

BLACKWORLD

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ONE NATION

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BLACKWORLD

**"KNOW
THYSELF"**LAURISTINE GOMES
Editor-in-ChiefCAREY GRAY
Managing EditorJACKIE HOWELL
Business ManagerMIKE PHILLIPS
Layout EditorKHALIL HAYES
JOANNE JOHNSON
Copy EditorsDANIEL L. HARTLEY
Creative Arts EditorLISA SAMUDA
SecretaryDOROTHY JACKSON
Office Manager

CONTRIBUTING STAFF

AMIRI BARAKA
DWIGHT R. BROWN
PROF. ELOF CARLSON
HEATHER MCPHILLIP
YOLANDA A. HEWITT
JULIE-ANN RODGERS
ANITRA SIMS
SUDANI
VICKI SYLVAIN
ANTOINETTE THOMAS
ANAHEATA

Cover Design: JAMES S.

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**WE ARE
ONE
NATION!**

editorial

We would first like to welcome everyone back from spring break and hope that it was a restful and revitalizing week. The end of spring break marks the beginning of the second half of the semester. This is the home stretch of the school year. Finals week will be here before you know it, so start preparing now.

March is not only the month of spring break, more importantly it is the month of the woman. This month is set aside for us to pay tribute to the courageous, beautiful, and outstanding accomplishments of women. The role of women in society is often viewed as being inferior to males. They say a good man always has a good woman behind him. The black woman has shown that not only does she stand next to her man, she often succeeds without him. In an era where black women are excelling and achieving at higher rates than black men, they still are not given the respect they deserve. Whether it is the courage of a single mother breaking her back to make ends meet, the beauty of giving birth to a black child, or the accomplishments of black women in fields dominated by white males (business, politics etc.), they represent the backbone and strength of the black community.

Since the times of slavery, it seems that black women have had to overcome more than any other group. Black men were degraded and disgraced in slavery, but black women were abused and forced to be sexual concubines. They were beaten and then raped. It's hard to imagine being forced to separate from my own mother at the age of five. But that is exactly what happened during slavery. Each year, black women would have children knowing that in a few short years their children would be ripped from their lives. With their pride and dignity taken away, black women still rose to great heights during the quest for freedom.

The alarming thing about our present day society is, that people have adopted many of the slavemaster's views towards black women. In the decade of the woman, black women are viewed as sexual objects (bitches and hoes). It's apparent that as black men, we really do not understand how important our women are to the existence of our race. The disrespectful treatment that some brothers

give to their women also has a lot to do with the past and present plight of the black man. However, that is no reason to leave your child fatherless or leave your woman battered and bruised.

During the hundreds of years that we have been residents of this country, black women have served as the spirit and the hope of a race of people who have been persecuted from day one. When the black man was whipped because he worked too slow in the fields, it was the black woman who healed the lashes on his back. When his pride is taken away from him on a daily basis, because society views him as only a criminal, it is the black women who soothes his shattered ego. We run to you when we are in trouble and take out our frustrations on you when we are angry. We take for granted the things that are most precious. So, instead of saying that we are sorry for all the suffering black women have endured, we should simply say thank you. In the immortal words of Tupac Shakur, "You are appreciated."

by Carey Gray
Managing Editor

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WOMANCHILD

I am well aware of the fact that mass media plays an enormous role in teaching and perpetuating gender roles in our society, but it was only when I became a critical thinker that I saw how my

gender was also constructed in my private space. As a result of thinking uncritically, I failed to see how powers of domination produce itself in different ways, employing similar strategies of

control. It was only when I began to think critically where gender is concerned, that I came to an awareness that there was no absolute difference between how my gender, your gender, our gender was constructed in our private space to that of my (our) public space. My family along with mass media was a great force in constructing, perpetuating, and reinforcing appropriate feminine (passive) behaviors in me as a child.

I learned at an early age that there is a "distinction between cultural appropriation and appreciation". As a child I learned that it was appropriate for a man to be dominant, aggressive, strong and outspoken and a woman to be caring, nurturing, loving, sensual, and let's not dare forget passive. But if the table was to turn and woman had the characteristics of "man", it would not be seen as appropriate, nor would it be appreciated. In my family we were forced to become "feminine" girls or "masculine" boys. Being a boy meant learning to mask one's feeling and to stand one's ground and fight back. As a girl I learned to obey, to be quiet, to clean, and recognize that I had no ground to stand on. This, however, was very confusing to me as a child because the women that were dictating these ways of how to live and how to act were the total opposite of what they were telling me was appropriate behavior for a woman. I was just like them—strong, aggressive, tough, and feisty, yet they insisted on suppressing my will to be like them, to be me.

As a black woman I grew up in a household of fussing and meddling women (grandmother, aunts, cousins, sister) who were the strong hold of our family. Their voices were powerful (in my eyes) making threats, making demands, giving orders or just fussing for the hell of it. It was these women especially my grandmother that established the everyday rules of "rights" and "wrongs." From these women I learned as a child not to "voice my voice". Meaning, stay out of 'grown folks talks'. I learned not to talk back to authority figures. I learned not to stare "grown folks" in the eyes, especially the men. I also remember being punished for fighting back my male cousins and beating the shit out of them. I remember being punished for having "evil eyes" because of the hard intense looks I would give grown-ups. I, though cannot remember the males in our family being punished for fighting back, staring in the eyes of authority figure, or for speaking when not spoken to. They were instead

applauded for these actions with a pat on the back because this was viewed as a gesture of "manliness"; he was on his way of becoming a "real man." As a child I was puzzled by the fact that I received the same negative vibes from my female and male relatives. I now realize that my attitude and looks were suppressed because they were confrontational challenges to authority: a gesture of power, strength and resistance. This, however was inappropriate behavior for a girl, female, or woman. I was instead expected to be submissive, subordinate, timid, shy, and gentle. I was expected not to talk back to or question authority figures, which I frequently did. In rationalizing my female relatives responses to my lash back personality, I now believe that they were more or less echoing to me what was said to them as a child by their parent.

Mass media is a system of knowledge to its viewing, listening, and reading audience. It is a system of power that produces and maintains the status quo of patriarchal dominance and biased sexist stereotypes of women. It is used as a strategy to keep women at a lesser level than men, to reaffirm constantly in our minds that a man is superior and women are inferior. Mass media's representations of women have been a major devaluing force in general, but for the purpose of this paper I will emphasize its belittling of women with "disrespect" to our "culturally constructed" passive, submissive character. In my opinion, to sit down and watch mainstream sitcoms and movies, is to engage in the politics of America that demean and devalue women. "Women are the carrier of a nation", yet we are not seen in strong roles (business or political) on television. Even if we are depicted in a power play role, we are portrayed as "sassy" business women, whose claim to fame is not because of their strength, hard work or resourcefulness, but, because of their ability to subdue men with their sexuality, and their womanish charm. If, though, a woman has a faint bit of aggressiveness in her, she is labeled as a 'ball's breaker'. Women are over all and primarily portrayed as a timid, nurturing, passive, sensual "womanchild" in mass media. Mass media allows women to appear one dimensional in focus and perspective. Where gender is concerned we are one or the other, a professional woman or a mother. We are either shy, passive, subordinate "homesy" women; or aggressive, bossy, have no care, "bitchy"

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NEWS BRIEFS

LOCAL

A LOOK AT THE FUTURE: CITY POPULATION TRENDS

According to a study released by the Department of City Planning on Tuesday, the number of whites living in New York city will continue to shrink, falling to less than 35 percent by the year 2000 (down from 43 percent in 1990).

The study projects that by the year 2000 the population is likely to be 29 percent Latino, 26 percent Black and 10 percent Asian and other, (1990 figures being 25.2 percent Black, 24.4 percent Latino and 8 percent Asian and other).

Other findings in the report project that:

Queens is anticipated to be 34 percent white (down from nearly 50 percent in 1990), while other population groups increase.

Even though the population of whites will greatly decrease, whites will continue to remain a majority in Staten Island.

LOCAL

POLICE ABUSED POWER: CITY PAYS MILLIONS

In August 1992, Carlton Brown, a van driver from Jamaica, was allegedly arrested for driving with a suspended license while he stopped for gas at a Utica avenue gas station in Brooklyn. When he was arrested his hands were cuffed behind him, and he was shoved into the patrol car. According to witnesses, Brown was in perfectly good health when he was arrested. He is now crippled and resides at the Goldwater Memorial Hospital as a permanent patient.

