

# BLACKWORLD

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ONE NATION

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**BLACKWORLD  
"KNOW  
THYSELF"**

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**WE ARE  
ONE  
NATION!**

# editorial

Welcome to the 5th issue of the BLACKWORLD newspaper for the spring 95' semester. The school year is coming to end with summer vacation just around the corner. Finals week is a heart beat away. We would like to wish everyone good luck on their tests. Remember that preparation is the best way to get those A's. Studying now diminishes the chances of a nervous breakdown during finals week.

During the closing weeks of the school year there are many things going on around the campus that should be of interest to the student body. Something that is very important is the Polity elections. These elections determine who will be the head of the student government. Polity is a government for the students by the students. The students who are elected will be in charge of the money given to Polity through your student activity fees. Many organizations including BLACKWORLD are funded by Polity with the monies the activity fees supply. This election will provide us with, among others, the President and Vice President of the Student Polity Association (SPA) for the entire 1995-96 school year. The BLACKWORLD newspaper Endorses current SPA Vice Pres. Annette Hicks for Polity President. She is the obvious choice for the position. She has spent a year in training as second in charge and is very capable of taking over the reigns from current president Crystal Plati. Hicks has made her presence known at every event that posed a threat to students. Whether it's at Senate meeting (of which she is the chair) or at a rally against the budget cuts. She helped organize the rally in the administration building as well as the rallies in Albany. She, as the current vice president, is also

against the EOP cuts. Annette Hicks is the logical and best choice to be the next Polity President.

Our selection for SPA Vice President is Laura Pace. Pace, who is currently the Freshman representative, will breath new life into Polity. Some may view her youth as a draw back but we believe it is one of her best assets. She is energetic and wants to do what is best for her fellow students. Pace is against the cuts of the EOP and Seek programs, as she stated at the debates. She was also very instrumental in developing proposals to lower the budget cuts. Because of the proposals that Pace helped develop, tuition will only be raised \$500 dollars instead of \$1800. Although a freshman, Laura Pace is a seasoned Veteran when it comes to student government. She will provide the energy, creativity, and skills essential for the position. She would be a perfect compliment to Annette Hicks as Polity Vice President.

Julio Alarcon gets the nod for Senior rep. It is quite an easy choice if you look at the facts. Alarcon is the leader that the forthcoming Senior class needs. He is currently the head of SPA Security. He has dealt with Polity and Administration on many issues. As head of SPA Security, Alarcon is the boss one of the largest student run organizations. He is also a building manager for the Student Union. As building manager, Alarcon has come in contact with many influential people. A list of the people he works with on a daily basis include: Carmen Vasquez (Director of Student Union & Activities), Cheryl Chambers (Assoc. Director of Student Union & Activities), and Ed Quinn (Head of Union Operations). His familiarity with Administration will insure that the se-

niors get what is due them, including a good graduation. Alarcon is in favor of an outdoor graduation and a December graduation ceremony for those graduating in the fall. Julio Alarcon knows the Stony Brook system and can help cut through the bureaucratic red tape.

Lisa Mather who is the current secretary for the Inter Fraternity Sorority Council (IFSC) is our endorsement for Polity secretary. Her opponent is David Shashoua. During the Polity debates, Shashoua made an attempt to win the minority vote. He tried to convince us that he too was a minority, based on his Jewish religion and his conservative affiliation. The people of color on campus can make their own choices as to who to vote for. Please keep in mind that Shashoua also stated his support for the cuts to the New York State budget. He said that all areas should be cut, from social services to higher education. His view was that the bottom line was the huge deficit, and cuts would be the only way to close it. Is this the kind of person the community should support? If only numbers on a page matter to him, imagine how much he cares about financial aid and EOP cuts!

In closing the BLACKWORLD staff urges everyone to get out and VOTE. Inform yourself of the candidates and their positions, by reading the main news article on page 3. Sorry for the delay between issues, we hope this double issue will quench your thirst for the writings of BLACKWORLD. Once again, study hard, vote, STAY BLACK STAY STRONG!

Carey Gray  
Managing Editor

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# POLITY DEBATES:

## FACING AND EVADING THE ISSUES

Heated debates for president, vice president and polity secretary took place on Thursday, April 20th.

Annette Hicks and Sean Harris are now the current candidates for president after Ken Daube dropped out of the race Wednesday, April 19th. Hicks is currently Polity Vice President and feels her experience is the strength of her campaign. Harris, who is currently a senator from Gershwin, aims to make the campus more exciting.

BLACKWORLD Editor-in-Chief, Laurestine Gomes asked several questions of the candidates. One question was, "What have you done to promote diversity at Stony Brook? Please be specific as to the groups you've worked with and what programs you've been a part of." Hicks, the first to answer, said she has been involved in several cultural organizations, like CSO, where she was a board member. Harris avoided the question by responding that he believes in diversity and feels that concerts need to be diverse.

Gomes also posed a controversial question: "Many have placed blame on Polity members of the Senate Council, what can you say has been truly a problem and not just a divisive measure, brought about to 'disunify' Polity?" Hicks responded in defense of the bad publicity she has been receiving from publications like the Statesman. She said there are no concrete issues presented in Polity and encourages students to voice issues at the polity meetings. Harris said, that a big problem is there is "no cooperation". "Polity", he said, "should be working with all the clubs and organizations". The argument became heated when Hicks rebutted that since he is a member of the senate, why not ask himself the question why there is no cooperation.

