—Farrakhan brings

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black poet Amiri Barakas, executive minister for the Black NIA Force, and third year student at Howard. "In order to gain equilibrium we must become militant — engaged in warfare."

The controversial minister Farrakhan of the Nation of Islam spoke to a crowd of about 1,500, emphasizing the need for new and more stable relationships. Poor relationships, he said, are the root of the problems within the black community.

Citing the escalating homicide rate in the District, Farrakhan exclaimed, "We have become our own worst enemy! What has happened to us?

"We have to put our future in our own hands or we will have no future at all," he declared. Farrakhan also pointed out that whites can no longer control blacks with an opiate religion or miseducation, so they have introduced drugs into the black community.

"Drugs are not the problem. It is the appetite for drugs that is the problem. What makes us have an appetite for death? The problem is improper relationships. Relationships are the key to empowerment," the minister concluded.

He explained that a baby, from conception, is given a firm resting place. The baby is secure. After birth, that person is constantly in search of security like what he initially had. Farrakhan said that the child in the black community does not find that security in the early years because he is weaned from the mother's breast and the father often is not around.

The black child doesn't find it in school because as he learns to read he finds that "Dick is white. Jane is white. And the only thing that he can identify with is the spot on Spot (the dog)."

The first black figure he sees in school, he continued, is Little Black Sambo, and he is taught to reject anything that has to do with Africa which results in a rejection of self.

Farrakhan was speaking from the heart, as was revealed in the synopsis he gave the audience about his own life. His mother tried to abort him with a clothes hanger when she discovered she was pregnant. When her efforts failed and she was forced to have the baby, she did not want a boy.

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Combining business with spirituality at Bethel AME Church

Rev. Frank Madison Reid, III

By Helen Glover Cook
AFRO Staff Reporter

When Rev. Reid arrived in Baltimore in October to assume duties as Pastor of Bethel A.M.E. church this is the atmosphere he found. Bethel's structure was already running according to a formula dictated by the ancestral pioneers within the A.M.E. church, among them several who also are the ancestors of Rev. Reid. Their history and the A.M.E. Church's are closely entwined.

Reid's great-great-grandfather set the professional precedent for a succession of his sons and grandsons to become A.M.E. ministers. Two of the Reid family went even further in the church hierachy and were elected to the Bishopric. Reid's father, Rev. Frank Reid, II, was elected in 1940 to the Bishopric of the 2nd Episcopal District.

If Frank Reid, III becomes Bishop, he will be the third member of his family to assume that post. Baltimore is a strategic Ministerial Assignment, those aspiring to reach the Bishop seat have traditionally stopped at Baltimore's Bethel A.M.E. Church.

Rev. Reid is proud of his heritage and the successes of his grandfathers, but does not feel as though he has to follow exactly in their footsteps or their way of doing things.

Reid's beard along with an aversion to the daily wearing of suits and ties are all part of his style. Some people will mistakenly confuse this image with that of a person who is inept, inefficient or overly nonchalant.

Rev. Reid has a effortless way of working that looks cool and unruffled, making the hardest jobs seem easy.

Reid was born in Chicago on June 29,1951,to Adrenis and Frank Madison Reid, II, at that time his father was in Seminary training. When Reid became five years old his family moved to St. Louis, MO, where they resided until Reid was 10, at which time his parents divorced.

After the divorce Adrenis Reid chose to remain in St. Louis, take a job with the government and raise her four girls and one son.

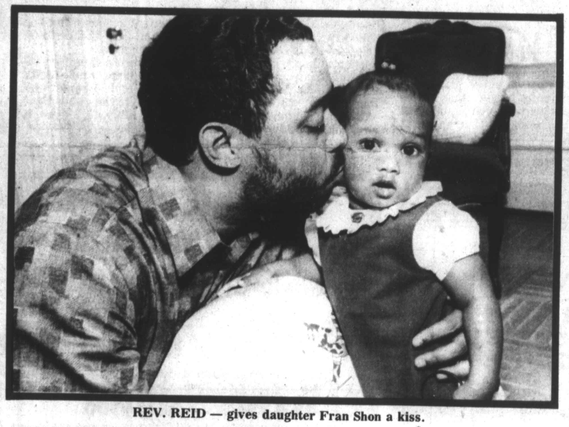
Upon graduating from high school, Reid left St. Louis to attend Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut. His original intent was to become a lawyer, he said:

"I thought I could become a good advocate for my people because I was bilingual, I spoke both white English and black English. This way I could change the world. I saw myself as The 'Spook Who Sat by the Door' type."

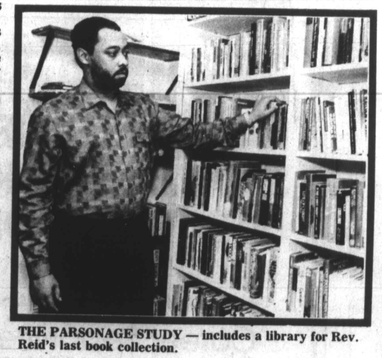
Yale University exposed Reid to personalities and experiences that would mold his thinking. In the early 70's the Black Power Movement was alive and thriving. Many of those who shaped that movement spoke at Yale. Students stayed up late at night discussing the finer points of the philosophies exposed by the Black Panthers, Malcolm X, and the sincerity of their motives.

Another personality whose thinking influenced Reid was also a Yale student, named Kurt Schmoke. Schmoke was the half brother of Reid. Schmoke's mother Irene had married Reid's father Rev. Frank Madison Reid, II. The couple now live in Birmingham Alabama where Bishop Reid presides over the 9th A.M.E. Bishopric.

