

BLACKWORLD

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Why Africana History?

By: Dr. John Henrik Clarke

The phrase African-American or African-American History Month, taken at face value and without serious thought, appears to be incongruous. Why is there a need for an African-American History Month when there is no similar month for the other minority groups in the United States?

The history of the United States, in total, consists of the collective histories of minority groups. What we call "American civilization" is no more than the sum of their contributions. The African-Americans are the least integrated and the most neglected of these groups in the historical interpretation of the American experience. This neglect has made African-American History Month a necessity.

Most of the large ethnic groups in the United States have had, and still have, their historical associations. Some of these associations predate the founding of the Association For The Study of Negro Life and History, (1915). Dr. Charles H. Wesley tells us that, "Historical societies were organized in the United States with the special purpose in view of preserving and maintaining the heritage of the American nation."

Within the framework of these historical societies, many ethnic groups, black and white, engaged in those endeavors that would keep alive their beliefs in themselves and their past as a part of their hopes for the future. For African-Americans, Carter G. Woodson led the way and used Negro History Week to call attention to his people's contribution to every aspect of world history. Dr. Woodson, then Director of the Association For the Study of Negro Life and History, conceived this special week as a time when public attention should be focused on the achievements of America's citizens of African descent.

The acceptance of the facts of African-American history as a legitimate part of the academic community did not come easily. Slavery ended and left its false images of black people intact. In his article, "What the Historian Owes the Negro," the noted African-American historian, Dr. Benjamin Quarles, says:

The Founding Fathers, revered by historians for over a century and a half, did not

conceive of the Negro as part of the body of politics. Theoretically, these men found it hard to imagine a society where Negroes were of equal status to whites. Thomas Jefferson, third President of the United States, who was far more liberal than the run of his contemporaries, was never the less certain that 'the two races, equally free, cannot live in the same government.'

I have been referring to the African origin of African-American literature and history. This preface is essential to every meaningful discussion of the role of the African-American in every aspect of American life, past and present. I want to make it clear that the Black race did not come to the United States culturally empty-handed.

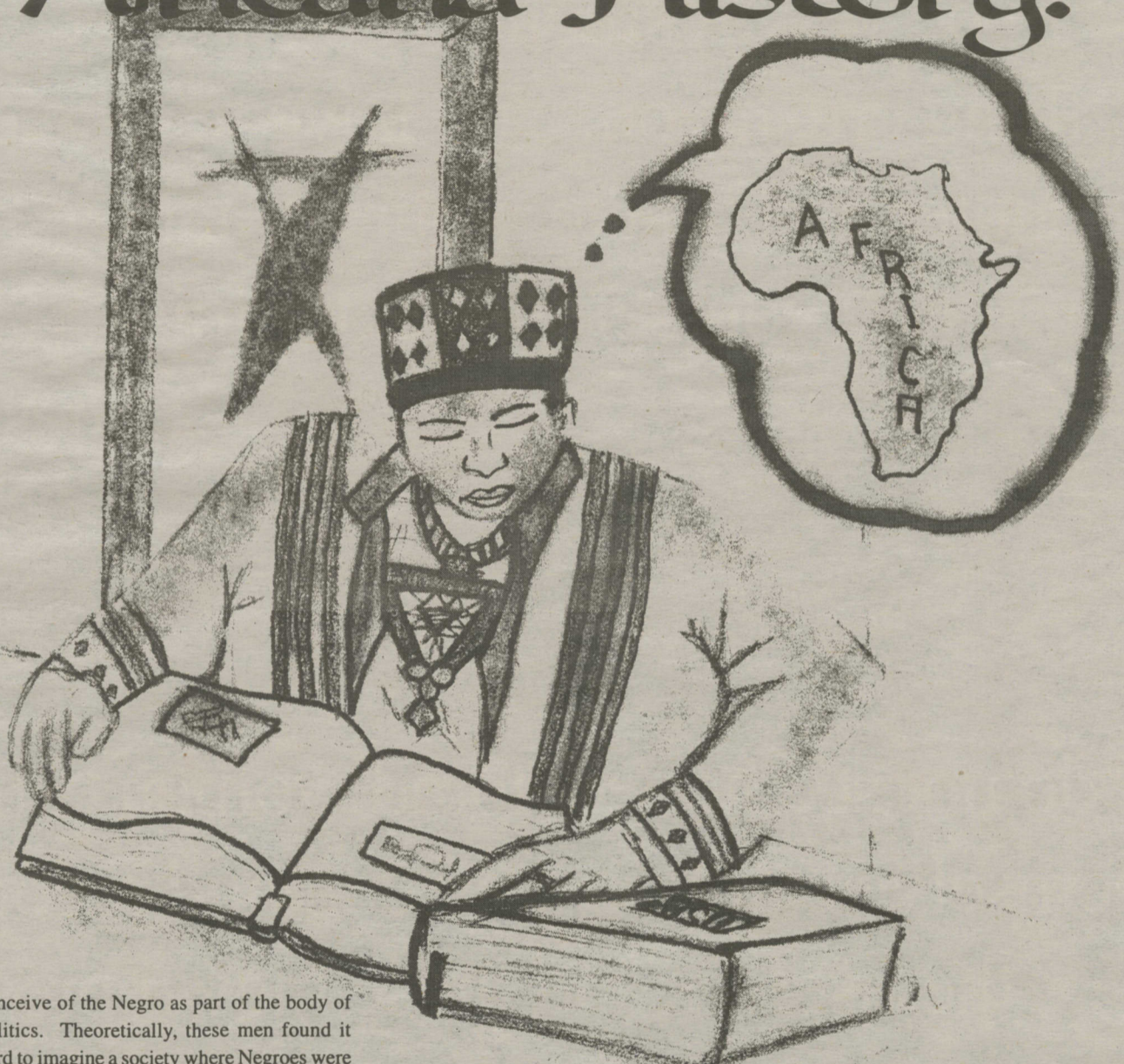
The role and importance of ethnic history is in how well it teaches a people to use their own talents, take pride in their own history and love their own memories. In order to fulfill themselves completely, in all of their honorable en-

deavors it is important that the teacher of history of the Black race find a definition of the subject and a frame of reference that can be understood by students who have no prior knowledge of the subject.

The following definition is paraphrased from a speech entitled, "The Negro Writer and His Relation To His Roots," by Saunders Redding, (1960):

Heritage, in essence, is how a people have used their talent to create a history that gives them memories that they can respect, and use to command the respect of other people. The ultimate purpose of history and history teaching is to use a people's talent to develop an awareness and a pride in themselves so that they can create better instruments for living together with other people.

This sense of identity is the



Amice M. Campbell

stimulation for all of a people's honest and creative efforts. A people's relationship to their heritage is the same as the relationship of a child to its mother. History is a clock that people use to tell their time of day. It is a compass that they use to find themselves on the map of human geography. It also tells them where they are and what they are. Most importantly, an understanding of history tells a people where they still must go and what they still must be.

Early white American historians did not accord African people anywhere a respectful place in their commentaries

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Quotables:

"If you live in an oppressive society, you've got to be very resilient. You can't let each little thing crush you. You have to take every encounter and make yourself larger, rather than allow yourself to be diminished by it."