When the Statesman asked the candidates how they plan to represent commuters, Harris spoke of the problem of the South P Lot, and the bad shape it's in. He said that students should not have to talk amongst themselves on the conditions of the parking lot calling it South "Crater" Lot. Hicks then responded that she had experience being an orientation leader and working with freshman commuters. As president, she said, she wants to set up a commuter task force and undergo full scale recruitment for polity education. Harris then rebutted with the statement, "Being president does a not mean being God!" He then added that media needs to take an active role in educating students in Polity happenings.

When the candidates were asked questions from the floor, students were concerned about the amount of money

that goes into making Polity work. One student claimed that \$450,000 was spent running Polity. He then asked, "Isn't there a better way to give to students?" Harris then responded that the Administration "has no focus" and there is an "extreme redundancy that needs to be removed". (Administration, meaning the professional faculty staff) Hicks said that salaries for Administration have already been cut. She said, "Administration budget includes stipends, employment opportunities...It's not only for Polity, but also students."

When asked about the money used for retreats that have benefited only a few people (The student claimed that 10's of thousands of dollars were spent on eight students) Hicks responded as to not knowing whether it was 10's of thousands of dollars, but that the retreat's objective was to give leadership training to the students. "It enhances their leadership", she said, "I feel it is necessary." Harris disagreed.

A student addressed the issue of the lack of caring by the student body. He said many students feel that this school "SUCKS". He wanted to know the plans of the candidates to change the opinions of the students. Hicks idea was to concentrate on school spirit. She said, "This school does not suck". She went on to tell the student that Stony Brook University ranks as one of the top in public education. She said "We have a good organization and something to be proud of." Harris felt that there was truth to this students allegations and stressed his "make the campus more exciting" idea by having groups like 9 Inch Nails perform on campus.

In closing, Harris said that his goal as president would be to make one coherent voice in Polity and make better use of SAB (Student Activity Board). He said that he wants to eliminate the red tape that make up Polity procedure and make Polity more approachable. He aims to increase cooperation between all clubs and organizations. His main point in the debate was that \$1.4 million went to the student activity fee by the students, but students never see that money. He wants to make Polity take that money to the students. Hicks final statement was a list of the top 10 reasons why students should vote for her: result, advocacy, recruitment, leadership, student empowerment, experience, direction, dedication, diversity, and service.

In the election for Polity Vice President, Nicole Rosner and Laura Pace are the candidates. In their opening statements, Rosner said she is the current Sophomore Representative, which gives her the experience needed for the job.

Pace said she is presently on the student council and she is one out of four on the Board of Directors. She said that she is a student advocate. She added that students have a voice and they need to use it.

When asked, what did both do as as Freshman Representatives, Pace answered that she organized dances, worked on the budget for new students was on the dining service committee and was the president for the task force for teaching and learning. Rosner responded that she helped organize the blood drive and was on the committee for those to voice their opinions. Many, she said, have grown to be student leaders.

When asked by BLACKWORLD, "What do you feel is the role of the Vice President and what do you plan to do if elected?" Rosner answered, that the Vice President is the "Chair of the Senate" and she wants to adopt a more specific agenda...she wants to adopt more speakers to different clubs and organizations. She said, "Communication is the key" and mentioned the radio station, 3TV, and the press on campus as her vehicle.

Laura Pace said that the Senate hasn't been working hard enough. She added that the Senate needs to become a place where students can be represented. "It's important", she said, "that students have the ability to get into school."

BLACKWORLD later asked, "What is your view on the present structure of Polity as compared to the new structure which failed on Referendum last week?" (Referendum, which was put on the ballot April 4th, would have changed the structure of Polity from the offices of President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Class Representatives to President, Executive VP, VP for Finance, VP for Community Relations, VP for Student Services, VP for Programming, VP for Student Advocacy, and VP for Academic Affairs. This was so more people could be held accountable for specific positions.) Rosner answered that the old structure does not allow students to be a part of the decision making whereas the new structure does. She was for the referendum as long as students were aware of what it was and what it was about, but she was against it as long as the students didn't. Pace answered that the new structure was so that students could understand what was happening within Polity, and is upset that it didn't pass. She said that she will push for it to pass.

When asked by a student from the floor, "Now that the budget cut went through, what is the biggest problem on campus and how would you solve it?" Rosner answered that reviewing proce-

dures within Polity to be run more effectively was important. Pace answered that the tuition increase is very important on her agenda because this will mean a drop in enrollment.

Another student asked, "Which steps did you take to inform students about Referendum?" Rosner said that she was out there talking to the students and found that there was not enough time to educate students properly and that's why she was not in favor of the Referendum to pass. Pace said that she let students know what was going on and informed them, but she said "Referendum was difficult to promote." "On election day" she added, "[she] let the students decide."

In closing, Rosner said that her aim was to focus efforts on reaching students, and her experience makes her "more than qualified". Pace ended by saying that she would "strive to educate students about how Polity works", and get more people involved.

The position of Polity Secretary was also on the agenda for the debate. The candidates David Shashoua and Lisa Mather agreed on their goals as elected official: encourage communication to all students.

Shashoua has been Polity Secretary for two years, and Mather stated that her qualification was being on the IFSC (Inter-Fraternity, Sorority, Council) board.

When asked about the ideas that they have as Polity Secretary the answer was the same: enhance public relations through a Newsletter. Shashoua added that he'd encourage advertisement through publications. Mather said that she'd help come up with some guidelines to encourage student involvement, even speak to people directly.

When BLACKWORLD asked the candidates about their feeling on diversity on campus, Shashoua said, "As a Jewish republican, I can identify...being a minority myself". Mather stated that she has dealt with under represented organizations by helping write proposals for events.