The arresting officers Donald Alesi and Steven Zimmerman were both acquitted of any wrong doing by the courts, who believed that Brown resisted arrest, became violent and hit his own head on the doors of the precinct. However, when Brown was brought to the pre-

cinct, he was shoved head first through the doors which is what caused his injury.

Brown, now a quadriplegic, has won \$16.6 million from the city, despite of the acquittal of the police.

WORLD

THOUSANDS FLEE FIGHTING IN BURUNDI CAPITAL

Thousands of terrified residents fled Bujumbura, the capital of Burundi, to escape clashes between the Hutu and the Tutsi. Burundi has been in turmoil since 1993, when the renegade Tutsi soldiers murdered Melchior Ndadaye, the first democratically elected President of the country, which has an 85% Hutu population.

The devastation from last Friday's fighting has been the worst this month, in which possibly hundreds were killed. Houses belonging to Hutu appeared to have been set ablaze by Tutsi militias. Also set on fire was the party headquarters of the Hutu-led governing Front for Democracy.

WORLD

ANGRY CITIZENS IN VENEZUELA

People in the marginalized areas of Caracas have begun to take the law into their own hands in the face of a rising crime wave which Venezuelan authorities have failed to subdue.

On March 5, Jose Figueroa, a young gang member was beaten to death by an angry crowd and his body hanged over a sewage outlet.

Three other delinquents have been killed in this was so far this year and the National Guard intervened in another case where four criminals had been rounded up by an angry crowd.

A STEP UP FOR TIME WARNER, INC.

Time Warner Inc. took a great step in October of 1994. Richard Parsons, an African American, was named president of the communications empire. The position was offered to him by the CEO of the company, Gerald Levin. With his acceptance of this offer, Parson became the most powerful African American in US. business. We are all proud of our brother's success.

Parsons was born in Brooklyn, NY. He attended the University of Hawaii. He also attended the Albany Law School, where he graduated as valedictorian. Parsons also received the highest score on the New York State bar exam.

Before joining the team at Time Warner, Parsons worked for various other institutions. He was a partner in the law firm of Patterson, Belknap, Webb & Tyler. There, he worked directly with Dime Savings Bank. First he was their counselor, and later he became the CEO of the company. The bank was in a lot of trouble. The organization was in a lot of debt. Parsons put the bank back on its

feet. He had to make many changes but the job was done. He used various strategic methods to help save the bank. Parsons comments, "Firing people proved to be the toughest thing about the corporate world. I literally cried along with some of them." When Dime was finally back on its feet, it was able to merge with Anchor's Savings Bank. Together the two institutions formed one of the largest banking establishments.

Richard Parsons has also served as a legal counsel to Governor Nelson Rockefeller. In Washington, Parsons became the associate director of the Domestic Council under President Gerald R. Ford.

Parsons is described as being cool, contained, and very self-confident. Harry Albright, co-worker of Parsons in Washington, said, "He appears to be easygoing and relaxed, but if he has to, he can be tough." This gives a perfect description of a good boss. Someone that is serious, but not too rigid. Parsons is very proud of his new position. He is

also happy people are discussing his great qualifications to perform his new job. The media isn't focusing on the fact that he is a black man in a high position. He says, "This hasn't been played as a Jackie Robinson kind of thing and I'm grateful for that. I'm glad that it's merit that people are talking about."

Time Warner, Inc. is one of the entertainment and communication empires of the United States. Although you may not be familiar with the name of the company itself, you should be able to recognize the companies that work under Time Warner. For example, the Home Box Office (HBO), the Warner Brothers network (the WB on channel 11), and Cinemax. On the publishing end of Time Warner, we have Sports Illustrated, Time Magazine, People Magazine, Fortune, and Life. Day after day we hear the music of individuals as Madonna, artist formerly known as Prince, En Vogue, and many others. Time Warner is also responsible for the success of these stars and many more. The company itself is grow-

ing tremendously.

Parsons works more on the financial end of the business. Once again, he is working towards helping Time Warner stand on solid ground financially. Levin, trusts that Parson will do a great job. Humbly, Parsons says, "My intent is to learn the subject matter and to manage a portfolio of businesses, not to know those businesses better than the people who have been there for years." Although Parsons hasn't worked directly with the entertainment industry, he is willing to learn and do his best at the job he was hired to perform.

Parsons certainly sets a great example for many out there. With much hard work and perseverance we too can succeed. This brother has worked a great deal to get where he is now. Yes, corporate America has come a long way, but the problem's African-Americans are challenged with have not yet been completely overcome.

by Vicki Sylvain

BODYISM

As black women living in a white male dominated society, such as America, we will eventually at some point in our life feel as if we possess an inferior body. I did not escape from this constructed ideology that my blackness was not "good" enough.

The ways in which I have been hard on my self or felt less than with respect to my own body as been feelings of self-loathing not with weight gain or weight lost, but with my blackness my Afro centric physique. My black body (skin, shape and color) was just not "good" enough in my eyes. It was not considered as beautiful in our society, therefore I was not beautiful. My lips are full and not thin. My nose is "flat" and not "straight." My hair is kinky and natural. And my butt....my butt was just too damn big, I believed (especially for my weight and height.) Everything on my body was just too damn much a representative of my African heritage. I wanted so desperately to looked less like my grandmother, mother, sister, cousins, aunts etc. and more like a particular white model, actress, or singer. Only then would I be beautiful.

The effects and personal costs that these feelings had on my life have been one of insecurity and self-loathing. I was suffering from a Eurocentric "ideology (idiot ideology)" as my mother would say. I was fundamentally convinced that straight hair was more beautiful than curly! kinky! natural hair. I was convinced that lighter skin makes one more valuable and worthy. I was convinced that a flat ass, a straighter nose,

and thinner lips would make me more worthy and valuable. With the self acknowledgment that I did not possess these physical features, I felt an inner hate, pain, and rage. I desperately wanted to replace my blackness with whiteness. Because I did not possess the body of a Eurocentric woman, the "ideal," "modeled" body, the body that signifies the epitome of beauty. I felt as if I possessed an inferior body, a load, a baggage that was imposed on my being without my consent. I hated, hated, hated the fact that I possessed a stigmatized body, an undesired differentness. I hated the fact that I had the body of a black woman. As a result of this self-loathing I was unable to look at my body and feel such things as pride, satisfaction, comfort, and above all an appreciation for my black body, its skin, color, and shape. I was unable to find love, joy or inner peace with my physique.

I now look back at the past (my adolescent years) and realize that the image, perception, self-loathing and fucked up self-concept that I adopted of my body was not the result of what I was told as a child through a generational legacy, but instead this @#* bodyism I had of myself was a constructed mission of a white patriarchal dominated society that emphasize my differentness in demeaning, and devaluing depiction's. My African features were played up and out as less than and not good enough as compared to the body of a white woman. I will echo a poem by Nikki Giovanni that exemplifies this point, that is, the degrading picture painted of the black women's

body in our culture:

...it's sex object if you're pretty and no love or love and no sex if your fat get back fat black woman be a mother grandmother strong thing but not woman games woman romantic woman love needer man seeker dick eater sweat getter fuck needing love seeking woman..... This "Women Poem" describes not only the historical perception and representation of black women's body in this country but it also exemplifies how it has been viewed then and now, specifically in relation to mass media. As the primary argument in this paper is about constructed bodyism by our culture this poem shed light on how our bodies are not celebrated, praised or marveled about by mass media. Mass media usually portrays our blackness in stereotypical images or caricatures. Our bodies only gain attention in mass media when it is synonymous with accessibility and availability, when it is synonymous with sexual deviance. Our body's shape and color are not depicted or considered as the epitome of beauty. Our "big" lips, nose, butt, thighs and hips are not idealized. We are not placed on a pedestal for our African features or our differentness. Our bodies are further objectified by mass media not looking at us as whole human beings, but as parts, only noticing certain parts. For example, mass media seem to have a fascination (although in denial) with black women's buttocks. This however is not an appreciation for our culturally difference, but instead it denotes disgust for our "big butt."

