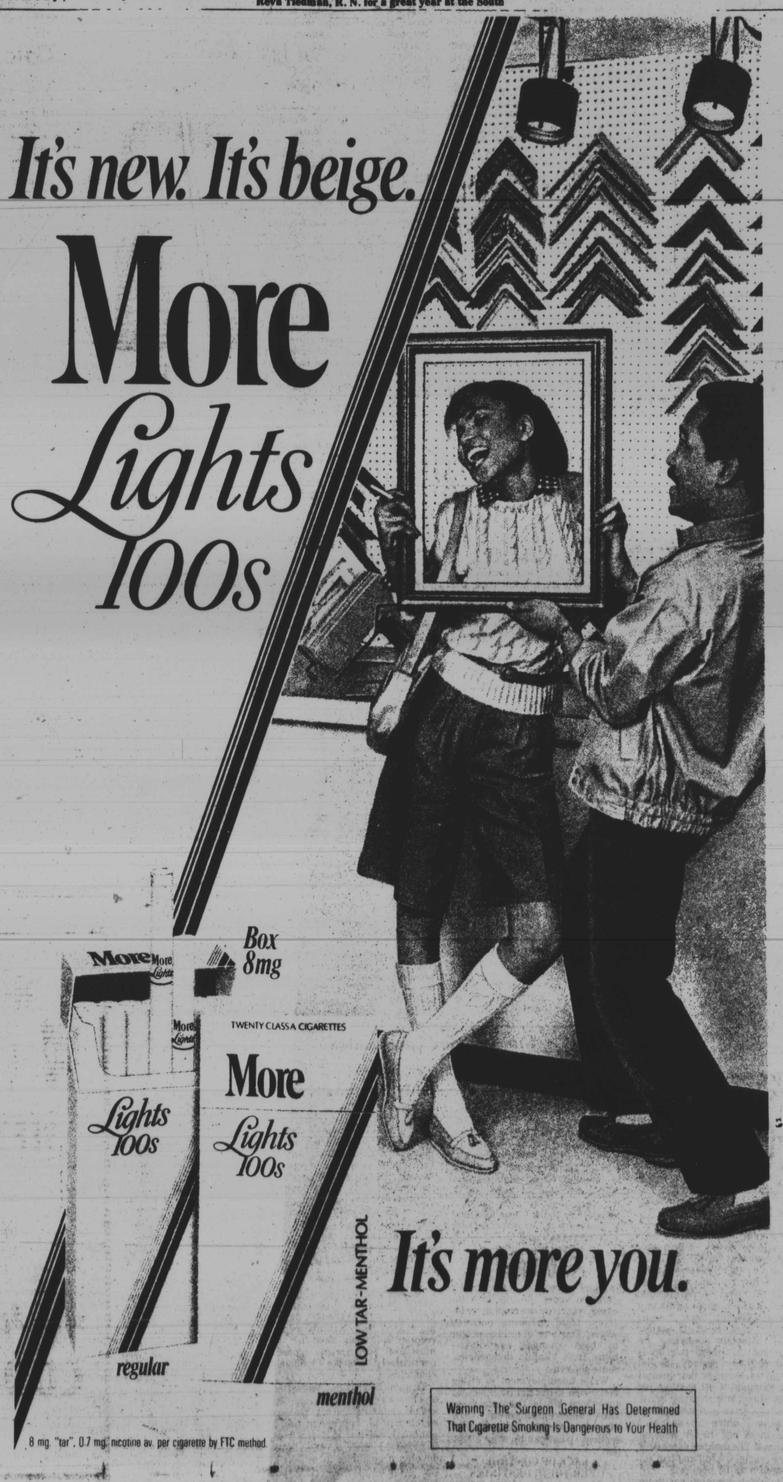
He became involved in the encyclopedia through an invitation bya friend. "Dr. Clift had been contacted by the McGraw Hill company and asked if he knew anyone to edit the book. He then called me and I said yes." Dr. Virgil Clift, professor emeritus of education of New York University and associate editor.

"I've always known a work like this was needed," saw Low.

Low states that "it was a most difficult decision" selecting the information for the encyclopedia. We were told that it would be 900 pages and we had enough to fill three volumes."