The Statesman also asked the candidates about Polity's role in athletics. Mather supports athletics and encourages school spirit. Shashoua said he doubts the benefits of this idea, because as a student he is more interested in academics.

When asked from a student on the floor their feelings toward the tuition hikes, Shashoua agrees with the hikes because he said, "everything needs to be cut". Mather's response, which gained applause from the audience was, "Tuition is a danger to students".

By: Joanne Johnson

# Book Review:

## The Adventures of Ibn Battuta

The Adventures of Ibn Battuta by Ross E. Dunn is a must-read for anyone studying the history of the religion of Islam. The book chronicles the travels of Abu 'Abdallah Ibn Battuta, a Muslim on his way to making the hajj in 1325. The fourteen chapters in the book are named for places or people that Battuta encountered during his journey. For instance, in the third chapter (The Mamluks) the reader is introduced to a warrior caste of people. The Mamluks were instrumental in saving the cities of the Nile from being overrun by the Mongol armies of Persia. Their acts of bravery were a contribution to the success of Egypt. Also, Egypt's beauty and the gifts of the Nile are extolled in this chapter. We are told, "...Cities and villages succeed one another along its banks without interruption and have no equal

in the inhabited world, nor is any river known whose basin is so intensely cultivated as that of the Nile." Through further reading we are shown the great contrast that the city of 'Aydhab was in relation to the great city of Cairo. The following quote, which appears in the third chapter, was excerpted from the rihla of Ibn Jubayr and it explains the conditions experienced in 'Aydhab: "It is enough for you of a place where everything is imported, even water, and this (because of its bitterness) is less agreeable than thirst. We had lived between air that melts the body and water that turns the stomach from appetite for food. Despite the drastic changes Battuta and other travelers went through, they all had to marvel at the great success of the political and social organization of the Mamluk government. Cairo's affluence in the 1320's was

a product of the Mamluk government.

My personal favorite chapter is the fourth (Mecca). I was intrigued by the strong determinations of the pilgrims to make hajj. Also, this chapter allowed me as a non-Muslim to understand the implications of the hajj and the occurrences once the pilgrims had reached their goal of Mecca and the Kaba. The Glorious Quran states, "As for those who believe in Allah, and hold fast unto Him, them he will cause to enter into his mercy and grace, and will guide them unto him by a straight road." As Battuta writes, the reader feels the passion with which the pilgrims believe this. In this chapter, as in most of the others, there are actual photographs of the places to which Battuta journeyed. Further insight is gained through this use of visual aids.

In classical Islam, brotherhood

and unity under God's rule are strongly stressed. Not since The Autobiography of Malcolm X (1964), has hajj been expressed so eloquently. The true meaning of Islam, and Allah's plan, shine through the images of pilgrims walking barefoot through hot sands to reach their final destination. We read: "Black Muslims and white Muslims, Sunnis and Shi'is all came to Mecca with the single declared purpose to fulfill a holy duty and to worship the One God." Hajj cannot be more simply explained to a non-Muslim than that. Dunn's clear, concise, pictures of the Muslim world and its events during the 14th century, make this book one that I recommend highly.

by Lauristine Gomes

## Maxine Freeman:

### An Inspirational Black Woman

It is thought by most of today's society that it is virtually impossible for an African American male to achieve a 4.0 average in college, and the chances for an African American female to achieve this is even less. Maxine Freeman, a very self-determined and ambitious black woman, is one of the many highly intelligent sisters that has proven society wrong.

Maxine Freeman is a third year student in the Bachelors of Social Work program, which falls under the major of Health Sciences, and plans to have a career in psycho therapy. The Health Science Center classes are not given on this side of campus and are only open to Health Science students. She also works 20 hours a week driving the campus school bus in order to support herself.

In order to achieve a 4.0 average last semester, Maxine had to endure five classes a week, each being 2 1/2 hours long. She took classes that con-

sisted of: human behavior in the social environment, political economy, and EST 194. A lot of her classes were challenging, because she made them challenging. Her EST

194 course was her most intimidating class because it made her feel incompetent. However, she overcame that and achieved a B+ in the class.

When asked how she manages her time between classes, studying, work, and socializing, Maxine answered that she schedules her fun and differentiates the times for school, work, and fun. Like any other person, she makes time to get her "groove on", but at the same time, she focuses on the reason why she is here, which is to complete her four years successfully. She said, "And I'm not here to get a husband, I'm here to get an education." Maxine makes sure that she studies amply. In addition to the notes that she takes in class, she takes notes as she studies from the text and translates the

lesson into her own words so as to understand better. Whatever she thoroughly understands in class is then applied to real life.

As a woman, her most difficult obstacle was what society says that she is supposed to be. It says that she is supposed to be in college and do alright and that the guys should do well. Her role in society as a black woman is to lead by example. Everyday of her life, she struggles to overcome the 3rd class citizenship that society has stereotyped her as a black woman. As a black woman, she feels that she is equal to, if not better than, men and has the ability to accomplish anything.

When questioned if she had any message for the students here at StonyBrook, Maxine said that "All women are beautiful, but black women are the most beautiful women in the world. As a black woman it is also important to look your best. You

have a responsibility to carry yourself with high regards because each and every one of you are representing us. The black women that are here owe it to their society to rise to the top. You have a responsibility to bring up the next generation. Take advantage of this opportunity and use it to make a difference. As a community, black women need to be more sister oriented. We have a responsibility to our mothers, our community, and ourselves to succeed."