In summary mass media's propaganda against my blackness transformed me into an individual in my adolescent years that felt great self-loathing for having African features. This was the result of a undemocratic country that allows racist comedies on television that portray another race's differentness as a mark of shame. We live in a society where there is a distinct double standard of body attractiveness where gender race is concerned. It is more accepted in our culture for a man to be "over weight" than it is for a woman. An "over weight" man is seen as a hearty eater or a man with a wife that is a great cook. But on the flip side an "overweight" woman is viewed as a woman without self control and self discipline and not to the unattainable beauty standard that is imposed on her living. She is instead stigmatized as an "obese" woman. She is condemned and labeled as a deviant because she doesn't meet the air brush, tall slender, blue eyes, blonde hair, pinch waist "ideal" women image that glaze the front pages of "VOGUE" and other magazines. This however is the constructed effort, mission of a white male dominated society that brain wash us so that we fail to recognize, fail to see (as I did) that beauty standard is a cultural phenomena that change with the time in our society and that beauty standards are different across cultures. So, don't hate me because of my blackness ,but, instead love and cherish me because I'M BEAUTIFUL GODDAMN IT!

by Yolanda A. Hewitt

This Way for Black Empowerment

The Death Penalty Can't Stop Violent Crime.

The American People Can.



Last week New York State Governor George Pataki signed a death penalty bill, restoring capital punishment after nearly 20 years. This was Governor Pataki's big campaign promise—to make New York tougher on crime by making the most heinous murders punishable by death.

It's certainly true that more and more people—white and Black—have come to believe that the death penalty could be an effective measure in combat-

ing crime. Even though the statistics prove that the death penalty is in no way a deterrent, it has become more popular as a "solution". Why? In my view, it is because most people feel powerless in the face of rising crime and violence, and the death penalty seems like something to do that might make a difference. It isn't. But the politicians have deftly capitalized on the public's fear and anger at being so impotent. Many believe support for the death penalty was a key to Pataki's victory over Mario Cuomo in New York. And on a national level, the Democrat-sponsored Clinton Crime Bill, which passed last year with Republican support, identified 60 new crimes for which Americans could be executed. Both parties use the death penalty issue as a political football, but have no real solutions for stopping crime and violence or for changing the conditions which produce them.

While I am completely sympathetic to the lack of trust in liberal solutions (prison rehabilitation has been one

of the most monumental social policy failures of this century), I do not believe that capital punishment is the answer. I have always opposed the death penalty and still do. Study after study proves conclusively that capital punishment does not act as a deterrent to murder or any other violent crime. But the death penalty does have a huge impact on the Black community. Thanks to racist nature of the American judicial system, no white person has ever been executed for killing a Black person. Moreover, a disproportionately high number of those on Death Row are men of color. In many ways the African American community was condemned to death long ago. Endemic poverty, unemployment, poor education, drugs and the day-to-day abuse and violence of racism are built into American society.

Ironically, the rise of violent crime and the increased popularity of the death penalty share a similar cause: powerlessness. Unable to make a life for

themselves due economic, social and/or psychological instability, and powerless to change these conditions, some turn to violent crimes. Unable to get the government to set the country on a developmental path, and powerless to change the government, more and more Americans support non-solutions like the death penalty.

The serious question in dealing with the pervasive problem of violent crime is how to get the country on a developmental path—economically, socially, psychologically and culturally. The popularity of the death penalty, and the willingness of politicians of both parties to put it forth as a genuine solution in spite of the fact that it isn't, is just one more indicator that under the present political arrangements, there is no such path to development. You and I and other ordinary Americans are going to have to create it. And we're going to have to restructure the political arrangement in order to do so.

by: Lenora Fulani

The Month of Ramadan

by Anaheata

Ramadan is the month in the Islamic calendar when all Muslims are required to fast the entire month. Every Muslim that hits puberty has to fast. Girls start fasting at about the age of 9 and boys start at the age of 14.

I grew up in an Islamic environment, and now that I'm living in the United States I can see how different the month of Ramadan is. In Kuwait, during Ramadan, every day's routine used to change for the whole month. You could see the change in the market places. In the day time all the restaurants were closed, but at night when it was time to eat, all the restaurants were open and you could smell the food everywhere. Most people used to close their businesses at Iftar time (the time when sun sets) which is around six PM and they would go home to pray and eat. We would prepare a great meal and after we ate, those who had stores went back until midnight. That was the best time for me and my family to go shopping as it was for almost every one else. The stores and the market places were open until midnight, as opposed to nine o'clock when it wasn't Ramadan. On weekends usually, a few friends and families would get together for Iftar and stay up and eat and talk. This would last until four in the morning, when it was time for Sahar (the time before sun rise that Muslims get up and eat before fasting). Then every one would go back home and sleep until late the next morning.

I missed all of that when I came here. Ramadan in the U.S. is the same as any other day. There is no change in routine unlike in Kuwait, where every one was following the same pattern.

The next section is excerpted by permission, from The Vision of Islam, written by Sachiko Murata and William C. Chittick.

The Fourth Pillar: Fasting

The fourth pillar is "to fast during the month of Ramadan." Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. Since this is a lunar calendar of 355 days, each month lasts twenty-nine or thirty days. For a month to be considered as having twenty-nine and not thirty days, the new crescent moon must have been sighted. This helps to explain why day begins at sundown: the new moon is seen at sunset on the western horizon, and then it sets. If it is cloudy and people have to depend upon calculation to decide if the new month has begun or not, the month is counted as lasting thirty days.

The month of Ramadan begins when the new crescent moon is sighted, or when the previous month reaches thirty days. Fasting begins at dawn the next morning. Dawn is defined as the time when the earliest light shows on the eastern horizon, or the time when one can see the difference between a black and a white piece of string by natural light. This is the time of the morning called adhan, about an hour and a half before

sunrise. The fast comes to an end when the sun sets; that is, when the evening adhan is sounded.

Fasting consists of refraining from eating, drinking, smoking, and sexual activity. All Muslims who have reached the age of puberty are required to fast, although there are several valid excuses for not fasting, such as illness and travel, and, while pregnant or menstruating. Missed fasting needs to be made up at another time, at the discretion of the person.

Ramadan is a time of heightened attention to the rules of proper conduct. For example, the Prophet said, "Five things break the fast of the faster—lying, backbiting, slander, ungodly oaths, and looking with passion. In other words, at a time when certain normally permitted acts are forbidden, acts that are always forbidden also ruin a person's fast.

The daylight hours in June are long in the northern hemisphere and short in the southern hemisphere. A solar month when every Muslim in the world would fast the same amount of time cannot be found—especially when one remembers that the pre-Islamic Arab solar calendar was observed by adding an extra month every three years to the lunar calendar, similar to what is done with the Jewish calendar. But the use of the lunar calendar demands that all Muslims who have fasted for a period of thirty-three years will have fasted for the same amount of time, no matter where they

live.

Because of the lunar calendar, Ramadan moves forward in the solar calendar about eleven days every year. Thus in the year 1998 C.E., the first day of Ramadan corresponds to December 20 (give or take a day); in 1999, to December 9; in 2000 to November 28; and so on.) People living in northern latitudes who will be fasting for only eight or nine hours a day during December, will be fasting for seventeen or eighteen hours a day after seventeen years when Ramadan comes in June. Thus most people's lives follow a cycle regulated by Ramadan, where fasting becomes easier and then more difficult.

Like the other pillars, fasting has a strong social component. When the pattern of individual life changes, the effects are multiplied in society. In a traditional Islamic community, all places of eating are closed during the daylight hours of Ramadan. People usually have a good-sized meal just before the beginning of the fast in the early morning. Depending on the time of the year and their own habits, they may then stay awake or go back to sleep after saying their morning salat. For the rest of the day they go about their activities more or less as usual.

Those who have not experienced the fast of Ramadan may think it is easy to skip breakfast and lunch, but what about that morning cup of coffee? Even a sip of water makes a difference

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"Auction Block Flashbacks"

by Lauristine Gomes

Here I am on just another Thursday night, working SPA Security. I'm supervisor for an event taking place in the Bi-level. Aside from the event title and expected amount of patrons, I don't know what to expect. I've never worked an Alpha Phi Alpha strip show before, so I'm just waiting to see what goes on. How bad could it be? It's just entertainment, right? As I place my crew of workers at their posts inside the Bi-level, I get different reactions. This person wants to be closer to the dance floor, that person closer to the DJ. After the initial chatter, the room is filled with only the sounds of DJ Smooth C.