It should at least be in libraries in the city's school system. Students can research the accomplishments of blacks in business, the professions, the arts, and economic life. Other entries include health, housing, employment, education, women, urban development, politics, class stratification, political organizations, slavery and important social and political movements.

Notable characteristics of the Encyclopedia of Black America, which is published by McGraw-Hill, are its readability and usefulness. The easy-access format contains cross-references, bibliographies following each entry, a critical analysis of reference sources.



BUSINESS/REAL ESTATE

This week's financial section produced by P. E. Badham

Business League discount card campaign

The Business League of Baltimore will sponsor a major program next week that will benefit both consumers and small businesses in the area.

The Preferred Discount Campaign will provide consumers with discount cards that can be used at 40 selected business throughout the city.

Beginning Sept. 14 through Sept. 19, discount cards will be distributed by the Business League at various locations. Business League officials state that they hope the campaign will encourage participating and sponsoring companies to upgrade standards of business, mutually support each other and the community.

The program is also viewed as a major thrust of support for the small business community.

The campaign is a systematic process intended to cultivate a support system for community-based businesses to work together in their own best interest and the interest of their consumers, states Bernette Jones, a member of the league.

Additional benefits of the program include special seminars and workshops that will be provided for the business owners and their employees.

In October, a workshop on effective business purchasing strategies will be conducted by Gloria Luster of the Baltimore city bureau of purchases.

Consumers will also be able to sign up for a number of informative workshops to help them discover and increase their purchasing power.

Locations for picking up free Preferred Discount cards are:

Monday, Sept. 14 - The Yellow Bowl Restaurant, 5811 Park Heights Ave., 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Tuesday, Sept. 15 - Aldateen Shoes, 308 N. Gay St., 12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m. and Bethel Food Co-op, Druid Hill Avenue and Lanvale Street, 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 16 - The Yellow Bowl Restaurant, 1234 Greenmount Ave., 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Thursday, Sept. 17 - Chio's Boutique, 2117 N. Charles St., 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Friday, Sept. 18 - ASSERT, Inc. Sickle Cell Month, Mondawmin Mall, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 19 - Project 10,000 - WEBB Radio - Voter Registration, Lexington Mall (downtown), 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The Business League of Baltimore is a chapter of the National Business League. This year the National Business League celebrates 81 years since its founding in 1900 by Booker T. Washington. With more than 100 chapters in 37 states and the District of Columbia, it is the nation's oldest organization.

The Business League of Baltimore is a non-profit membership organization made up primarily of small business persons in the Baltimore metropolitan area.

The league encourages, develops, promotes and supports and represents the interest of its members to make a favorable impact on the social, political and economic development of quality communities for all people.

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Saunders receives brokers contract

Herman L. Saunders

Herman L. Saunders Sr., broker for Herm Saunders Realty Company, has just been appointed and received a brokers contract from the Midland National Life Insurance Company of Sioux Falls, S.D.

Saunders formerly worked for Midland National as an agent with the William E. Canedy Insurance Agency until that agency was terminated due to the death of Canedy.

Saunders stated that by adding the insurance line to his existing real estate and income tax business his company can better serve his clients by offering them a complete package of home sales, life or mortgage insurance.

In addition, an income tax service is offered.

Saunders also hopes to expand the insurance services and offer employment opportunities to people who want to enter the insurance field.

Catonsville estate courses

Catonsville Community College has scheduled a series of credit and credit-free courses for people in the field of Real Estate.

The credit-free courses are part of a continuing education package, offered at a nominal charge and they vary in length.

Credit courses run for 14 weeks and students will earn college credit for their studies. There are two registration processes involved.

Real Estate Licensees Orientation is a credit-free course designed to enable the newly-licensed agent to better understand the day to day activities of listing, selling, financing and closing processes in real estate.

The class will meet on Saturday, Sept. 5 from 9 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. on the CCC campus, 800 S. Rolling Road. The cost is $8.

Real Estate License Preparatory will assist those planning to take the state's licensing examination. The class will meet Saturday, Sept. 19 from 9 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. at CCC. The registration fee is $8.

Selecting a Real Estate Broker is a third credit-free course to be offered in September. It will assist the student in selecting a firm with which to be associated.

It will meet Saturday, Sept. 12 from 9 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. at CCC and the cost is $8.