Maxine also said that she would love to see BLACKWORLD feature someone in every issue in order to create an incentive for other black people. "Use it to uplift our community on this campus. Praise the athletes and the black professors as well. Instead of striving for best legs, shortest skirt or hoochie mama, strive for something positive."

by Alicia Beckford

**BLACKWORLD HAS GENERAL BODY MEETINGS MONDAYS FROM 2:30-3:30 AND THURSDAYS FROM 1:00-1:50 IN THE STUDENT UNION ROOM 072.**

# As a Muslim and a Woman

My father is a big black man rumored to be from Trinidad. I haven't seen much of it in him, in his tastes, in his foods, in his trade, in his politics, in his religion. My father I know only as a Muslim. His voice as cool as a 36 year old hip Daddy, his footsteps like tiny waterfalls approaching, his eyes like wise wild globes. I love this man, who taught himself to read Arabic by looking at it, who's never had to raise his voice to win an argument, this man who wears only traditional Sunni clothing, carries prayer beads if he carries anything, this man who smells like oils perfumed in the near future. My father is good and beautiful and wise. And he is a Muslim man.

When asked about my Islamic upbringing, my spiritual growth in ugly America, my personal travels and struggles against hatred of women and black people in my own and all communities, when asked about my life as a Muslim woman, I hear my father's footsteps and his speaking voice reciting one of the 40 Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (SAS). I see myself as a four year old sitting in a semicircle with my entire family. I cannot see any of my own flesh I am so perfectly covered. I am staring at my father. I have already begun preparing for war.

It must be recognized that to be a woman anywhere on this earth is to be a woman in search of liberation. Like racism, patriarchy and misogyny permeate every corner of the globe. And yet for me as well as numerous sisters, mothers and daughters in and of Islam, my liberation is within the context of worship. My one adversary is Satan, his followers, his deeds and influences. And my life's purpose and aspiration is to serve best my Creator.

It has often been stated and will, thus, sound familiar when I reiterate that Islam is not a religion but a way of life. It is hardly possible to live outside the realm of sin in America because of the quality and legacy of this land. Islam and

its dictates are our only guide. The religion determines codes of behavior between all groups in a society, between parents and children, husbands and wives, siblings, between Muslims and Non Muslims. It determines how one dresses, speaks, bathes, adorns, and carries oneself. It dictates the proper behaviors and manners in all places, the bedroom, in the bathroom, in the prayer room, at weddings, at funerals, and in all other areas one imagines. There are five pillars of Islam, and each Muslim is required to uphold them. They are Iman (faith), Salat (prayer), Ramadan (the holy month of fasting), Hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca) and Zakat (charity).

There are seven "Articles of Faith," aspects of belief that come under the heading Iman: belief in the oneness of Allah, belief in all of His books, belief in all of His angels, belief in all of His Prophets, belief in the Day of Resurrection, belief in the Day of Judgement, belief that the power of doing all actions (whether good or bad) proceeds from Allah but that we are responsible for our own actions. There are five ritual prayers daily that come under the heading of salat. During the Holy Month of Ramadan, over a 30 year period, the Holy Quran was revealed to the last prophet of Allah, Prophet Muhammad (SAS). It is during this month that all Muslims are required to fast from sunrise to sunset, daily. It is expected that during the lifespan of each

Muslim s/he will make a pilgrimage to the Holy City of Mecca, if s/he can afford to. And Zakat is charity given to the poor. It takes on many forms, and all Muslims are required to participate.

Everyone is born Muslim, that is, one who is a believer, one who submits to the will of Allah. Each person, like all things in nature, all things invented, are things in the spirit world. All things in existence submit to the will of God. But for all who do not know and practice Islam, it is required that they take

Shahadah, an oath declaring belief. At that point all past sins are forgiven, and the soul begins its new journey.

Based on the information given thus far, it should seem clear that some of the most valued qualities in Muslims are submission, humility, self-discipline, piety, peacefulness, modesty, courage, cleanliness and the ability to sacrifice of our most human desires in order to grow nearer to our Lord. Islam is then in near complete opposition to America, to the western world, its culture, its belief and value systems, its moreq, its ethos. Thus, it is impossible for women in Islam to define and determine their liberation in western feminist terms.

For many years of my own growing, my father was my arch rival. Not only does he stand, alongside my mother, as a pillar of Islam and a contributor to its preservation in our home and community, but he is a bold and brilliant Black man. His will is unmatched by most. His determination is fierce. His principles determine his and his family's lifestyle. As a child and adolescent female, there was no way and nowhere to show my face, to stick it out smiling and laughing and speaking. My role was predetermined by my religion and my role in the family. I am my father's eighth child and my mother's second. I am older than the six who follow me. Aliyyah had to do as was told to her by her Creator, her Prophets, her religion, her parents, her elders. It seemed a hard life, but it was in fact a womb. I was being nurtured, loved, nursed, prayed, spanked, fed into form and existence. I was being prepared for life in a society, in a world that can be considered, in my father's own words, "crappy at best." I was given both peace and principle, courage and honor, a modesty tempered only by boldness. I was given the only armor that guarantees spiritual survival and prosperity in both this world and the next. I was blessed with all this, as I've come to know in my maturity.

When women of the West question women in Islam, know this: One of six women in America will be raped in her lifetime. Rape is punishable by death in Islam. In America women's bodies are used as Capitalistic trinkets employed and exploited to sell everything from cars and beer to video games and toothpaste. As the carrier of the human womb, women's bodies are guarded at all times in Islam. In America, men mate with women and never care for the children. In Islam this can never happen. In America a man can have one wife and numerous mistresses. In Islam, a man who wants more than one woman must seek the permission of his wife and marry the other woman if it is granted and care for all children he fathers. What white women in America have deemed sexist in Islam is, in fact, protective. Where the hatred of women determines her treatment in America, it is the love and highly regarded position of the woman that determines how she is treated in Islam.