The show and party are scheduled to last from 10:00 pm till 1:00 am. Slowly but surely, the door begins to get crowded. Only female faces are seen, mostly all of them black. 4 or 5 Caucasian and Asian faces mingle in the crowd. Not until 12:30am, is the show about to start. The club's contact person asks for an extension of half an hour, due to the late start. Reluctantly, the other supervisor and myself grant the extension. Thursday is girl's night out, and my party-animal comrades will be waiting for me at 1:00 am in the Union. Oh well, such is the life of a Security supervisor.

The set up of the show is such that there is no stage. The strippers will do their thing in the middle of the crowd, who standing are in a circle. The audience is filled with familiar faces, and represents all sectors of black women at Stony Brook. The black-nationalism-talking-headwrap-wearing lot is here. Also in attendance are many sorority members. The-I-don't-see-nothing-wrong-with-a-little-bump-and-grind type is here. Basically, everyone here is your average Stony Brook type. The rest of the crowd is a mix of the curious, and the regular-strip-club-goers. Everyone is alike in their reaction to the strippers. Applause and screams are heard from all representatives of whatever clique.

The stripper who is the most well received is an S-curl wearing Keith Sweat look-a-like. He has stripped down and is wearing only a red bikini brief, with a smile. The crowd likes him and he likes (well, sort of) them. That is, he likes to thrill them with his acrobatic displays of sexuality. Most of the women are inspecting him as if he is a piece of property-to-be on an slave auction block. Those who are brave enough to be pulled

onto the show floor, are in for a surprise. Some are bent over in a backshot position and humped to the music. Many are instructed to lay on the floor, as they willingly do. Then, the stripper proceeds to simulate his favorite sexual positions (from lizard lap to foot-on-shoulder). One patron is very shocked when her turn on the floor comes. She is laying on the floor and suddenly the stripper runs and jumps into a split. He lands over her face, still in split form. She cringes with embarrassment and possibly pleasure, as his testicles slap her forehead. Countless porno-flick-type displays are given. I'm very surprised at how many so-called-ladies are allowing him to slap their rumps. I mean, I know its all in fun but, come on! The sound of rump-slapping fun is working the crowd into a frenzy. Once on the floor, some women look like they are having second thoughts. Embarrassed or not, they continue to dance with and be rubbed on, by the stripper.

Adina Howard's "Freak in Me" is pumping through the speakers. And I just can't close my mouth or eyes back into their normal places. My amazement refuses to let me. Don't they see anything wrong here? C'mon ladies, think about it! If your man tried to lay you down on a cold, dirty floor would you allow him to? If he grabbed you forcefully and proceeded to twist you like a pretzel, how would you feel? Does your boyfriend slap your ass during sex, as though you are a thoroughbred he is riding? If the answer to these questions is yes, then maybe I can understand this "show". But, if you are the same woman who wants to shoot a man for brushing your booty in a party- then what's up? How come some strange stripper can make you turn into a replica of one in a million video-ho's? You know, the same ones we condemn for their actions on national television? Well, at least they are being paid! The women here tonight are in it for fun, regardless of the implications. Never mind the way they act here, right? Its only the dark, dark Bi-level.

No one sees anything wrong here except me. If you wanna be a freak-in-da-mornin' type, that's cool. But have some morals and respect for yourself. You can have good sex that is safe from STD's and emotional pain, and still be a "freak". If you are a "freak-for-your-man-behind-closed-doors", that's one thing. But the public displays of cheap

New Column:

Life Line

by Prof. Elof Carlson

In North America the birth rate for twins is slightly higher for African Americans than it is for other Americans. Why is this so? Twins come in two forms — identical (the fancy word is monozygotic) and fraternal (dizygotic to professionals). Identical twins arise from one fertilized egg and contrary to popular belief the splitting into two comes about several days after the egg is fertilized when the preembryo has quite a few cells. Fraternal twins are two separate fertilizations, just like siblings born in different years. The frequency of identical twins is the same in all cultures and races, about 1 in 300 fertilizations. The frequency of fraternal twins varies with culture. The highest frequency is in West Africa, among the Yoruba in Nigeria, about 1 in 25 births; the lowest is in Japan, about 1 in 350 births.

Two egg twins are variable in frequency because the maturing and release of eggs is controlled by hormones from the pituitary gland. The amount of hormone and the response to the hormone is under genetic control. That is why some infertile women given an injection of hormone will have a singleton baby and other women given the same dose will have triplets or quadruplets. There are two theories for the high incidence of two egg twins among the that might act as hormones (synthetic steroid hormones are made from such plants). The other is cultural. I read an article some 20 years ago in African Art about a wooden sculpting tradition among the Yoruba called Ibeji figures. These are twins often kept by the family of twins as a repository for a twin's soul, especially when one of the twins dies. Twins are revered among the Yoruba who believe that one twin is a demi-god and the other is mortal. Twins are treated with favor and receive double the goods for a purchase. Their mothers are revered for their fertility. In many other African cultures twins were less fortunate because such a birth was considered evidence of infidelity (the mother having intercourse with an evil spirit after having had intercourse with her husband). In those cul-

tures the twins were often killed and the mother isolated in exile in a "twin village," divorced from her husband. Over many dozens of generations such cultural traditions can select for genes that affect ovulation, increasing twin births among the Yoruba and diminishing them in other populations that condemn twin births.

I favor the cultural interpretation because the Yoruba also have the highest rate of albino births in the world. There the albinos were brought into the royal household for protection and had an opportunity to marry into the royal family. When I was visiting Salvador, in Bahia in Brazil, I visited a geneticist who taught at the university and asked her about the frequency of twins and albinos in Salvador (the most African of cities in the Western hemisphere). She said twinning was high in Salvador as were albino births. It is likely that the genes for both traits were brought over when the slave trade brought West Africans to Brazil from the 16th to the 19th centuries. While I was in Salvador I was impressed by the collection of Ibeji carvings in that city's Museum of African Heritage and by the use of twin figures in the Catholic churches (built by slaves) who smuggled their Orisha religious symbols into the Church and who practiced their African religion outside the church as Condomble ceremonies. In the Condomble churches I visited I noted many Ibeji figures, many of them donated by visiting Nigerians. I am fortunate to have such an Ibeji carving in my office which my sister-in-law purchased in Africa when her husband (the late Ted Weiss, D.-Manhattan) was on the African Affairs Committee in the House of Representatives. One of the delights of knowledge is how much connection there is among all things of the universe. My Ibeji carving is connected to art, history, religion, culture, biology, genetics, folklore, and the loving remembrance of my brother-in-law.

Elof Carlson is a Distinguished Teaching Professor in the Department of Biochemistry and Cell Biology and Master of the Honors College.

sexy thrills are condoms of a different color.

To top the night off, we have to listen to the screamed proclamations of "Oh-Sixx" and "A Phi A". Their testosterone and adrenaline is flowing, and it is cutting into our time. I ask them to please exit, so that security can go home and am met with rude remarks. See, try to be nice and give extra time, and what

do I get? Rhetoric and trash, in return. So much for unity. Tonight I'm worn out and tired. Tired of being the conscience of black people on campus. Tired of cooperating with uncooperative groups. And tired that 1 in 4 sistas on college campuses will be raped. After all, some think "It's All Good" and that "Bitches Ain't Shit But Hos and Tricks".

Diary of an Intelligent Black Man

"Slavery past, or present?"

by Khalil Hayes

At times I sit and ponder over the situation of African-Americans in this great "U.S of A." No human mind could grasp such a broad topic in its entirety, so when I toss certain questions into my pool of thoughts, the pebble that usually breaks the surface first is that of slavery.

Slavery can be seen as one of mankind's most destructive creations. An institution that robs a people of their home, freedom, family, language, history and culture, created and continued for the sake of profit.

Slaves in America were brought from Africa to the deep South where they began their half starved, whipped back, field hand or house nigger careers. Allow me to set the stage: A young ebony-skinned African man lying flat on his back, eyes shut tight, ears unable to block

but were fully responsible for their actions if a crime was committed. They were not allowed to be educated and marriages between slaves weren't considered lawful. Disobedience was met with crude brutality. Many slaves were worked to death, and those who refused were whipped severely.