--James Earl Jones

"I do not see how colored women can be true to themselves, unless they demand recognition for themselves and those they represent."

--Ida B. Wells Barnett

From One, A Nation Speaks

Thoughts and Reactions to Aristide's Visit to Stony Brook

By: Cassandra Regis

The Aristide convention started promptly after 8:00 p.m. The stage was decorated with flags representing Haiti and the United States of America. There were plants and flowers around the podium and four paintings that centered the stage. Of the four, my colleague and I admired one that showed a mother wearing a red scarf, nursing her baby, who was wrapped in white cloth. The painting had all of the colors of the Haitian flag, which are red, green, blue, brown and white.

When I entered the auditorium of the Student Activities Center, I was happy to see the representation of many cultures. I was also pleased to see the number of people who are not directly associated with Stony Brook, either as students or faculty, who came to hear the former president of Haiti, Jean-Bertrand Aristide speak.

Before Aristide began his speech, the representatives of the Peace Studies Center, the Concerned Haitian League and the Haitian Student Organization gave a description of his impressive background and history. Aristide speaks seven languages, and had nine attempts made on his life. He also heads two organizations. So when he did speak, there was a sudden vibe or presence that swept through the whole room. Who knew that a man so small in stature could be so large in his influence on the Stony Brook campus.

Aristide spoke about Haiti's past, its present condition of poverty and its aspirations for peace. He said Haiti is poor economically, but rich spiritually. It is that same spirit that has kept Haiti going. He recalled Haiti's revolution—the first country to revolt, and how the country paid for its freedom. He commended Haitian people who came to the United States and never forgot about their family or country. One of Aristide's organizations, Lafanmi Selavie, has American doctors who volunteer a few weeks or months of their time to care for the sick children in Haiti.

Aristide made a point about the significance of women in Haitian communities and in politics. The women in Haiti have an important role in the family. They make sure the children wake-up on time to go to school. They prepare lunches for their husbands and they make sure that the house is clean. Aristide noted that if women were running the country that they would handle important matters in the same way that they handle household matters. Women would hold the country as a child and make sure everything gets done on time.

The last portion of the conference was reserved for a question and answer segment. One question to Aristide from the audience was: What are your plans for the immediate future? Aristide

said he plans to work for peace and peace of the students. He said people need to have respect for different types of opinions. Only then can we learn from others and ourselves. "Then we learn to make it easier and improve the quality of life," Aristide said.

A second question from the audience asked the former president about his feelings for the 2001 elections and the military? Aristide stated that he feels the same as a candidate as he does as a priest. He does what the people want him to do. He's working for the people and so he takes orders from them. As for the military, after the elections he knows that

weapons will still exist. The military is not the same. He congratulates the few good soldiers that did help him.

A final question addressed the issues of illiteracy and poor health care in Haiti and how does Aristide plan to correct these situations. He began by saying that the government controls the majority of the people. He expressed that the country needs to train and educate young people to teach adults to read and vice versa. This arrangement will ensure that parents and children are teaching each other how to read. In health care there are doctors who return to Haiti to offer their time and talent.

By: Josephine Oduro

On March 3, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, a one time imprisoned scholar and former democratically elected president of Haiti, spoke at the Student Activities Center about issues concerning peace for Haiti.

After three unsuccessful attempts to bring Aristide to Stony Brook, The Concerned Haitian League, the Haitian Student Organization and The Peace Studies Center were finally triumphant. As President Shirley Strum Kenny introduced the humble Aristide, a tremendous applause from the audience guided him to the microphone.

The former president spoke about The Aristide Foundation For Democracy and its purpose to provide literacy programs to Haiti's 85% illiterate population. He also mentioned peace and its relation to poverty. "There is no peace in the head if there is no peace in the stomach," Aristide said. "None of us will have peace in the next century, if more than a billion have no peace in their stom-

achs."

Aristide illustrated the importance of democracy by telling a story about the responses he received from three girls who defined what a democracy meant to them. Their reply was food, school, and health care. "Democracy in Haiti means to eat," Aristide said.

Addressing one of the poorest countries in the West, Aristide said "Haiti was not always poor. In 1879, it was France's most valuable country." He spoke about how presently one percent of the country's population controls 45 percent of its national wealth. He also discussed the 1.5 million Haitians living outside of Haiti and how greatly their contributions are appreciated. "Without them life would be more difficult," Aristide said.

He also offered many suggestions to solve the problems of illiteracy and poverty in Haiti. He discussed the ability of women to handle household budgets efficiently. "Survival of the people rest on the strength of the

Overall, I enjoyed the event. This is the first time that I've ever seen Aristide speak. I went to Haiti for the first time in 1995 and was surprised at the beauty that I saw. There were children laughing in the canal and adults cooking in pots by the fire. It's a very rural and poor country, but it is the same country that I am proud to call my home. As a young Haitian-American woman I am just realizing the importance of knowing your culture. I am learning that Haiti is a country for which I should be proud to represent, with its unique cooking, language (Creole) and music (Kompa).

women," he said.

He then addressed the students and their role in obtaining peace. "Me speaking to you," Aristide said, "is like sending a message to the 21st. century. The century of peace is our century."

During a question and answer period he was asked whether he is considering running for president again, when the present incumbent term ends? Aristide responded by saying "I want to continue to serve the people, if the people think I can serve them, it will be their decision."

After the question and answer period Aristide was presented with awards from The Peace Studies Center, The Concerned Haitian League and the Haitian Student Organization. Upon receiving one of the awards Aristide said, "I spent three years in exile. I waited three years to get this award!"

In concluding his speech Aristide said, "Instead of saying thank you, I will tell you I love you."

Congratulations to The Peace Studies Center, The Concerned Haitian League and the Haitian Student Organization for their efforts in bringing Jean Bertrand-Aristide to the Stony Brook Campus.

The Struggle for Black Studies

By: Joy Mahabir

February 1998 was Black History Month. Those present at the specific programs would have noted the conspicuous absence of administrators and faculty, a trend which began at the Opening Ceremonies.

The most shocking, in my opinion, was the lack of representation at the Amiri Baraka/Blue Ark performance, which was only attended by undergraduate students, faculty from Africana Studies, and other members of BFSA (Black Faculty and Staff Association).

It's good to know that we have people on campus who can truly appreciate the aesthetic skill and lyrical depth of one of the best African-American poets of this century. One of my students said that it was the best course he ever took at Stony Brook. It encompassed history, poetry, art, philosophy, and taught him more than he ever learned in any classroom, all in one hour. Another said, "While walking out, I felt a strange sense of empowerment... the ability to protest and be heard... the ability to make a difference."

Students should feel empowered to make a difference on campus: to seize the power. There are several struggles on campus going on right at this moment, and all progressive students, black and white, should start taking their place in these struggles. You can make a difference. Your voice will be heard.