It has taken years of rebellion and inquiry into the western way of doing things for me to learn this. It has taken years of learning ugly American culture, both black and white, for me to remember and realize that when the angel visited me in the womb to tell me what my life would be, that I would be a Muslim woman, that he brought news of the most wonderful gift imaginable. As I have been told constantly, "Muslims are the best of mankind, evolved from mankind, for the guidance of mankind." This holds true for women as well.

When I go home these days and I watch my younger brothers and sisters going off to Islamic and Arabic class, when I pray with them and my younger brother leads Salat, when I sit and watch my father reading the Quran at the window, I am smiling and laughing all over my insides. I have been given this blessing. I have already begun preparing for the next life.

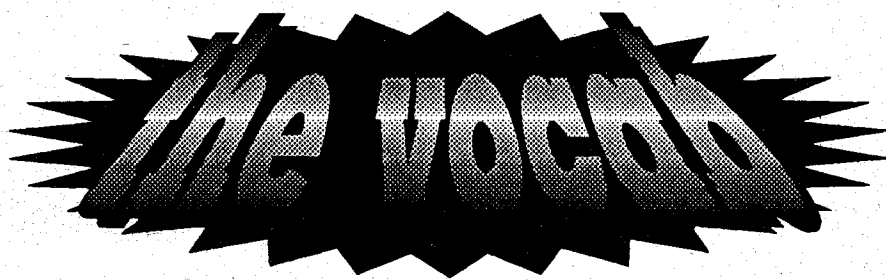
by Aliyyah Abdur'Rahman

## BLACK WOMEN'S WEEKEND

APRIL 27 - APRIL 30 COMMITTEE

MEETS TUESDAYS 9:30PM

UNITY CULTURAL CENTER



## "Ballots or Bullets?"

by Lauristine Gomes

So once again its election time at Stony Brook. The time when those who have little or nothing in the way of leadership, battle for all kinds of heavy-weight titles. Most of us in the Black community are grossly uninformed and highly uninterested in the process, or its candidates. Yet, we are bombarded with placards and voices shouting, "Vote! Vote! Vote!" At Stony Brook, like the rest of the country, voting ranges from the haphazard to the meticulously planned. But why is it that Blacks and Latinos remain such unaware least-likely-to-vote groups?

Black Americans were constitutionally banned from the electoral process and did not possess the right to vote. Long after this was "amended" in the Constitution, it was not put into practice. For example, Black people would be advised as to their polling station, only to arrive and realize that it had been moved. By the time they obtained any information on a "real" polling site, the site would be closed. In addition, the Black vote was often not put in or counted. Many Black people in the early voting era, had little or no reading skills. They needed instructions as to how to select their chosen candidate. Instead, they were duped into selecting a candidate other than the one they had wanted to endorse. These illegalities were carried out by white pollwatchers who lied to (or conned) Black voters into voting their way. Let us not forget the Grandfather Clause which made voting impossible for many Black would-be voters. These clauses were put into place by individual states and used for exclusion of the Black vote, on the basis of land ownership. Under the Clause, only those who had a grandfather that had owned land, were eligible to vote. The majority of Black people in America at that time were the descendants of slaves. And as we are well aware, slaves could hold no land. So, if your grandfather was a former slave (9 times out of 10 he was) then you could not vote. Pretty much that weeded out the Black vote again.

What is my point by this little history lesson? To shed light on the historical struggles Black people have had concerning voting, and to bring that into our present situation as Black non-voters. The attitude of most Black youth is one which views voting as an impotent device of the powerless. Real power, exists only in the barrels of high caliber automatic weapons. The power to decide if someone else's life will continue, or be extinguished like a flame on a cheap candle. In the fast paced, drive-by, no witness, chalk line, police state of vio-

lence that we live in, voting seems to take too long. What many fought years for has been reduced to the minutes it takes to fill out an absentee ballot, go to a polling site, or pencil in the bubbles on a Stony Brook election ballot. Minutes that are so valuable, we cannot "waste" them by using them to vote. Of course it is more productive to spend your time bullshitting with friends in the Union, than it is to step 50 feet over to the table and place your vote. The former is an easy activity and requires no real thought. But the latter, requires research and maybe attending a debate or two, at least enough to know who the faces are that belong to the names on the ballot. As a person who traveled all the way to Brooklyn to vote in the gubernatorial election, and who voted in the mayoral election through absentee ballot, I see no excuse for not voting. No one can say that they are in college and cannot read a ballot. Everyone has or has access to a television or newspapers. Though the information may not be objective and often is only partially truthful, it is our job to find out what the candidates are about.

For example, when EOP and financial aid receiving students found out about the proposed cuts to the State budget, everyone was shocked. The effect to higher education for historically disadvantaged groups was forecasted as devastating. Yet where were these people when it was time to vote? Black people have lost so much faith in politics that we have ceased to participate in it. But until guns and booklets on "How To Start A Black Power Revolution" are passed out in our communities, we had better start voting. We have been guilty of thinking that major politics do not affect us. However, federal, state, and local governments affect us directly. Take for example the flight of Haitian citizens to America's shores a few years ago. The President of the United States, who would not have won office without the Black vote, refused to let them enter the U.S. and turned them away. Over 1000 Haitians (who incidentally were Black) drowned in the waters between the U.S. and Haiti, due to Bill Clinton's heartless negligence. Still don't see it? Look at how hard we were on Dinkins, letting the media influence us into believing that he was not a good mayor. Granted he may have been a card-carrying member of the bourgeoisie, a tennis freak and all that. But what exactly did he do wrong? He fired some civil service workers, for one thing. He maintained the deficit that was left by Ed Koch. Then the Crown Heights problem sealed his fate with the white voters. Enter Rudolph Giuliani with his increase police (and brutality), lower

# To The Heart Of The Matter

By: T.N.H.