To register for any of the credit-free real estate courses, call the Office of Continuing Education at 455-4318.

Credit courses scheduled for the fall are Real Estate Principles, Principles for Real Estate Brokers I and II, Real Estate Appraisal, Real Estate I, Real Estate Finance, Property Management, Real Estate Law and Regulations, and Field Service Training.

Most of these credit courses are three credits and the tuition for Baltimore County residents is $21 per credit. Registration may be completed during the weeks of Aug. 31 and Sept. 8 from 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. (except Friday night). For more information call the Registration Office at 455-4555.

Business Workshops

The following is the September and October calendar of workshops and courses for small business persons which are sponsored by the Small Business and minority Business Development Center.

How to Start and Manage Your Own Business will be held Thursday, Sept. 24 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Salisbury State College. Call 546-4261, ext. 421.

Starting Your Own Business will be held at Essex Community College Saturday, Sept. 26 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Call 522-1303.

On Wednesday, Sept. 30 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Record Management will be held at Aveson Methodist Church. Call 522-1303.

At Essex Community College on Saturday, Oct. 10, Taking a Look at Your Market will be presented from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Call 522-1303.

Crime Prevention will be held on Fallon Federal Building Thursday, Oct. 15 and 22 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Call 962-2243.

Advertising Aids for Small Business will be presented Wednesday, Oct. 21 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Lyons Methodist Church. Call 522-1303.

On Saturday, Oct. 24 Financial Management for Small Business will be held at Essex Community College from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Essex Community College. Call 522-1303.

The Small Business Market in the World will be held Saturday, Oct. 31 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Essex Community College. Call 522-1303.

Pre-registration is required for each course. For further information or to register, call the phone numbers indicated.

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Start thinking about taxes now, expert says

You remember the feeling. It's about April 15. Your shoebox full of receipts is overflowing and the income tax forms seem more confusing than ever before.

Most of us would rather forget that annual test of our mettle. But Jerry Hutton, manager of federal income tax for R.J. Reynolds Industries, Inc., says procrastinating jitters can be reduced if taxpayers begin planning now for next spring.

Tax planning doesn't take long, Hutton says.

But most people just don't do it.

Hutton says year-round tax planning is more important this year than before because of recent changes in tax laws.

Taxpayers should begin now to estimate their income for 1981. Hutton says. Knowing how much money you will make this year will give you an idea of your tax situation.

Some people are able to adjust their yearly income by changing their payments and billing schedules, Hutton says, and they should be making those decisions now.

In further case, the IRS and Treasurer of the U.S. promulgation of preparation, Hutton recommends the following:

Keep receipts in an organized file, arranged by the type of payment or contribution. Update the file monthly.

Look into the types of professional tax preparation available. Because professional tax consultants fees are deductible, less than the expense of the deduction may cost the taxpayer during a certified public accountant or tax attorney actually pays for itself.

People who make your payments, certified service, Second jobs or sales of property or securities are especially wise to consider taking a professional. Standard methods of calculation tax forms, minimum tax and income averaging. Under the heavy passed tax plan, some may find they could pay less tax with a new method of calculation.

Know the difference between tax deductions and tax credits. Tax deductions decrease an individual's taxable income.

Tax credits are subtracted from the amount of tax actually paid by the individual. Legitimate deductions include professional fees, health insurance payments and interest on mortgages and other loans.

Political contributions, day care costs and some home energy conservation measures qualify as tax credits.

Anticipate whether or not you will be due a refund. If so, file your return early, so that your refund can be earning you interest as quickly as possible.

Social complicated individual returns are a piece of cake compared to corporate tax requirements, according to Hutton. His employer, R.J. Reynolds Industries, Inc. has more than 50 tax experts to handle local, state, federal and international tax planning and returns.

The process is so complex that the IRS and state auditors maintain an office at RJR's World Headquarters building in Winston-Salem, N.C.

Businesses need year-round tax planning, says Hutton, so do individuals.

R.J. Reynolds Industries - with headquarters in Winston-Salem, N.C. - is the parent company of R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co., the Sterling Group (cables) and prepared foods, beverages and fresh fruit. R.J. Reynolds Tobacco In-ternal tax planning and International, Inc. Aminoil USA, Inc. Energy Sea Land Industries Investments, Inc.

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