One struggle that needs our immediate attention on campus is the struggle for a real Black Studies Department. As Polity President, Monique Maylor, noted at the Opening Ceremonies for Black History Month, we are going into the twenty-first century without a Black Studies Department. In other words, our Africana Studies Program on campus is only an undergraduate program, and many students, who want to go ahead in graduate studies here, are shocked to find out that Africana Studies does not offer a graduate degree, although all the faculty members of Africana Studies teach graduate courses or are on graduate committees for other departments. In addition, Africana Studies has an average enrollment of 2,000 to 2,500 students every year—which makes it one of the highest enrolled undergraduate programs on this campus. So the students obviously know where to invest their time, but alas, the administrators who spend our students money don't.

Now, in a campus that is 60 percent non-white, how is it possible that we don't have an advanced Black Studies Department? Last semester BLACKWORLD broke the news about a proposed Asian Studies Graduate Certificate. This semester our newspaper learned about a Latin American and Caribbean Graduate Certificate program in the making. We already have a Graduate Certificate in Women's Studies.

Consider these areas, and remember that the Black Liberation Move-

ment in the United States made the study of these possible, because the Black Liberation movement, especially in the 1960's and early 1970's, forced academic institutions to pay attention to under-represented groups and to address this. Consider also the fact that the Africana Studies program started in here thirty years ago. Consider the disgraceful fact that we are going into the twenty-first century with things the same as they were in 1968.

What about the tradition of Liberation that made Africana Studies possible? Are we going to abandon it out of apathy? Are we going to forget that, in the beginning, there was blood? Think of all the brothers and sisters who were gunned down, who thought it worthy "to die for the people." Remember that they were your age, and they looked down the future and wanted to make the world a better place for you. And guess what? Some of them are still in jail, while you are free to benefit from their struggle.

Please don't look to your faculty and administrators to lead you in any battle. These people belong to one of the most entrenched bourgeois sections in the United States. Wonder why no one came to the Baraka concert? For what? To see what they can never do, and witness art they can never make? To hear him call them by name: "Liars...murderers...maniacs...?"

Notice I said nothing about the race of these people. I referred to the

bourgeois class they belong to. The same class our young black revolutionaries were fighting against. So this is why an Africana Studies Department is so important. It comes from a class struggle waged by oppressed people. It is the visible sign of a truce that the United States academy was forced to make because we said "No More!!" Because we asked for a real study of the philosophy, culture and history that we have made in the New World for four centuries. The presence of Black Studies honors the class that fought for it. It was conceived in struggle; and it will not survive unless there are more people like Huey Newton and Elaine Brown and those numerous sons and daughters of the Black Liberation movement.

There is something I always tell my classes, and it is very important. It is the fact that the same battles our parents fought, we will have to fight all over again, this time for our children. The struggle is not static; it continues. We will have to wage anti-war protests again, as the US today threatens to bomb Iraq. We will have to fight for Affirmative Action all over again, because it has not been in operation at Stony Brook. In fact there have been so many Affirmative Action waivers at Stony Brook that the administration is certainly in violation of SUNY policy and Federal Law many times over. The fight has been abandoned for too long. It is still waiting for us. Remember the past. Struggle for the future.

EDITORIAL:

Greetings, BLACKWORLD readers. We apologize for the delay of our second issue, but we know that you will enjoy it all the same.

In this issue we bring to you a new column, Info/tainment-Upclose. This column, which is written by Lina Garner, a recent Stony Brook graduate, will feature interviews and information about celebrities in the Black and Latino communities.

Another new feature to the BLACKWORLD pages is the "Know Thyself Book Club." This section will provide our readers with a top 10, best read list and a review of a selected book. The purpose of the book club is to encourage students to enjoy literature by reading a good novel. Text books can certainly stimulate your mind, but how much do you actually enjoy reading them?

The recurring theme in this issue, is the need for the Africana Studies Program to become a department. Departmental status would allow for a graduate program and an increase in graduate enrollment by under represented students.

Currently the University is suffering in its attempts to attract graduate students of color. I can only imagine the

trouble that administrators will have, when prospective students learn about the absence of African-American professors in the English and Psychology departments.

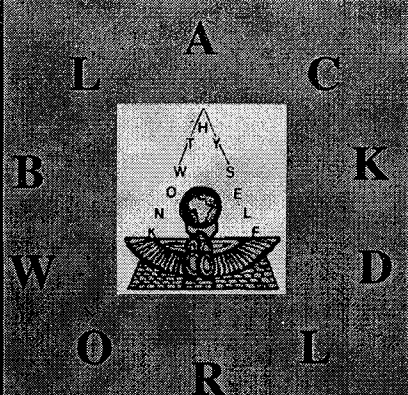
Most students in this university who are science majors, can go for four years without having a class taught by a Black professor, unless they take an Africana Studies course. And since the Africana Studies Program is so poorly promoted in the admissions process, students only inquire about these courses when trying to fulfill a D.E.C. requirement.

Maybe the seriousness of the situation will be realized when someone conducts an experiment, similar to the one used to dispel the belief of separate but equal. Black students who were receiving completely unequal educational experiences than White students, suffered from severe inferiority complexes. An experiment of that nature, conducted at the State University of New York at Stony Brook would reveal the harmful effects on students of a total disregard and misrepresentation of African-American scholars, culture and history.

Tischelle George
Editor-in-Chief

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**CELEBRATE 25
YEARS OF
BLACKWORLD IN
'99**



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This Way For Black Empowerment When Kids Perform They Learn!

By: Dr. Lenora Fulani

The Development School for Youth, a project I co-direct, employs a new performance based educational approach that challenges the prevailing view of how young people learn. It is a rigorous three month leadership training program for young adults between the ages of 16 and 22 that uses performance to enable them to make the transition from school, which is where they are now, to the world of work.

The Development School for Youth is structured as a 12-act "play" in which the students, most of them in high school, perform as leaders in a variety of "scenes." These are some of the scenes that the first group of 17 trainees, who graduated last May, performed: a tour of the New York Stock Exchange, conducted by a retired managing director of Merrill Lynch. Including, a visit to the ABC-TV television studios in midtown, led by a senior writer on a popular day-

time show; a public speaking caught by a professional actor; classes in computer proficiency, resume writing, and dressing for success; and a two day visit to Washington, D.C. The students made presentations to members of Congress on issues of concern to youth. All of these workshops are led by adult professionals who are supporters of the program and who volunteer their time. Many of these adults have told me how it has been developmental for them, too!

A scene that was recently added to our development play was directed by one of our supporters, the owner of an advertising agency. This advertising executive and members of his staff met with the young people; to develop an advertising campaign for their Development School for Youth as a way to show them something of how the advertising business works. As part of creating the "campaign," the young people were organized into a "focus group" where they came up

with a slogan to describe the leadership training program: SCHOOL AS IT SHOULD BE.

In addition to such basic performance requirements as being ready to go on-stage, on time and "in costume" for each scene, the students are expected to do the homework assignments based on the exercises in *Let's Develop*, the marvelous book by Dr. Fred Newman is our textbook. They also produce a professional resume, and take part in a mock job interview. All seventeen members of the Spring class were placed in paid summer internships. We are enormously proud of the rave reviews our students received, with several of them being invited to come back next summer or offered permanent part-time jobs after school.