Hello, and welcome to another edition of BLACKWORLD, and also to another "To The Heart Of The Matter". I will be answering a readers question in this edition of my column. All of my readers know that I love to entertain viewer mail, because I prefer the interaction that I receive from responding to your questions. The letter I received read as follows: Dear T.N.H.

I feel kind of depressed. Spring is upon us, and everything is beautiful except for me. I really want a boyfriend this summer but I am heavy set. I tried to work on my weight during the winter, but got lazy. What can I do?

Sincerely,  
Hopeful

Dear Hopeful,

I would like to thank you for trusting me enough to write. I know it may have been difficult to write your feelings down to a complete stranger for some sort of resolution to your problem. However, I found your letter quite disturbing. There is an issue of self esteem that I would like to focus on before talking about boyfriends.

Hopeful, why do you feel that you have to change your appearance in anyway to get a man? If you think that your weight is inhibiting you from getting a man, how are others going to view you?

Everyone of us has parts of their bodies that they would like to improve, that goes for heavy people and skinny people. You may not be a hundred percent satisfied with your body right now,

spending and the crime rate, cut jobs and opportunities for students (and belittle their protests of the budget), let's attract big business to New York by giving tax cuts program. White conservatives and so-called liberals chomp at the bit. And all of a sudden Mayor Dinkins and Governor Cuomo were the worst thing to ever happen to New York. Let's change for the better with conservative-republican-white-males running the show! So Black people gave Dinkins up to his persecutors, and voted against him or not at all. Now the crying begins and everyone wants back their money and their aid.

By no means am I saying that the ballot is the be all to end all. It is not some miracle solution to long term problems. But right now, it is a tool that we must utilize. If you don't think the candidates are for you, then write in someone or yourself. We should be voting as a community block, a force to be reckoned with. Do you think that if we realized our power and used it, that politicians would continue to mistreat us? We must be accountable and hold others accountable for their deeds while in and out of office. 'Nuff said!

Now, I hear some people still

but realize it's your body.

Hopeful, don't view weight as your problem. I think the problem is with your view of yourself. Your body houses your spirit. Our spirits are intangible beings that make us individuals. From your letter it seems to me that your spirit may be broken. I think that instead of loving yourself, and uplifting your spirit to feel better about yourself, you want a man in your life to do that for you.

You may feel that if a man came into your life, everything will be okay. You want a man to tell you that you look good. You want a man to build your self esteem. But I am telling you right know that is not going to happen. If you stay in the same state of mind that you are in now, the man that you do find will feed on your insecurities about yourself, and use it to take advantage of you.

I have been in your shoes Hopeful, there was a time I would of done anything for a man. My self esteem was so low that I thought if I had a man, I would feel better about myself. My spirit was broken and my self esteem was very low. The man that did enter my life sensed my low self confidence and used it to get anything he wanted out of me.

Hopeful, my advice to you is to get a job this summer. Go out and have fun. Spend money on yourself. You may even want to modify your eating habits and exercise. Uplift your spirit, edify yourself to the point that you feel good about yourself at any weight. Therefore the next man in your life won't be a crutch to carry your self esteem.

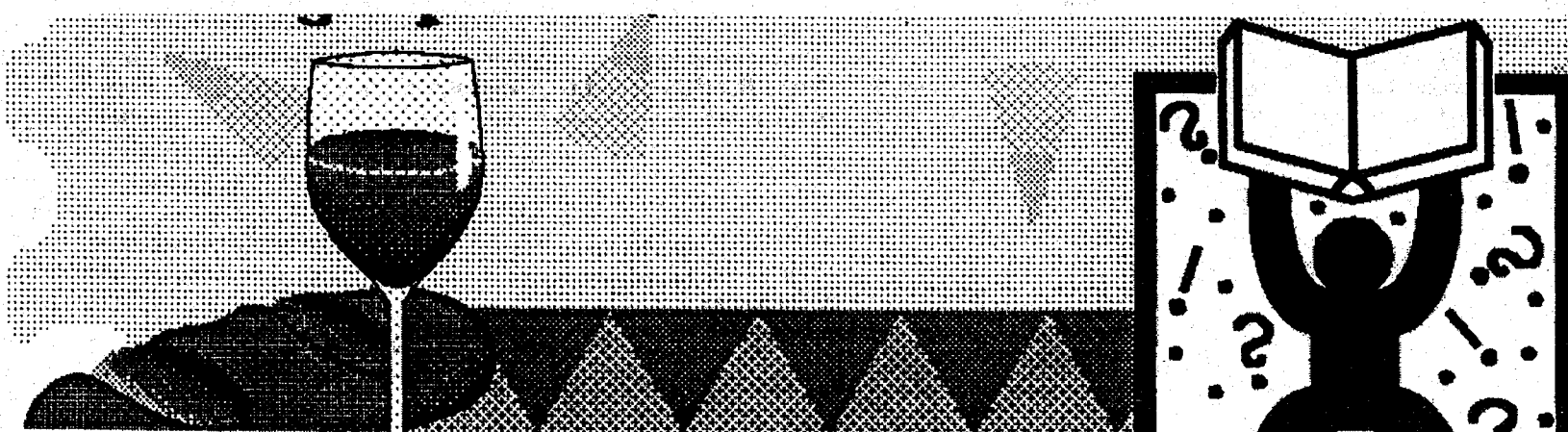
saying that they are not going to vote. Well, I pose this to those people. In any struggle there will be those who are seen, and those who remain unseen. Those who hold the pens, pull the pollbox levers, and those who send out the "official messages". There will also be those who set up plans for bombings, bank robberies to secure funds, and theft of information. The simplest task will be to pull a gun on whoever the movement must execute. However, true revolutionaries will be those who are involved in all aspects of the fight, involving free thought as well as armed warfare for freedom. Most of the footsoldiers will also be writers. Eldridge Cleaver, George Jackson, Sojourner Truth all wrote as well as did. Actions speak louder than words to those who are there, but the effect is often the same. You must take your travels as well as tell about them. Freedom is a process. Emancipation of your mind enough to vote is one step. To use force, perhaps killing someone, is another step. And the ultimate step towards freedom is the willingness to pay for it with your life. Prepare to vote if necessary. Prepare to kill if necessary. Prepare to die if necessary. But most of all, prepare for your freedom.