To many blacks, slavery was an inescapable, omnipotent entity. Some slaves did escape. What I mean when I say "escape" is not just the stereotypical, underground railroad, follow the North star escape, but rebellion in general which begins in the mind, and was as old as the institution itself. Somehow through the ravages of slavery certain African traditions were kept alive. Whether it was the rhythmic singing in the fields that allowed spirits to rise or the fiery conflicts between slave and master that the famous

Slavery can be seen as one of mankind's most destructive creations. An institution that robs a people of their home, freedom, family, language, history and culture

out incessant shrieks, nose unable to dilute the pungent smell of feces and vomit. Death is upon him, but just the other day he was standing with his fellow tribesmen laughing out loud, now he is too afraid to cry. Shackled in chains to the belly of this large monster, the man waits, and waits, and waits. He finally arrives at his new home and finds himself surrounded by hundreds of other Africans from different tribes, speaking different languages. After his genitalia and physique are thoroughly inspected he is off to his grandchildren's future playground, the thorn pricking, blood dripping cotton fields.

In my opinion, this depiction of slavery does not come near to the actual dreadfulness of the institution. Blacks were not considered human beings, but property or chattel that is owned by the slave master. Slaves had no Constitutional rights, they could not own any property without their master's permission, could not travel freely, and were basically treated in a bestial manner. The slave master had no legal restrictions on buying or selling slaves and although it was not legal to murder a slave, slave owners could easily replace their lost property. Slaves were not allowed to testify in court

ex- slave Frederick Douglass wrote about, something motivated these people, our people, to survive. Maybe it was simply the idea of hope or having a common enemy in which to join forces against. In sight of seemingly insurmountable odds, the descendants of Africa managed to forge a new identity out of ancient traditions almost lost. Through the splitting up of families and the mental and physical tortures of mothers having their children stripped away from them, the idea of family was not completely destroyed. Blacks helped each other escape to free territories, educated one another, and created an identity through struggle. We survived and only an ignoramus would not believe that every day in which slavery existed, rebellion was not knocking at its door, hard.

The year is 1995 and today I see many of my brothers and sistas walking with an unease in their step. Why? Is there something in the air? Do I hear a low murmur in the winds of education cuts? Or maybe its the crisp breeze whispering "increase police." Are my ears stung frozen by the intangible air of more prisons? Shhhh! Silence they insist, for as you and I sit, "me thinks me hear Masta, goin' to get his whip!"

To The Heart Of The Matter

by: T.N.H.

Welcome to another edition of BLACKWORLD, and also to another column of "To The Heart Of The Matter". I hope everyone had a good spring break, or at least tried to have fun.

This column is a very special one to me because normally I would choose topics to discuss, then give you my viewpoint on the subject. However this is the first column in which I have received a letter from a reader of BLACKWORLD newspaper. I must say it is refreshing to respond to a question of a reader, and also a nice change of course. The letter reads as follows:

Question for BLACKWORLD's romance writer:

Can a "true sister" see beyond being so critical that all she can focus on are the external features of her supposed "ideal man"? If you can give me the word, I'm ready...

Sincerely "I"

Dear "I",

I would first like to begin by thanking you for your letter. It seems to me from your letter that you seem angry about the idea of a black woman having set presets on what she considers someone she will be interested in having a relationship with. Each of us as human beings are very critical, and weigh a lot of value on the first impression we receive from someone, either male or female. Women will always have in their mind a type of guy they are physically attracted to whether he be tall, dark, white, Jamaican, light skin or what have you.

But because a black woman

may favor a particular man, or type of man does not mean she is not a "true sister". It means she has a preference in the type of guy she would consider getting to know a little better.

To help you understand my concept, my "ideal man" is 6'2, 180 pounds, with a bald head, between 22 and 28 years of age, with no kids, black (preferably Caribbean) unmarried, educated, and with a good job. As a woman I naturally have in my mind the perfect guy. The man I just described has not fully entered my life. However, I have dated guys with certain qualities, but never the full package. There is no doubt that most women have preferences, but that does not mean they will exclusively date guys within that set of restrictions. My advice to you, "I", is if there is someone out there that you are attracted to, don't feel she is not a "true sister" if you are not her "ideal man". Since she may or may not be instantly attracted to you enough to date you at first, don't break off the lines of communication.

I would suggest that you call her occasionally to see how she's doing. If you see her around, stop her briefly for a conversation. The key is to build a friendship. Show your lady friend that you are your own individual, you care about her, and you want to get to know her a lot better on a different level. However, each person is different, and certain things are just not meant to be, even though you know in your heart you care about this person and would be right for her.

Well "I", I hope that my honesty helped you understand a little better about relationships dealing with women and their "ideal man" preferences.

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rhapsodies

I'm Thinking, Too

My friend Julie once
wrote a poem
called "I'm thinking"
but I want her to know
I'm Thinking, Too

I'm thinking too
of what to do
about the insanity
in this world-
of how to fight
poverty, drugs, racism
and the welfare lines.

I'm thinking too
about what will
happen I
climb the ladder
of success-
and get stuck.
Will I too think
that I have arrived
but in reality I
haven't gone very
far- if any place
at all.

I'm thinking too
about what will
happen as I climb
that ladder of political,
economic and social
status. Will I forget
who I am? Will
my little hands be
clutched so tight
to that ladder
that I won't
want to let go?
Will I have
remembered to keep
my feet firmly
planted but forgotten
to let my hands
go so that I
can pull another
brother or sister
on up?

Moving on up
what's that all about ?
middle class, mediocrity,
suburbs, Volvos, and
Mercedes.
I'm thinking too
about what that
all means

Selling out, to get out of-
- the ghetto
The trades no good
Adam and Eve,
Learn from them please.
Don't bargain with
the devil ; You'll lose
Think about it

I'm thinking about
selling out-
no, no- no sell out
What is selling out?
They'll make you think
it's getting an education
and moving in with
them and their neighbors
But that is not the case.
Selling out is when you
move out of your
mind.
You sell your mind
for earthly goods
and try to forget
who and what
you are.
Don't sell out-
because when you do-
remember who you
sold out.

I'm thinking too
about what am I
going to do with
my life. Will I
fail or succeed?
I'm eighteen.
I've never been in love.
I'm thinking too
about what that
all means.
Men, they're all dogs.
I'm thinking too
why is that
saying the truth.
Is it because their
allowed to be and
we allow ourselves
to accept it?
If so why?

Why ask why?
OK then how come.
I don't understand
the madness and
confusion - why is
life so uncertain, so
unfair. Why can't
men and women
just be friends?

Why is it that we
all can't get along?
Why? I'm thinking!
I'm thinking
I think I'm thinking to
much.-
How about you?

--- Heather McPhillip

CALLING

Forgive you, you say slavery took you away from me
chained you from AFRICA to JAMAICA,
called you boy exposed your manhood took your women
and raped them, made you watch and not a thing you could do
Forgive you, you say slavery took you away from me
your little princess, your skin and bone, your own.
I am your little black girl, nappy hair and all
so come take care of your responsibility and stop
blaming slavery.
Mama was raped too some of her children taken away,
her lovers she could not choose, master abused
her body, her mind but her child she loved and
kept the best she knew how, she didn't cop out.
400 years ago and still on the rise slavery is now
the tears flowing from my eyes because daddy went
away and left me.
Daddy couldn't stand being called a boy and not a man.
Mama stayed so slavery wouldn't be reality to me.
But where's daddy? Out running, making babies, leaving them
fatherless, mindless, loveless.
Doesn't daddy know that I will have no direction with
lovers because of him?
He can't love me and stick around, I'll find a lover just
like him to make love to me, then leave me because of
slavery alone with his babies.
Yes I know slavery stripped you away from your manhood and
treated you like an animal.
But doesn't love and unity start at home, home with me
flesh of your flesh, scent of your scent
Daddy I am not your friend. I am your child.
Love me, daddy, love me, so we could laugh in the white
race's face and show unity within our race.
Come and sit at the head of the table daddy.
Come and be with your black family.
Come and wipe the tears from my eyes
Come and live your real life.