The current class consists of fourteen young people, who will graduate on December 17, 1998. Like the first group of trainees, the class is very het-

erogeneous. It includes a Muslim young woman, a 15-year-old from Hong Kong whose family came to New York two years ago, a Jewish young man who is a freshman at John Jay College (at 22 he is our elder statesman), several young people whose parents are recent immigrants from the Caribbean, and African American youngsters.

In the Development School for Youth, young people are performing ahead of themselves. They are doing more than they are "scheduled" to do, stepping outside the fixed identities that keep them insufficiently educated and unconnected to the world at large.

As the co-director of the school, I have also been performing. At The Development School for Youth and the All Stars, we are participating with the young people in creating new developmental performances for all of us, and together we are learning a great deal in the process.

SUNY at Stony Brook Presents:

Dine with your Deans

Learn about the people behind the titles.

The Deans will discuss their careers, early influences, role models, best and worst decisions, and the benefits of their co-curricular activities. They will share the wisdom of hindsight. What would they change, if they could plan their lives all over again?

March 11: Burton Pollack, Dental Medicine

Yacov Shamash, Business and Engineering

March 25: Rollin Richmond, Provost

Carmen Vasquez, Dean of Students

April 1: Frances Brisbane, Social Welfare, 12:30

Paul Armstrong, Arts and Sciences, 2:00

April 8: Marvin Geller, Marine Sciences

Richard Laskowski, Physical Education and Athletics

April 15: Paul Edelson, Professional Development

April 22: Norman Edelman, Medicine

April 29: Lawrence Martin, Graduate School

May 6: Lorna McBarnette, Health Technology

This event will take place in the upper dining lounge of the Student Activities Center, on Wednesdays, usually between 12:30 and 1:30. (April 1st is the only exception.) Reservations are required due to the expected demand. Please call 2-7320.

Bring your own lunch.

If any special accommodations are required or if there are any questions, please contact Marpat Quinn at 2-7320.

A Sister's Welcome Little Known Truth About Lady Liberty

The Statue of Liberty was originally a Black woman, but, as memory serves, it was created in black because the model was Black. In a book called *The Journey of the Songhai People*, Dr. Jim Haskins points out that what stimulated the original idea for that 151-foot statue in the New York harbor initially was the part that Black soldiers played in the ending of Black African Bondage in the United States.

Dr. Haskins is a member of the National Education Advisory Committee of the Liberty-Ellis Island Committee and professor of English at the University of Florida. He is also a Black author. Dr. Haskins says that the statue was created in the mind of the French historian Edourd de Laboulaye, chairman of the French Anti-Slavery Society. De Laboulaye, together with sculptor Frederic Auguste Bartholdi, proposed to the French government that the people of France present to the people of the United States, the gift of a Statue of Liberty. It was presented to the American Abolitionist Society, in recognition of the fact that Black soldiers won the Civil War in the United States. It was widely known that Black soldiers played the pivotal role in winning the war, and this gift would be a tribute to their prowess.

Suzanne Nakasian, director of the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island Foundations' National Ethnic Campaign, said that the Black Americans direct connection to Lady Liberty is unknown to the majority of Americans, black or white. When the statue was presented to the U.S.

Minister to France in 1884, it is said that he remonstrated that the dominant view of the broken shackles would be offensive to the U.S. South, since the statue was a reminder of Blacks winning their freedom. It was a reminder to a beaten South of the ones who caused their defeat; their despised former captives.

Documents of Proof:

1.) To see the original model of the Statue of Liberty, with the broken chains at her feet and in her left hand, go to the Museum of the City of N.Y. at Fifth Avenue and 103rd Street. For further information call (212) 534-1672 ext.208 and speak to Peter Simmons and ask to be sent documentation.

2) Check the New York Times Magazine, part II, May 18, 1986. Read the article by Laboulaye.

3) The dark original face of the Statue of Liberty can be seen in the New York Post, June 17, 1986 issue. The Post also states the reason for the broken chains at her feet.

4) Finally, you can check with the French Mission or the French Embassy at the U.N. in Washington, D.C. and ask for the original French material on the Statue of Liberty. Be sure to ask that they include the Bartholdi Original model. Call the following numbers in September for more information (202) 944-6060 or (202) 944-6400.

Africana History cont'd

on the history of man. In the closing years of the 19th century, African-American historians began to look at their people's history from their vantage point and their point of view. Dr. Benjamin Quarks observed that "as early as 1883 this desire to bring to public attention the untapped material on the Negro prompted George Washington Williams to publish his two-volume *History of The Negro Race in America from 1619 to 1880*.

The first formally trained African-American historian was W.E.B. DuBois, whose doctoral dissertation, published in 1895, *The Suppression Of The African Slave Trade To The United States, 1638-1870*, became the first title to be published in the Harvard Historical Studies. It was with Carter G. Woodson, another Ph.D., that African world history took a great leap forward and found a defender who could document his claims. Woodson was convinced that unless

something was done to rescue the Black man from history's oversight, he would become a "negligible factor in the thought of the world." Woodson, in 1915, founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History. Woodson believed that there was no such thing as, "Negro History." He said what was called "Negro History" was only a missing segment of world history. He devoted the greater portion of his life to restoring this segment.

Africa came into the Mediterranean world, mainly through Greece, which had been under African influence, and then Africa was cut off from the melting pot by the turmoil among the Europeans and the religious conquests incident to the rise of Islam. Africa, prior to these events, had developed its history and civilization, indigenous to its people and lands. Africa came back into the general picture of history through the

penetration of North Africa, West Africa and the Sudan by the Arabs. European and American slave traders next ravaged the continent. The imperialist colonizers and missionaries finally entered the scene and prevailed until the recent re-emergence of independent African nations.

Africans are, of course, closely connected to the history of both North and South America. The African-American's role in the social, economic and political development of the American states is an important foundation upon which to build racial understanding, especially in areas in which false generalization and stereotypes have been developed to separate peoples rather than to unite them. Contrary to a misconception which still prevails, the Africans were familiar with literature and art for many years before their contact with the Western World. Before the breakup of the social structure of the West African states of Ghana, Mali and Songhay, and the internal strife and chaos that made the slave

trade possible, the forefathers of the Africans who eventually became slaves in the United States, lived in a society where university life was fairly common and scholars were held in reverence.

To understand fully any aspect of African-American life, one must realize that the African-American is not without a cultural past, though he was many generations removed from it before his achievements in American literature and art commanded any appreciable attention. Africana, or Black History, should be taught every day, not only in the schools, but also in the home. African History Month should be every month. We need to learn about all the African people of the world, including those who live in Asia and the Pacific Islands.

In the twenty-first century there will be over one billion African people in the world. We are tomorrow's people, but, of course, we were yesterday's people, too. With an understanding of our new importance we can change the world, if first we change ourselves.

A Tribute To Mamma's

by Louis Woods

This is dedicated to the most important person in my life, my mother. I wish that everyone could be as blessed as I am in this regard. I have the best mother on the planet. She gives me hope when I get discouraged about finding that special someone. But I know that there are many Black women out there that are as wonderful as she is. I would like to take the time to dedicate this written expression of love to all of them and the mothers that raised all of us.

