

Thorpe first Miss Black PSU

By **NANCY GOWER**
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Sharon Thorpe, with appropriate crown and flowers, was named Miss Black Penn State '80 last night.

An enthusiastic crowd filled the Paul Robeson Cultural Center auditorium to view the first Miss Black Penn State pageant, sponsored by Omega Psi Phi fraternity.

The nine contestants were judged for talent, beauty and poise in each of three categories: bathing suit, talent and evening gown competitions.

In the evening gown phase, each contestant was asked a different question related to the pageant theme, "Believe in Yourself."

Scores were given on a scale of 10 points for each of the three criteria in the categories, with a maximum score of 90 points.

Joseph Laney, vice president of Omega Psi Phi, said the entrance requirements consisted of submitting an application and a \$3 entry fee. The main aspect of the pageant, he said, "was to promote community identity amongst the blacks at Penn State."

That idea was emphasized by Ernest J. White, who gave the

opening address. White said "the pageant is in appreciation of black talent . . . and to encourage each person to take pride in themselves."



Photo by Janis Burger

Sharon Thorpe

Thorpe (6th-health planning and administration) said she entered the pageant for fun, and because she had entered pageants in high school. In

the talent portion of the contest she sang a Natalie Cole song, "I'm Catching Hell."

She was also asked a question concerning the goals of career women. She replied that a woman should devote herself to whatever her priorities were — a career or home. To the delight of the audience, Thorpe said that she hoped to do a bit of both. Thorpe's University activities include Quessence club and Black Caucus. Her interests include gymnastics and horseback riding.

Thorpe, in addition to the crown and flowers, received a trophy and a \$100 check.

First runner-up, Susan Lingner (pre-medicine), and second runner-up, Fawn Coleman (9th-Spanish/business), each received a trophy and flowers.

Commercial sponsors of the pageant include Burger King, K-Mart, Mid-State Band, People's Bank, the Student Book Store and The Trophy Room.

Thorpe said her duties as Miss Black Penn State '80 include "acting queen-y," and feels "the pageant is a really good idea; it should go far."