--- Julie Ann Rodgers

Get To Know Yourself

Black Woman, do you know who you are.
Do you realize that your the mother of this earth.
Aren't you beautiful? Look at you with your light,
light brown, brown, dark brown or chocolate skin,
do you like what you see. You walk with your head up high,
your head wrapped around your head, but are you really proud
to be a black woman.
Black Queen what is your calling? Are you here to be fruitful and multiply,
to cater to your loved ones, feed the hungry and take care of the needy.
What is it that satisfies your soul? Are you on this earth to lead the world
into the kingdom of heaven? Black Woman get to know self
and love self for if you don't love yourself your not going to love another.

--- Anitra Sims

The Last Call
once was a thought, but now I
live and breathe
I sit in the structure un-noticed
By the passing masses
classes, concrete masses,

I don't throw stones, but glass windows
break,

written words sound fake
spoken words sound confused

Talking in circles, I found that
life is round,

Sounds are unheard, screams un-noticed
can't you read the signs,

Macro defined by micro
stop the unnatural flow

The mighty dollar rests in heaven
on a throne of gold,

I don't want to hold on to
dreams of millionaires schemes
alone in the wilderness, I feel

Blessed because I know;

and no forbidden fruit will stop
my conscious flow;

I breath so I live

I live to give to those
who thought they knew

What is the meaning of life,
Be true, be true

What is it to live and never give
to those who need to breath as
you and I

Crying eyes don't take the rain away

The pain won't stay away
Come one Come all before
The masses fall

--- Dwight R. Brown

Heart Stuck

I doubt your sincerity
The words you spoke almost made me blind
Sightless to see keen darts of charm
pin me up against a black wall
I'm stuck like hot pink bubble gum
underneath a desk
left to be joined by others
oh how disgusting
You turned me off and
I wonder if I did the same
These wild burning emotions I'll try to tame
You've walked a foot while I ran a mile
I leave you the option to catch up
and adjoin my lonely heart
Don't take this invitation lightly,
If so, I prefer you don't come at all,
Terminate the inner pain that drains me
Far from full but not yet empty.

--- Sudani

THE PRETENDER

WHEN I LOOK, I KNOW WHAT I SEE.
"WHAT?", YOU ASK. "I SEE ME."
I REPLY, FOR EYES DON'T LIE.

AND I WONDER, WHAT YOU VIEW.
WHEN I DO ALL THAT I DO, TO BE

IS ME?, THE ONE I CREATE
THE ONE WITH THE FULL PLATE
THE SAME AS THE NAME
THAT YOU HAVE FOR ME?
BUT NO MATTER WHAT, I CONTINUE TO ... BE.

DO YOU WONDER,
WHAT IS UNDER.
THE SKIN, OF THE THIN, ONE WITHIN?
WHOSE DARK EYES,
HIDE MANY CRIES.
AND KEEPS THE MYSTERY,
AND THE HISTORY,
BURIED DEEP, IN SLEEP, AND WEEP?

AND AS YOU TRY TO SEE
I STILL CONTINUE TO JUST ... BE.

AND WILL, OR DO I EXIST
BEYOND THE MIST
THAT THE WORLD HAS MADE OF ME?
AND I STILL SEE
THE PERSON WHO WANTS TO BE AND JUST, ... BE.

--- LISA SAMUDA

**The recesses of my mind I explore
And ignore life, but death I want more
Dark inner thoughts remain at rest
Murder is the best, to use it- the real test
The anger within me, turmoil and strife
Could all be solved with the taking of a life
The journey deeper floods my soul with pain
Homicidal notions I entertain, yet I refrain
From the wickedness that I yearn
My conscious turns, and the evil burns
And just when I decide I can't
I raise my foot and squash the ant.**

--- Daniel LeClair Hartley

Creative Arts

Walk like a champion: The 1995 Miss C.S.O. pageant

by Antoinette Thomas

The Caribbean Students Organization held its eighth annual Miss C.S.O. Pageant this past Saturday. The organization had a wide variety of contestants this year. The contestants consisted of Christine Perry- Ms. Jamaica, Sonya Forrester- Ms. Guyana, Rochelle Bailey- Ms. Antigua, Carol-Lynn Taylor- Ms. Bahamas, Taunia Moore- Ms. Barbados, Taymou Scotland- Ms. Bermuda, and SaKaina Simon - Ms. Grenada.

The festivities began an hour and a half late as usual. However, guilt does not fall on the C.S.O. organization per say, but the blame does fall on two tardy judges. After the delay, the show began with a swift start. The opening scene was illuminating, as the contestants strutted across the stage wearing silver outfits. While the ladies changed in between scenes, there were breaks in the show. Nevertheless, thanks to the two M.C.'s, Earnest Alexander and Stacy McLeod kept the crowd pleasantly entertained.

The show went on with the cultural wear. The contestants introduced themselves and gave some information on the countries they represented. (editsent. all hang out) Their descriptive images of their countries created a virtual collage of the Caribbean. Each contestant wore very original and colorful costumes. With exceeding exuberance, they made their fellow West Indians proud. Sakaina Simon, Ms. Grenada, won for best cultural wear and she deserved to.

Even though the show was somewhat lengthy, it was fast-paced and kept the crowd alive. Based on my judgment and the response of the audience, the best scene was evening wear. The ladies and their escorts gave the audience something to remember. Ms. Antigua was so graceful, it was unreal. Winning for best smile, Ms. Antigua went on to winning the talent category as well. Skillfully striking the steel pan, Ms. Antigua steered the crowd into her corner. It is no real surprise to know that she was

crowned Miss C.S.O. 1995. There is no doubt in my mind that Rochelle deserved it. Congratulations to Ms. Grenada, SaKaina Simon, the first runner-up and Ms. Guyana, Sonya Forrester, the second runner-up. Although only one person was selected as Miss C.S.O., they were all winners. The show was a great success and it took hard work to realize this.

Last but not least, I would like to acknowledge the eight cultural officers, including Rhonda Joseph, Natasha Nicholson, and Mahalia Williams. They were dedicated and hard-working. The show's success can be contributed to these fine young women. Being behind the scenes, I know how difficult a task the cultural officers take on. So I would like to recognize these people, for they often go unnoticed.

Courtney O'Meally should also acknowledge for his significant contribution to the event. And to conclude, I would like to congratulate Rochelle Bailey, Miss C.S.O. 1995.

COMING SOON

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UNITY CULTURAL CENTER

Black Arts Movement

Part III

by Amiri Baraka

The Black Arts Repertory Theater School lasted formally, a little more than a year, but by the end of 1965, there were similar efforts rising all over the country. There was a Black Arts Midwest (Woodie King and Ron Milner), a Black Arts West (Ed Bullins, Marvin X, Furaha Broadus) in San Francisco/Oakland/Berkeley. Both Emery Douglas, the Black Panther revolutionary artist, and Danny Glover came out of the Black Communications Project that we put together during that period at San Francisco State, and in the then Black Fillmore community. Black Arts South emerged in New Orleans with Val Ferdinand (Kalamuya Salaam).

At one point, Black Arts theaters and poetry organizations sprung up ubiquitously across the country. Usually in the larger cities where there were Afro American pluralities or majorities. It was clear there was a torrent of inspiration that lifted the Black artists communities across the country, and the evidence is coming in.

What seemed most important about the BARTS was that it was a living paradigm of what many people had come to feel was the direction Afro American artists and the art with which they expressed the particular culture they reflected had to go. Fundamentally we must pursue what Du Bois called True Self Consciousness and defeat its reverse the Double Consciousness. The Black Arts movement raised this antagonistic contradiction once again, as part of the cultural revolution still necessary to raise and unite the consciousness of the oppressed Afro American people, so that they better understand themselves as well as better resist their enemies.

We felt (and I still do feel) that the Afro American people were and are still involved in a war. A war for Self Determination, Self Respect and Self Defense. It is a war for equal rights and democracy. But how can we press this struggle to victory if we suffer from Double consciousness, i.e., if we see ourselves, like Spike Lee and the other new wave Fechts, through the eyes of people that hate us (Even In Living Color!), if we look at ourselves in that grim mixture of amusement and contempt? As artists we felt that that was our chief function, to reshape the minds of the people. To move them to revolutionary positions.

The dicta we arrived at 1. To

create a true Afro American Art 2. To create a mass art. 3. To create a revolutionary art were simply three of the most important and positive aspects of our methodology our ideological practice, such as we understood it. This was the broad spearhead of Blackness that emerged and that I feel has lasted yet still to be further summed up.