Too often we take our loved ones, our privileges and our prized possessions for granted. I refuse to make this common blunder made by many. I aspire to cherish my loved ones and all of the positive influences that have helped me to succeed on a daily basis. What better way to begin this life long process than to celebrate the most important person in my life, my mother.

Mom, I truly cherish you on every conceivable level. My love for you is so intense, so profound, that it is unmatched by anything under the sun except the love that you have given to me all of my life. Words cannot possibly describe my feelings for you. The expression of those feelings can only be conveyed through my hugs, my kisses and that occasional glance at each other that always seems to bring a smile to both of our faces.

I am eternally grateful to the universe, the cosmos or whatever forces brought me into your life 23 and a half years ago. For, at my conception, those forces gave me the privilege of being an extension of you, an extension of greatness. Any being on this planet that is conceived by someone wonderful is bound for greatness. So it is with you and I. All that I have achieved and will

achieve in the future can be traced directly back to you. You deserve all of the credit for transferring the privilege present in our family to your only son. You instilled in me the desire to learn and today I am intelligent. You gave me a pencil, a drawing pad and an infinite amount of love and today I am an artist. When I was one and a half years old you gave me a coke bottle and lots of attention and now I am potty trained (smile). All of these things that I am now you taught me by example (except the coke bottle thing). But seriously, I am extremely blessed to have you in my life. You are the best, the absolute best parent and person on the planet. I cannot imagine having a better relationship with another human being, than the one I have with you. Every day I am excited and thankful to be your son.

The wonders of our relationship are experienced on many levels. One level that I would be remiss not to mention is the spiritual level. You and I are linked for life in a truly wonderful and mysterious way. Part of your soul resides in me. For how could it not? You have raised me to be as wonderful as you are in my own special way. Your splendor is part of me, and it will be passed down our lineage through my children and my children's children. This is a spiritual reality that we experience daily but seldom verbalize. You have linked me to the lineage that made you the great person that you are today. I am indebted to you for letting me experience the joys that our family brings and I am equally as indebted to them for making you, the person that you are.

Ma, I would not want it any other way. Thank you for raising me the way that you did and for allowing me to spread your greatness through me.

A Brief Biography of John Henrik Clarke

By: Simcael Mason

Brother John Henrik Clarke was born on January 1, 1915 in Union Springs Alabama. At an early age, Clarke's thinking was greatly influenced by a fifth grade teacher, who made it quite clear to him that he was not like the other children. Therefore, he had to become a critical thinker. However, while studying the bible, Dr. Clarke began a search for "the true history of African people."

Dr. Clarke has done, and continues to do, many lectures in his hometown Harlem, New York. Christopher Columbus and the African Holocaust: and the rise of European capitalism, Africans at the Crossroads, Marcus Garvey and the vision of Africa, Why Africana History, Africa in the Conquest of Spain, and History of Africa are among the numerous books, articles, and essays he has written over the years. Dr. Clarke also taught at Hunter College and Cornell University during the 1980's. Cornell University established an Africana Library in his name.

Despite his great achievements, it is his particular methodology of processing historical information that compels many brothers and sisters to refer to Dr. Clarke's works for accuracy of their erudition. Furthermore, Dr. Clarke continues to cause "trouble" in the academic field, along with his "partner in crime," Dr. Yosef ben-Jochannon. The two elders are an inseparable pair of revolutionaries in thought, who continuously "raise hell until the heavens fall" (quoted from Cannabis in the song *I'll be gone till November*) where it concerns the correct education of our people. Dr. Leonard Jeffries called these two elder sages, "Living fountains of knowledge."

Pick up a cup and drink from the nectar of knowledge that both elders possess. Not solely to receive their data, but to tap into their vein of conceptualization in order to enhance yours; before they make that transcendental journey joining our ancestors.

JOIN THE STRUGGLE!!!

**GET INVOLVED
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African American Art Authority Speaks at Presidential Lecture Series

Stony Brook- Dr. David C. Driskell, one of the world's leading experts on African American art and a prominent artist in his own right, spoke at the State University of New York at Stony Brook on Wednesday, March 4. His talk, "*An Art Journey: David C. Driskell, Painter*," is the third offering in a new Presidential Lecture Series Celebrating Diversity that began last fall as part of the University's 40th anniversary celebration.

The program, which is free and open to the public, is co-sponsored by the Office of the President, the Office for Diversity and Affirmative Action and the Department of Art. The Student Union Art Gallery will exhibit Dr. Driskell's work, which will remain on display through Friday, March 20.

Considered one of the world's leading authorities on African American art, Dr. Driskell is the recipient of nine honorary doctoral degrees in art. He has

contributed significantly to scholarship in the history of art on the role of the Black artist in American society; authored five exhibition books on the subject; co-authored four others; and published more than 40 catalogues from exhibitions he curated. His articles and essays on the subject of African American art are extensive, having appeared in more than 20 major publications throughout the world. His most recent creative project is the execution of 65 stained glass windows for the newly renovated DeForest Chapel on the campus of Talladega College in Alabama. The windows were installed in the spring of 1996.

No stranger to television, Dr. Driskell has seven films to his credit on the subject of African American art. He has appeared on NBC's *The Today Show*, CBS's *In The News*, PBS and on television in 10 foreign countries. In 1977, Dr. Driskell was commissioned by CBS Television to write the script for an hour-long television program on African American art, *Hidden Heritage*, which he also narrated on camera. CUE Films of London produced the documentary *Hidden Heritage: The Roots of Black American Painting*, for British television which premiered at the Princess Anne Theater at the British Academy of Film and Arts in 1990, to the acclaim of an audience comprised of art enthusiasts from four continents.

Since 1977, Dr. Driskell has served as cultural advisor to Camille and Bill Cosby and as curator of the Cosby Collection of Fine Arts. In 1995, President and Mrs. Clinton asked him to select a work of art by an African American artist for permanent display in The White House. Henry O. Tanner's celebrated painting, *Sand Dunes at Sunset: Atlantic City*, was unveiled and installed in a ceremony in the Garden Room on October 29, 1996.

Dr. Driskell, Distinguished University Professor of Art at the University of Maryland, College Park, was born in Georgia and educated in the public schools of North Carolina. He received an undergraduate degree in art from Howard University and a master of fine arts degree from the Catholic University of America, both in Washington, D.C. He pursued post-graduate study in art history at The Netherlands Institute for the History of Art in The Hague and independently studied African and African American cultures in Europe, Africa and South America.

The recipient of numerous fellowships, he began his teaching career at Talladega in 1955 and has taught at Howard and Fisk Universities. He was a visiting professor of art at Bowdoin College, the University of Michigan, Queens

College and Obafemi Awolowo University (previously the University of Ife) in Nigeria, West Africa.