# DESTINY

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*The Destiny Awards Dinner will take place on Saturday, May 6th at 4:00pm in the Union. Come celebrate your achievement with Destiny, at a ceremony specifically geared towards the Afrikan and Native graduates!*

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## GRATITUDE

you know they always say  
behind every strong Black man  
is a strong Black woman  
But I'm not behind you  
my brother.  
I'm at your side.  
When people disrespect you  
hurt you,  
call you nigger,  
and turn you away  
I'm wiping your tears  
I'm soothing your pain  
You're my baby  
and I hold you  
until your troubles are lost  
within the comfort of my arms.  
Then you turn around.  
You call me a bitch  
you raise your hand to me  
you beat me down  
and then you walk over me  
What's left of me.  
Then you tell me  
you're sorry.

Sorry?

I don't want your damn apologies  
My beautiful yet disillusioned  
brother  
I've built up your pride  
You've torn mine down  
I've searched for a way  
to reach your soul  
You've searched for a way  
to get between my legs  
  
You see, no matter how hard you try  
To break my little body  
you can't break what's inside.  
Didn't you know  
I was a queen?  
I wore a crown, sat on my throne  
with my head cocked back.  
Dynamic, beautiful.  
Invincible.  
With my beauty all of the great Egyptian kings  
were left  
breathless.

And here you are.  
Who do you think you are, exactly?

I'm down right now  
I may be sore  
my face still wet with tears.  
But you'd better watch your back.  
You see, I don't need you to love me  
I love myself.  
I don't even need you to like me.  
Because you can't appreciate something  
you don't quite understand  
My beautiful, yet ignorant  
brother  
After all I've done for you  
I don't even want  
gratitude.  
If you searched deep enough  
you'd be able to see what I want from you  
What I need from you.  
What I demand from you.  
I'm a Black woman.  
Beautiful, strong, intelligent  
A Black woman.  
I expect nothing less  
than the respect I deserve  
Respect.  
If you can't provide that for me  
My beautiful Black man  
then you can't do a damn thing  
for me.

--- Lydia Ocasio

### Reflections on the Present Day

Its built up inside me  
Too much chaos on my TV  
It leaves me empty  
And feeling like the end is upon us quick

Like Tupac said its just  
"So much pain"  
I wanna bust from the stress  
And the strain

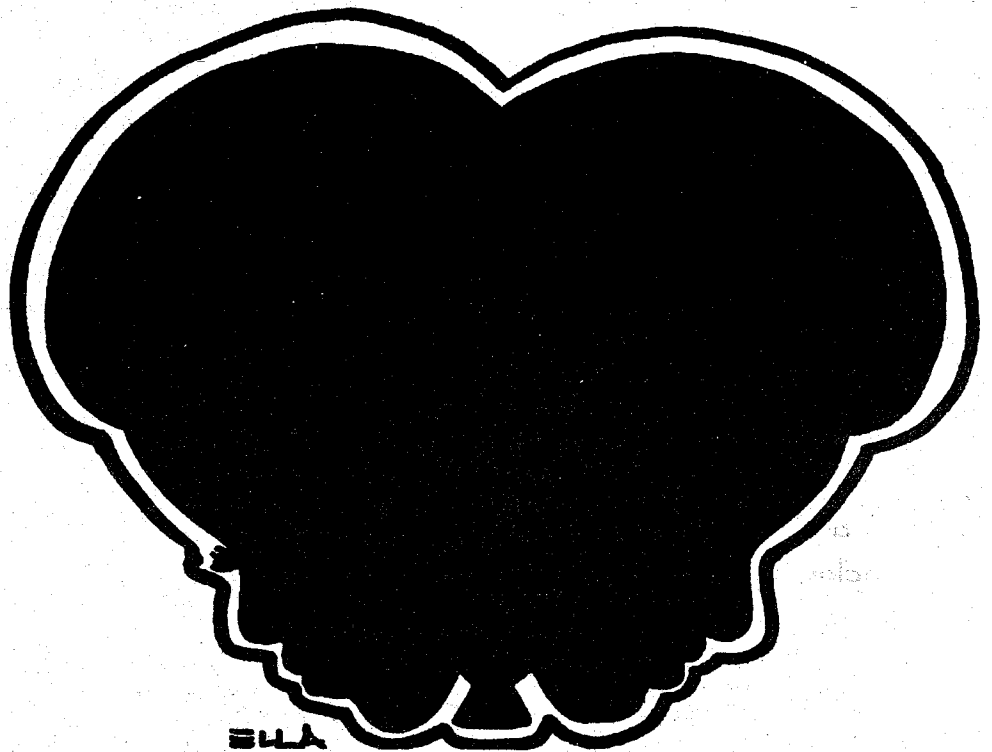
Forget about the drama  
These are the real life chains  
Around ya brain