But this broad credo came under attack fundamentally because we had initially cloaked our call to battle in the starkest terms of cultural nationalism and Hate White language. Yet the essence of our call and our work was to try to unite the Afro American people, by raising their consciousness by attempting to raise our own consciousness and that of the Afro American artists and intellectuals.

We were new nationalists, older nationalists and others and that was the center of our loose front. But by the middle 70's, many of us still held the general credo of The Black Arts but no longer upheld nationalism. Even so the three points remain strong and essentially correct. But we received opposition because we called for Black Art to define itself and speak for itself from the security of its own institutions. We were opposed because we withdrew from white people and for many of our downtown contemporaries this was unthinkable or impossible. But at the root of our most profound feeling was that it was the social context and practice of petty bourgeois Liberalism that we wanted to flee.

The Afro American people are an oppressed nation, objectively, with the right of Self Determination. This remains the valid issue of our struggle. But even broadening the take on our opposition, for many of our contemporaries the idea that somehow Black people could express themselves through institutions of their own creation and with ideas whose validity was confirmed by their own interests and measure was absurd.

Certainly in the hot 60's when "Revolution was the main trend in the world..." and many people felt they had to at give lip service to "Blackness" much opposition was more covert, sub rosa or unable to find broad circulation in the community. Opposition was quickly identified as from the "whited out", the bourgeois negroes, the backward-though that

was not necessarily always true. There were on the Left who occasionally tried to point out the excess and errors of our

cultural nationalism. But since that time until the fullest unfolding of the Black Arts concept in the 70's until the eventual reaction that paralleled the shape and direction and dynamic of the overall political movement itself, with its Sisyphus like historic pattern, evidence of the validity and continued existence of the Black Arts stance remains. Even though today, and for several years now, it is also obvious that the rock we rolled to the top of the mountain in the 60's and early 70's has been rolled back down on our heads. And now the essence of the opposition to what the Black Arts stood for and symbolizes has come "full out" — it is even empowered.

The Black Liberation Movement and even the Civil Rights movements are held up each day to either public ridicule as backward and passe or the most valid ideas of our struggle are replaced with the ideas of the sickest and the most backward of our contemporaries by Hanging Judges from the Caucasian Chalk Circle. And because of the continuous stream; of distorted anti-democratic and anti-Black and counter revolutionary images in all media have been used to try to "reverse correct verdicts" reached through struggle, to character assassinate the Black Liberation and its chief combatants.

Spike Lee trashed Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, The Nation of Islam and Elijah Muhammad in the same movie. We hear from Bruce Perry that Malcolm was white and psychosexual. From various ex-revolutionaries we are told of the bankruptcy of the Panthers and everyday people tell me that the BARTS movement tried to tell people what to write. No, it tried to unite the best of us to fight our oppressors!

And now in the midst of the starkest period of reaction have ever seen, a new generation of the backward, the Buppies, the little neo negro greed balls bloated with the arrogant ignorance of abject submission to imperialism. The various Fly Boys, in The Butter Milk and Affirmative Action Babies. Colored People whose mission like the Spikes and Skips, just like the Tom Ass Clarences and Colon Powells is to attack and give lie to the idea and movement for Black Self Determination. To make it seem that. Hey, we are all Americans and you all that ain't skipping the light fantastic of celebration by the imperialist superstructure are simply cursed by the Gods for

trying to push that Black Shit— when we know it is America. America the Beautiful, that gives us our salaries, our prizes, our note, hey, even our ideas.

Yet the deepest problem, aside from our history being covered, and gains won by our struggles being reverse being claimed by our enemies, conscious or un, is that we still have not built organizations and institutions to struggle for Self Determination. Self Respect. Self Defense. If we had built those institutions, those journals (like Journal of Black Poetry, Black Nation, The Cricket, BARTS, The Spirit House, The Black House, The New School of Afro American Thought &c), we would not have to worry about the distortions of the terminally backward, Black or White. We would define ourselves and speak for ourselves and carve up our enemies with the graceful ease of our high art. Duke and Trane and Billie them to death! But our enemies have created our spokespersons, and they speak for us every day, covering and distorting reality and this is the state in which we exist today.

The very people who even denied the existence of Black Art were immediately given grants to claim it. Even in this festival the Neals, Dumases, Sanchezes, Toures, Madhabutis art packed into single readings while opposition forces (remember the name of the festival itself) are given full range now to claim what we so painfully struggled to bring into existence! The Lesson, where are our institutions and organizations of the Black Arts. Where are our theaters and newspapers and journals and truly independent films (not skin black but speaking from the essence of the most advanced consciousness of the Afro American people? That no one has the right to rule our lives for a second, the true self-consciousness, who we are, who we were and who we would become.

That is the continuing task we face, as revolutionary Black artists and intellectuals, to make Cultural Revolution. To fight in the super structure, in the realm of ideas, philosophies, the arts, academia, the class struggle between oppressed and oppressor. To recreate and maintain our voice as a truly self-conscious, self determining entity, to interpret and focus our whole lives and history. And create those organizations and institutions that will finally educate, employ, entertain and liberate us!

Quotable

*There are those who believe
Black people possess the se-
cret of joy, and that it is this
that will sustain them
through any spiritual or
moral or Physical devastation*

Alice Walker

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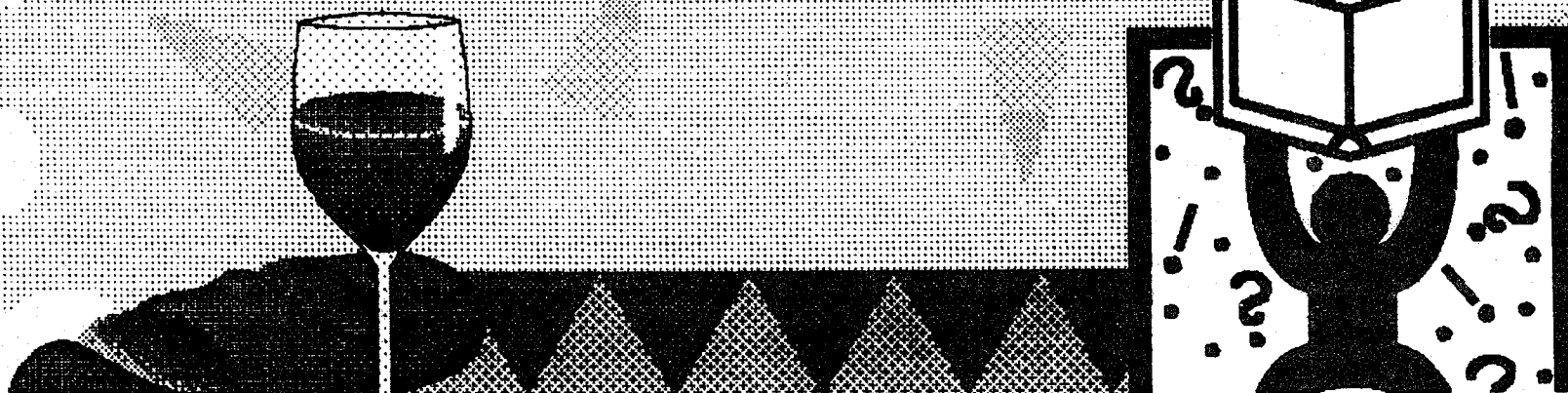
-Type a 3 to 5 minute speech using our theme as the focus, please double-space.

-Please use a cover sheet with your name, ID.#, and telephone # to be reached.

-Submit your entry to:

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DESTINY meetings at 9pm on Mondays in
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Two Day Event

Cultural Fest!