He joined the University of Maryland art department faculty in 1977 and served as its chairman from 1978 to 1983. He has maintained an active career in the arts as a teacher, curator, administrator and art consultant while continuing to paint and teach at the University of Maryland. He serves on the boards of several nationally known art institutions and organizations such as the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, the American Federation of Arts, The Cosby Foundation Scholarship Advisory Committee, the Commissioners of the Smithsonian's National Museum of African Art and the Amistad Research Center.

The 40th Anniversary Presidential Series concludes with a Wednesday, April 8 talk by educator Jane Elliott, adapter of the "*Blue Eyes, Brown Eyes*" discrimination experiment. The sensitizing exercise, in which participants are labeled inferior or superior based on the color of their eyes, began in a third grade classroom in all-white, all-Christian Riceville, Iowa, immediately after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. It has been repeated with dramatic results with children and adults throughout the country.

Several documentaries have covered Ms. Elliott's work. They include ABC-TV's "*The Eye of the Storm*," which won a Peabody Award; "*A Class Divided*," an Emmy-winning PBS Frontline series that dealt with the long-term impact of the exercise and Ms. Elliott's work with adults; and most recently, the Emmy-winning Florida Public Television production of "*The Eye of the Beholder*," which also explored how adults react to discrimination. "*A Class Divided*," is being used with high school students in South Africa to teach them about the anatomy of prejudice and the effects of racism on both the perpetrators and the victims of discriminatory treatment.

Ms. Elliott is a recipient of the National Mental Health Association Award for Excellence in Education. She is a popular speaker among education, business and labor groups, and frequently appears on television in programs ranging from the *Today Show* to *Oprah Winfrey*. Her talk at Stony Brook, entitled "*A Collar in My Pocket*," will run from 12:40 p.m. to 2 p.m. in the Staller Center for the Arts Recital Hall. The free lecture is cosponsored by the Office of the President, the Office for Diversity and Affirmative Action, and the Center for Innovation and Excellence in Education.

Know Thyself Book Club

Recommended Best Read

1. Singing in the Come Back Chior by Bebe Moore Campbell (Putnam, \$20)
2. Coffee Will Make You Black by April Sinclair (Avon, \$12)
3. Soul Food by L. Brookshire (HarperCollins, \$5.99)
4. *Paradise* by Toni Morrison (Knopf, \$25)
5. Caught Up in the Rapture by S. Jackson (Scribner, \$12)
6. Color of Water by James McBride (Riverhead, \$13)
7. The Color Complex by Kathy Russell (Anchor, \$12.95)
8. Caucasasia by Danzy Senna (Riverhead, \$24.95)
9. Lady Moses by Lucinda Roy (HarperFlamingo, \$24)
10. Acts of Faith by Iyanla Vanzant (Fireside, \$11)

Between The Lines

By: Carline Lina Garner

The Nobel Laureate, Toni Morrison, has finally released her long awaited book, **Paradise**. This is her seventh book since the release of *Jazz* in 1993. Morrison is most noted for her books, *The Bluest Eye*, 1970; *Sula*, 1974; *Song of Solomon*, 1977; *Tar Baby*, 1981; and the Pulitzer Prize winning - *Beloved*, 1987. For years Morrison has tackled tough issues that touch the lives of Black people. In her latest novel, the award winning author intrigues us with a richly imagined and elegantly composed mystery that extends over a period from the 1800's to the 1970's.

The novel takes place in an all-Black town in Oklahoma, in 1976. It is a story about a group of women living in a convent and the men who try to assault them. Morrison touches on many issues in this novel such as, the significance of race, conflicts between generations, the customs of religion, and overall the true meaning of paradise.

If you think you can read this book with Puff Daddy's latest remix playing in the background while your roommate is on the phone screaming at her jealous boyfriend, forget it! This novel requires careful reading in a quiet area and a dictionary by your side. In this very special sneak preview excerpt, one of the characters, Mavis tries to escape from her family because she believes that they are going to try to kill her for the accidental death of her two children.

The rest of the night she waited, not closing her eyes for a second. Frank's sleep was sound and she would have slipped out of bed and opened the door except for the breathing beyond it. She was sure Sal squatted there - ready to pounce and grab her legs. Her upper lip would be raised showing her eleven year-old teeth too big for her snarling mouth. The trap would be agreed upon but maybe not laid yet. Getting out of the house had been so intense. She finally made it out to the car. Pulling the Cadillac away from the curb when she realized she didn't know what to do next. She drove towards her mother's.

Toni Morrison is currently teaching at Princeton University in New Jersey.

**When Nothing Exists . . . My Love
Dedicated to My Divine-Entity**

When nothing exists, I'll still be with you.

When the sun runs cold.
God has lost his hold.
And reality begins to close.
You will be my divine inspiration, yet untold.
When nothing exists, I'll be with you complementing
your soul.

When I am close to death.
And my head lay upon your chest.
With my last tear caressing your breasts.
Take hold of my breath.
When nothing exists, I'll be with you in peaceful rest.

When the human race begins to cry.
And the last life form on earth dies.
Do not fret, we are spiritually tied.
When nothing exists, I will forever, always, be by your
side.

When all metal begins to rust.
The earth crumbles to Dust to Dust.
And Ashes to Ashes becomes us.
Do not quiver my love.
For we will walk upon the universe itself,
transcending what is physically hidden
and spiritually above.

When the waters of the earth become diseased.
The air we breathe polluted with fleas.
And the supreme wicked being falls to his knees.
We will be together, as the universal breeze,
recreating life with ease.

---Simcael Mason

P
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E
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Y

Militant Black

I have been lied to
Cheated of my heritage
Cheated of my humanity
Bereft of my virtue
Oppressed, Repressed, Compressed
in the name of Conquest
So, Don't Call Me A Militant Black!

I was raped, ridiculed, and murdered
My mind contaminated with the false
My faith shattered by the truth
My spirit shackled with the Black of Good
My culture destroyed by the White of Greed
So, Don't Call Me A Militant Black!

You have been lied to
Your ancestors were divided and conquered
in the name of the West
Your history has been swallowed
by the Black Sea's depths
Your self-respect has been destroyed
by the pale of pain
Your self-worth has been strangled
By the noose of shame
So, Why Aren't You A Militant Black!?!

--- Nikki Hall

Stream
of
Consciousness:
Joygasm's
Rivers

Deciphering a Joygasm

You can't know me and I'll tell you why, as
you stare with bewilderment while your lips form
a lie. You hear my weakness but you don't listen to
my strength. You search for my life and simulta-
neously take my breath. You want to decipher my
"ifs", "ands", or "buts". You misread perverted
mentions and then label me a slut. My truth can't
stab you in the back if you face it, and that you
must. Look deep into a Joygasm and you'll find
your own lust. You might not recognize it at first
because it's masked by my diction; and because
you won't acknowledge it you label it fiction.

A Joygasm is the reflection of your own shal-
low existence. If you try to decipher one you'll
face reciprocal resistance. You should not ignore
the stories that full length mirrors tell. You don't
know me because you know me too well.