REV. REID — Conducts a telephone interview from his home office.



REV. REID — gives daughter Fran Shon a kiss.



THE PARSONAGE STUDY — includes a library for Rev. Reid's last book collection.

Afro Photos by Paul A. Greene

The relationship between Reid and Schmoke was termed by Reid as "one in which Schmoke and I ate together every few weeks and discussed any problems I might be having. Most upperclassmen don't have the time for younger brothers but Kurt always made time."

Yale was also the venue where Reid experienced his first acknowledgement of a "calling to the ministry" saying "My first religious experiences were not of the falling out or fainting variety."

While at Yale, Reid also read lots of books; Chairman Mao's Little Red Book, the I Ching, etc. but he found the greatest most precious and truth-filled of all these books to be the Bible. He decided to devote his life to the teachings in this book.

Reid bases his decision to enter the ministry on the prayers of his parents, who "prayed for me to return to the black church tradition. This is my way of repaying, Jesus Christ and my parents for their guidance and strength."

In his ministerial travels throughout New England Reid acquired a pastoral mentor, a man he affectionately calls Rev. John. Baltimoreans know Rev. John as Bishop John Bryant and the former pastor at Bethel.

The destinies of the Reid, Bryant and Bethel families have continued to be interlocked throughout the years, with each minister at one time becoming pastor of the Baltimore Bethel church, and paving a way for the next in line to enter Bethel's Pastorate.

Rev. John Bryant was also mentor to another student, Rev. Fred Lucas. Lucas invited Reid to his church in Monrovia Liberia to assume Missionary duties as a teacher at the high school attached to the Eliza Turner Memorial church. Reid took a year's absence from school to go to Africa and complete that missionary work.

When Reid returned to Harvard Seminary he received his degree. It was at this time that Reid says "I received one of the most spirit-filled blessings of my life. Both my father and I preached on the same day during my graduation weekend. I preached at the morning service and my father at the 11 o'clock service.

"There was a mural depicting Christ on the wall of the church and there were college students proudly displaying their Afro hairdo's as well as a Black Liberation flag hanging from the ceiling."

After pastoring a small congregation near the campus of Johnson C. Smith College in Charlotte, North Carolina, where he raised the conscious level of many buppies, encouraging their church attendance.

This was a skill church leaders soon grew to equate with the work of Rev. Reid. He would soon be asked to develop and nurture the communications between the upper middle class and the A.M.E. Church.

In 1978 Reid traveled to Kansas City to attend a church conference. There he would meet the young lady who would become his bride. Marlaa Hall was also born into the A.M.E. Church, her father, the late Rev. E. Woody Hall pastored Kansas City's Bethel A.M.E. Church.

The Reid wedding took place in March of 1980, by the first Sunday in May the couple were at their new post in Los Angeles at the Ward A.M.E. Church. During this time Reid became an advisor to the television show "Amen," starring Sherman Hemsley. He said "our relationship with the Hollywood community and many Los Angeles community groups was excellent."

The atmosphere in California influenced much of Reid's religious methodology. He acquired a relaxed unsanctimonious demeanor. Here he also honed his buppie converting talent to an edge, an edge A.M.E. leaders thought finely tuned enough to tackle Baltimore City's Bethel A.M.E. Church.

Rev. Reid packed his Mercedes, Marlaa, the baby Fran Shon Marlee, and their 19-year-old Goddaughter Charlon Melton and moved into Bethel's parsonage on Calloway Avenue. When they arrived in Baltimore their adjustment was smooth and uneventful due to the professionalism of church workers.

The community welcomed the family with open arms, giving Reid an opportunity to deliver to Baltimore what he terms "a clarity of direction as we move into the 21st century. Baltimoreans must unite and support the many organizations at our doorstep such as the NAACP, Morgan University, the AFRO and many others."

He feels "We must develop black excellence for the good of our society, we must not turn on each other as things get worse during this continued era of Reaganism."

Rev. Reid realizes that he is one of "God's more fortunate children," a concept he wishes all middle class blacks were aware of and would use their material wealth in the struggle to uplift all of their brothers and sisters. His wealth does not stop him from or make him guilty knowing that he is surrounded by luxury.

His Mercedes, Rolex watch, and finely furnished large house are all "gifts from God," he says. Reid is secure in his belief that these material possessions are a reward for a job well done and a life well lived. These perceptions were gained at Reid's church office and reinforced by a visit to his home.

Marlaa Reid answered the front door to her new home holding little 10-month-old Fran Shon. The first impression one notices is the newly coiffeured, stylished pant suited young lady doesn't look like the typical preacher's wife. She looks more like the average MBA about to sit down to a power lunch or board meeting, and she talks like one too.

Highly articulate, Marlaa Reid discusses her plans to continue working on behalf of Women's Ministries. She says "Bethel administers to the total individual including the physical, mental and spiritual person. I'll continue to work with the women's Ministry as well as the scholarship program they administer."

Bethel is a ministerial post Rev. Frank Reid says he "asked to be assigned to."

Frank and Marlaa Reid have already begun to make a difference at Bethel. They say they have "more plans and ideas to implement in Baltimore." Both Baltimoreans and the Bethel community welcome the Reid's and look forward to working with them.

MARLA, FRAN SHON, CHALON AND REV. REID — pose for a family portrait in the Reid livingroom.