Day 1:

Guest Speaker: Lisa A Smith

"The Role of Black men & women in the 90's"

Where: Unity Cultural Center

Date: April 5, at 7pm

Day 2:

Featuring:

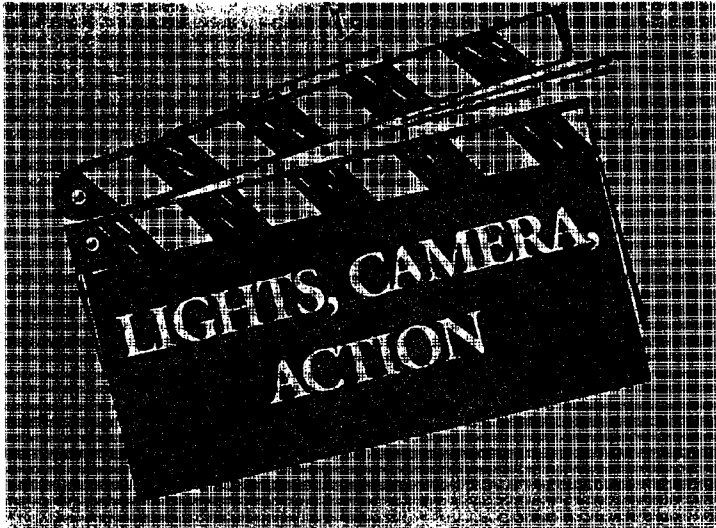
African Dance Troop
&

A Surprise guest from the past!

Where: Unity Cultural Center

Date: April 6, at 7pm

Persons needing disability related accommodations please contact Glen at 2-3455



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Ramadan

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

after a heavy sleep, since it helps turn the metabolism around. In winter it is not difficult to go eight hours without food or drink, but what about June or July? One day may be easy, but what about one week, two weeks. . . ? Unless people are firm in their faith, they are not likely to make it through the whole month, summer or winter.

But to suggest that fasting during Ramadan is difficult does not mean that Muslims find it to be a hardship. By and large Ramadan tends to be the happiest time of the year, although this does not become obvious until the night. During the daytime, people are too subdued to show their happiness. Traditional Islamic cities are sights to behold during the month of fasting. Daylight hours and nighttime exhibit a total contrast. During the day there is relatively little activity, many shops are closed, and people tend to be quiet, if not morose. But as soon as the cannon sounds or the adhan is proclaimed, the whole atmosphere changes. Everyone has been anxiously waiting for the day's fast to end. If they follow the example of the Prophet, they immediately eat a date or two or have a drink of water, then say their evening salat. In public areas, right before sundown, the tea houses and restaurants are full of people sitting patiently, food and drink before them.

In many parts of the Islamic world it has become the custom to have a feast as soon as the fasting ends. In any case, the nights of Ramadan are festive occasions. The city streets come alive with the activity that is reserved for day-

light hours at other times of the year. According to Islamic law, not observing the fast is a serious sin. In order to make up for a single day missed intentionally, a person must fast for two months. However, as is often the case, there is no way to enforce this rule. People have only themselves and God to answer to. In traditional Islamic society, everyone carefully observed the fast in public. In private, they could do whatever they wanted, and no one but God was the wiser.

Today, in some of the larger cities in the Islamic world, one may have the impression that few people fast. Restaurants are busy and life seems to be going on as usual. But even in the West, many Muslims who do not observe the pillars of Islam fast for at least a day or two. (In a similar way, residual Christians are likely to go to church once a year at Easter.) Part of the reason for token shows of fasting is that the fast is the one ritual that is strictly between the individual and God. Though it has social dimensions, God alone sees whether or not a person observes it. Hence, Ramadan is usually considered to be the most personal and spiritual of the pillars. It is a test of people's sincerity in their religion. The salat can be seen by other people, and in a tight-knit society, everyone knows how well others observe it. But no one can check on your every movement during the day to see whether or not you have taken a sip of water or nibbled a snack. Many otherwise lapsed Muslims sense this, and so they fast for a day or two just to let themselves and God know that they have not left the fold.

Habari Gani?

Tues. 4/4 Alternative Cinema Film, SB Union Aud., 6pm- 12am

Tues. 4/4 NYPIRG/ "You Want to be a Lawyer" SB Union FSL, 8pm- 9pm.

Wed. 4/5 African Students Union: JAMBOREE, SB Union FSL, 9:30am- 5:30 pm.

Wed. 4/5 Mailik Sigma Psi: Fraternity Dinner, SB Union EOB, 3pm-7pm

Wed. 4/5 COCA presents: "Dumb/ Dumber & Junior", 7:30pm & 10pm, Union Aud

Thurs. 4/6- Sat. 4/8 Staller Cen-

ter Presents: A Midsummer Night's Dream, Theatre 1, 8pm.

Thurs. 4/6 Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Step Show/ Party, SB Union Bi-Level, 9pm- 2am.

Fri. 4/7 - Sun 4/9 COCA presents: "DISCLOSURE", Javits Lecture Cntr.

7, 9:30 PM
Rm. 100, Fri & Sat., 9:30pm & midnight, Sun. 7pm & 9:30

Fri. 4/7 Delta Sigma Theta- Sorority Party, Union Bi-Level, 9pm- 2am

Sat. 4/8 Malik Sigma Phi Fra-

ternity Dinner, Union EOB, 3pm- 7pm

Sun. 4/9 Staller Center presents: Stony Brook Theatre: A Midsummer Night's Dream, Theatre 1, 2pm
Mon. 4/10 - Fri. 4/21 Student exhibition, Union Art Gallery, Noon - 4pm

Wed. 4/12 Spring Cultural Festival, Fine Arts Plaza, 11am-3pm

Wed. 4/12 COCA presents: "Demon Night", Union Aud, 7:30 & 10pm

Thurs. 4/13 Minority Planning Board Speakers, Union Ballroom,

9pm-1am

Fri. 4/14 - Sun. 4/16 COCA presents: "Drop Zone", Javits Lecture Cntr.

7, 9:30 PM, Rm. 100, Fri & Sat., 9:30pm & midnight, Sun. 7pm & 9:30

Fri. 4/14 Caribbean Students Org. Weekend Cultural Show & Party, Union Aud & Ballroom, 6pm-2am

Sat. 4/15 Latin Block Party (Cultural Fest), Location TBA, Noon- 6pm

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

WOMANCHILD

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

women. The lens of mass media portrays women as having no personality. We are shallow and empty or immoral and irrational.

Our environment is filled with blaring multifaceted messages of how a woman must dress, look, act, speak, smell and even walk. I received these messages when I was a child from my family, and they were perpetuated and reinforced by mass media in my adult years. As a child I did not suffer much from being forced to identify myself with the female gender. It was as an adult in my private space that I was most wounded. This was where I lost my spirit, my soul and objectified myself to fit a "culturally constructed" gender role of passivity. Through repeated punishment as a child by my family to suppress my lash back, aggressive personality, my relatives succeeded in transforming me into a passive, shy "womanchild" adult, not in my public persona, but in my intimate space with my man. When I'm with a man that I care for, I find myself changing my persona, changing myself into a "womanchild". I become less aggressive, less strong

minded, and more timid, submissive and soft spoken. I was selling my self to him as a submissive, easily aroused, vulnerable woman. He was the aggressor and I the Aggresee, sick isn't it. I victimized myself in a sexist gender cast system.

The refusal to recognize that gender is culturally constructed and sex is biological is inherent to America's politics to keep women subordinate to men. This "ideology [idiot ideology]" prevails men with privilege and power. And if we as women refuse to suppress our self to this societal "ideology" of appropriate behaviors for females such as passivity, we are stigmatized, labeled, and condemned as man-hating lesbian, radical feminist, "manto", "butchy bitch", or mannish. All and all, a woman that doesn't conform to what is considered "normal" behavior for females, is a woman who just doesn't know her place," therefore she is declassified as a female, or woman. And if we go in the direction of conformity we are exemplified as a "real" woman, that is, we are "hot," fine, sexy, sensual, loving, caring, nurturing, sensitive and vulnerable: a "real woman."

by Yolanda A. Hewitt

New Polity Structure Going on Referendum Tuesday April 4th

- A President**
- B Executive Vice President**
- C Vice President for Finance**
- D Vice President for Community Relations**
- E Vice President for Student Services**
- F Vice President for Programming**
- G Vice President for Student Advocacy**
- H Vice President for Academic Affairs**

If you have any questions or concerns contact a council member at the Polity Suite, Union 258, 2-6460

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IF INTERESTED CALL 2 - 6494
OR COME TO THE MEETINGS ON
TUESDAYS AND THURSDAYS AT 1:00
IN THE STUDENT UNION ROOM 072.

IF YOU WOULD JUST LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE SOME OF YOUR WORK, ALL POETRY, OPINIONS, LETTERS, DRAWINGS, PHOTOGRAPHS AND ARTICLES CAN BE BROUGHT TO THE BLACKWORLD OFFICE (RM. 072 IN THE STUDENT UNION).