Joyal Miasia McNeil

Call for Creativity

The Creative Arts Editor
is looking for:

- Poems
- Short Stories
- Artwork
- Photographs
- other forms of creative expression

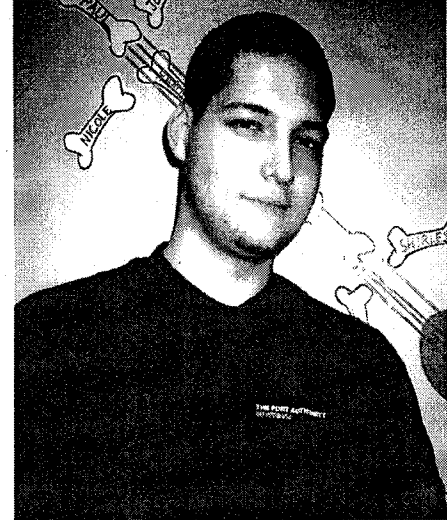
Please bring all materials to
the BLACKWORLD office
Student Union Basement Room 072
or to the Student Polity Suite
Student Activities Center Room 217

After nearly three decades as a program, do you feel that the University should institute an Africana Studies DEPARTMENT?



Danielle Wynn/Junior/English Major

I have taken AFS courses, and I think that AFS should become a department because the fact that there's not enough teachers. African Americans students need to learn more about themselves and they need to have more classes, if you have more classes and less teachers there's no way for the students to learn more about themselves.



Casimir Marszalek/Junior/Economics Major

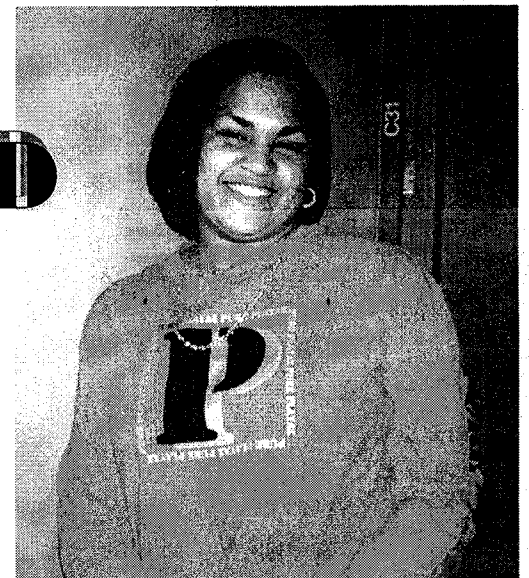
It seems to me like all the important courses have departments, I'm sure there's room for one more. Especially since the issues brought up in AFS courses are so interesting and increasing in demand.



Yolanda Tart/Sophomore/Psychology Major

I believe it's unfair that AFS has been here for more than 25 years and it is not recognized by administration. What that is saying to me is that as an African American I'm important enough to pay tuition but my history is not important enough to be considered a department. Stony Brook is a multiracial school and by shutting out Africana Studies, the school is a reneging on its "ideals" of equal education and opportunity, if the opportunity to enhance one's own understanding of his or her culture is taken away.

The BLACKWORLD Opinion Question



Nicole Callier/Senior/Bio Major

I feel that the AFS program should be changed into a department cause their such a high demand for AFS courses, and a lot of times those courses are closed. From what I understand when cuts are done AFS courses are the first to go and I don't understand this rational when AFS courses have such high demand.



Andre English/Senior/AFS Major

I think the fact that the AFS program has not been a department is due to nothing but pure racism I think that there's an assault on people of color on this campus. The president talks clearly about wanting to have a diverse campus yet there's five to six hundred affirmative action waivers that have been done illegally in the past two years under her reign, which clearly cuts into diversity and the idea of affirmative action. I think this all ties into one basically it's a racist reason, the program has been here for 30 years and they still haven't made it a department.

New Baffles Mean Better Sound Quality for the Sports Complex

By: Josephine Oduro

Poor acoustics in the sports complex has made it an undesirable place to hold music concerts, but a plan is underway to correct this problem and bring a little more entertainment to the Stony Brook campus.

The plan to improve the sound quality in the complex involves inserting baffles in strategic areas. A baffle is a partition that prevents interference between sound waves in a loudspeaker. Because of the design of the sports complex, sound waves get trapped in the rafters, which makes the sound distribution uneven.

The problems with the sound quality have resulted in a negative response from promoters. Once the sound quality is improved, Stony Brook will be more accessible to performers such as Puff Daddy and The Family, Hanson, Sheryl Crow, and Toni Braxton. "By introducing new baffles this will open doors for real high-level performers," said Alan Inkles, director of the Staller Center for the Arts.

Inkles said the gym needs to provide rock and roll seven days a week because the Staller Center can't do it alone. In addition, Inkles assures that there is no competition between the Staller Center and the sports complex. The main objective of both buildings is to provide quality entertainment.

The idea to implement baffles wasn't very baffling at all. Actually the plan to improve the sound quality in the sports complex has been around for about five to seven years, but it was never fully addressed because of a lack of funds. Jim Faith Productions, an outside promoter offered to install the baffles, but later backed out of the deal promotionally and financially.

This project is a collaborative effort by Inkles, Dr. Fred Preston, vice president of Student Affairs, the Physical Education and Athletic Department, the Concert Committee, and The Student Polity Association, Inc.

Funding for the baffle treatment will be provided by the Physical Education and Athletic department, President Kenny and Dr. Preston. The exact cost of install-

ing the baffles is unavailable at this time. Managing Director of the sports complex, Kay Don, assures that absolutely no student funds will be used. "The only money students will be spending is for the concert tickets," Don said.

Many students complain about the lack of concerts on campus. Vanessa Joseph, a member of the Stony Brook gospel choir, has sung in the sports complex with the choir, and said that the acoustics did not allow their voices to be projected as well as it should have.

Other students are excited about the idea of seeing their favorite performers live in concert. Currently, concerts are held in the Pritchard Gym. The walls of the sports complex have been sprayed with baffle treatment to correct the problem. The spray, however, is not enough to significantly improve the sound quality.

The sound improvement is an attempt not only to attract promoters and artists, but also students and members of the Stony Brook community. The complex will host a variety of musical concerts, such as Rock, Hip-Hop, and Reggae. It will also hold comedy shows with big name comedians.

Don expressed her desire to resume having concerts in the complex, which at one point housed 4,500 to 4,700 people. The sports complex has a successful history of presenting live concerts, but due to the problems with the sound, the privilege has been taken away.

"When we improve the pitch quality, Stony Brook will be able to resume the reputation it had years ago as a place that can promote really good concerts," said Norman Berhannan, facilities manager of the sports complex.

Anthony Bonovito, Building Manager of the sports complex thinks that baffles will be a tremendous help, but says, "there's not going to be a 100 percent improvement."

Completion of the project is scheduled for the fall semester of 1998.

Find Your Roots in the Motherland

By: Tischelle George

An old Mende proverb says, "You know who a person is by the language he cries in," which means, regardless of how many languages a person knows, when in pain he will always cry out in his mother tongue.

Anthropologist, Joseph Opala discussed his research of the American South Gullah people and their connection to Sierra Leone, West Africa, in a lecture that he presented on February 19th at the Staller Center in honor of Black History Month.