When the main enemy  
is sending waves through  
your ear  
Or through your food thats micro

Killing ya ass like a psycho  
The human start of Armageddon  
Watch the news  
And see who got killed today  
Its the blues

And the soldiers is set to mount up  
Go buck, buck  
Cause we ready  
Fuck all the frontin, if the world is gonna end  
I might as well be in the liberation army

--- Lauristine Gomes



How to crawl

Life is a wonderful thing you know  
Like the cliché goes a bowl of  
cherries with the pits  
Not to mention the stems

I mean  
There are precious joys, lessons  
and experiences  
As sweet as cherry meat

Then  
Life could do the cruelest things to you  
things that not even the hardest pit  
of a man would have the heart to do

But, that's how it is right  
You take the good with the bad

Let's think this out  
You could have more good and less bad  
If you follow the rules

You see  
Mother Nature plays a harmony that we  
all must learn  
There is a rhythm to the chimes of  
Father Time that we all must listen to

The birds have learned the harmony  
The waves listen to the rhythm

Okay... So  
You get the harmony down packed  
And you start groovin to the rhythm

You know  
You're just walking along  
Admiring the sun and the trees  
And Life sticks out its foot and trips you

You lay down and cry  
The lay down and whimper  
And between the sobs  
You hear a tiny voice from within  
Surfacing above the tears

"Just put one hand in front of the other  
One knee in front of the other  
One mind in front of the other

"Crawl please  
Just crawl on your hands and knees  
Because God gave it all to you to use

"When you get the stamina  
Break into a light jog towards  
your dreams

"When you get the breath, Run  
Run fast towards the sunshine

So you're running and running  
And doing so good  
Head so high, you overlook that branch

Slowly, you raise your head from the  
familiar sand  
stare into blue-black clouds  
blurred by your tears  
WHY!!

My child  
Remember how to crawl on your hands and knees  
I gave it all to you to use

My child  
The birds sing in the sun and the rain

--- LaKeesha Tyler

If you were to ask me, "are you Black?"  
I would say, "there is no doubt in that,"  
But that curly haired, light skin exterior?  
Does not reveal my Blackest interior.  
A mixed child I am, with European mother and Southern "Roots" dad,  
I know my history for whose treasures, "how is it dad, that you are  
Blackest of black, with an English name Hayes?"  
If flat feet and full lips do not reveal,  
Then where is my Blackness which I refuse to conceal?  
"Nigger" they shouted, silence I bawled,  
For a Russian, German, African American, my  
Blackness is a fearsome Niahbingi call.  
Poised proud on my podium of Blackness,  
The struggle I am challenged with is everyday reenacted.  
To some my ideas and culture are just a bluff,  
Coarse hair and ebony skin, or "you're not black enough."  
This with steel sharp words I strongly disavow,  
If I were King of Blackness, brown, light, dark,  
All of ya'll would bow!

--- Khalil Hayes

Whapsoodies



# **BLACKWORLD presents:**

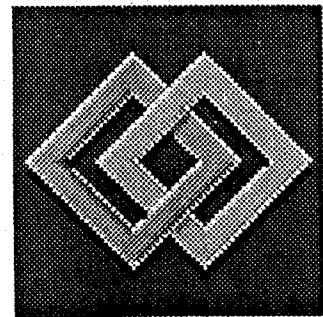
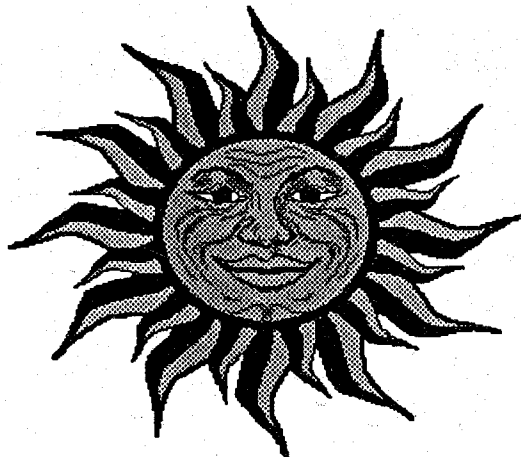
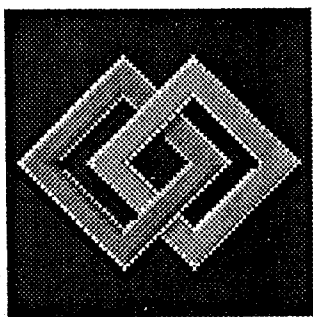
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# Quotable

*The act of registering to vote does several things. It marks the beginning of political modernization by broadening the base of participation. It also does something the existentialists talk about: it gives one a sense of being. the black man that goes to register is saying to the white man, "No." he is saying: "You have said that I cannot vote. You have said that this is my place. This is where I should remain. You have contained me and I am saying 'No' to your containment. I am stepping out of bounds. I am saying: 'No' to you and thereby I am creating a better life for myself. I am resisting someone who has contained me." That is what the first act does the black person begins to live. He begins to create his own existence when he says "No" to someone who contains him. But obviously this is not enough*

*excerpt from Black Power: The Politics of Liberation  
by Kwame Ture and Charles V. Hamilton*

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