Opala's research focuses on the similarities in culture, language and traditions of the Gullah and the Sierra Leonians. The Gullah population is condensed on small islands along the coast of South Carolina and Georgia. "It is a very remote, isolated community," Opala said. "It is rural with distinctive language and color." This location has been a major factor in their ability to preserve African traditions and vocabulary for over 200 years.

Opala discovered that during the late 1700's the Africans of Sierra Leone were delivered directly to Charleston, South Carolina and Savannah, Georgia. In the 18th century, these states served

as rice colonies because of the climate and weather conditions. "Rice is a tropical and complicated crop," Opala said. "Britains didn't know what to do. They needed Africans to be technicians for the rice crops." British slave traders headed for countries such as Sierra Leone, Senegal and Liberia, which were referred to as the "Rice Coast." Rice was a main staple of the diet in these countries and the Africans had the techniques for growing the crop. "We have never been told that Africans brought their know-how," Opala said. "The tools and methods for rice cultivation came from Africa."

Techniques for growing rice are not the only tradition that enslaved Africans maintained in America. Dr. Lorenzo Turner, the first Black scholar to do detailed research on Black linguistics, discovered that the Gullah language had an African influence. He found 250 words in Gullah that were African in origin.

Dr. Turner found another preservation of African culture in America, in the names of the Gullah people. Just about every person in the Gullah community had two names. One name was for public use and the second was for family use. The second name was called a "basket name" and was usually African.

One of the most notable discoveries of this Howard Ph.D was a five-line song, which is the longest text in African to be preserved by Black Americans. It took him 10 years to decipher the language of the song, which was Mende.

Opala followed up on Dr. Turner's research several years later. He went so far as to find the daughter of the woman who originally sang the song for Turner. Opala and other anthropologists and linguists managed to locate the village in Sierra Leone where the song originated. A removed African-American family was reunited with their African relatives after 200 years. Opala documented this event in the film, *Crossing the Sea on a Sacred Song. A Gullah family finds its roots in Sierra Leone.*

Through researching the methods of the slave trade, Opala was able to infer that the Mende song was carried to the Americas by a young woman, who was captured in Sierra Leone during the late 1700's. Only the strong, young, productive men and women were captured into slavery. Opala knows that a woman is responsible for the preservation of the song, because in Sierra Leone, this particular song is a Mende burial song that is sung exclusively by women.

Opala consulted with an elder about why a young woman would choose such a song to preserve in America. The elder explained to him that Africans believe that being buried in a foreign country prevents the spirit from returning to the ancestors. The song, the elder said, was her only means to connect herself to her African ancestors. It was the only thing of importance that she could carry with her, because all of her people had been buried with it.

Opala's discussion and slide presentation concluded Professor Barbara Frank's class on Arts of the African Diaspora, ARH 329/AFS 339. "I have always included a section on the Gullah," said Frank. "I usually end in the U. S. looking at the Diaspora."

Professor Frank, who has been friends with Opala for several years, says she invited him because, "I was aware of his research and he's a fabulous lecturer. I knew it would be a wonderful opportunity for my class."

Graduate student-teacher's assistant, Jennifer Wingate agrees, saying the lecture "gives students an idea of what goes into anthropology research. It brings it alive."

CONNECT THE DOTS

By: Roberto Augustus Gayle

ONE MONTH IS NOT ENOUGH!

Black History Month has become as American as chili dogs and antacid, as traditional as Thanksgiving dinner and as festive as the annual Mardi Gras. But the reality is, Black History Month is America's greatest misnomer. The relentless efforts of our ancestors, who pushed and pleaded with the government to set aside a time to honor Black Americans, was obviously born from integrity and self-respect.

The American governing body, the great-great-grandchildren of the European poor who tripped over and then stole this nation, did the best they could: they allocated the shortest month in their calendar to celebrate Black history. The Black community, like an unknowing child who is offered a toy gun with real bullets, accepted this new American game. We agreed to play "Name that Black Hero" for 400 points! That's all it's worth because, America is only 400 years old. Meanwhile, the value of our richest civilizations spans three millennia.

How then can America hope to communicate more than 3,000 years of a civilization's growth, demise and resurgence in one month? It is foolish to consider that the history of African descendants, the indigenous people, would be recognized only since the time we made the horrific middle passage to the Americas.

How could our history in the Americas, the shortest, most minimal part of our great journey, be seen as greater than the rise and fall of Egypt, Thebes and the Sudanese empires? How could the life preserving works of the original physician, mathematician, astrologer and philosopher, Imhotep, be outweighed by Garrett Morgan's invention of the traffic light?

The historic Greek mathematician, Pythagoras, admired Imhotep so much that he claimed his discoveries as his own. Even today he is credited for the scientific process of numerology and true astrology with our 1-900-dial-a-psychic schemes.

Truth is indivisible. Its value is constant, so one truth doesn't supersede another. Our goal, however, should be to tell the complete truth, not a small portion of it. The brilliance of the Haitian revolutionist Toussaint L'Ouverture cannot be judged against Imhotep or Queen

Nefertari, co-founder of the famous Eighteenth Dynasty and wife of Ramses I, Egypt's great imperial leader.

All of history must be considered to understand each piece of it. The wisdom is in the balancing, the completeness, the holism. At least some of today's Black scholars see the big picture. They include Wade Nobles, Ph.D., national president of The Association of Black Psychologists and specialist in African psychology and Black child development, and Na'im Akbar, Ph.D., preeminent African American psychologist and professor at Florida State University in Tallahassee, FL. Here at the University at Stony Brook you have Professor Joy

Mahabir, Professor Leslie Owens and Professor Oleufemi Vaughn, all of whom are faculty of the Africana Studies Program.

Viewing our challenges and triumphs globally will usually raise more truth. Only a few years ago, European archaeologists affirmed what African scholars already knew: all species of man originated from the Africa.

People of color today make up the majority of the world population. So, who America likes to call the minority, in the bigger picture, is the majority. This year as we continue to recognize Black achievements in America and proceed to balance it with the teachings before the

middle passage, we will discover that one month can not possibly be enough time to learn what is, essentially, the basis for world history.

Maybe we will build on this often unspoken legacy and outline a journey for our children that will lead them back to the teachings of our great rulers, the wisdom of our ancient pharaohs or the genius of our supreme mathematicians. This new legacy could guarantee their mastery of today's computer technology, unearth their God given knowledge of environmental preservation or tap their innate understanding of how to change the world.

HOW TO FIT THE SKIN YOU'RE IN

Despite rumors to the contrary, people of African descent in North America are African Americans. Many people of African descent, however, suffer from a myopic view. This is the residual effect of being brought to the Americas in chains and being stripped of our language, culture and true identity.

If you had a chance to look at the film "Sankofa" recently, you might remember a scene in which an African American model said "I'm not African." There are a lot of people who could have written those lines as an expression of their true feelings. I realized this wholeheartedly when a former colleague denied that she is Black. This resulted from a comment as I referred to her as a "sister."

Let us not forget that there were some in our ancestral line, who related to their African roots. Let's take for example the African Methodist Episcopal church. Brother Richard Allen, Absalom Jones and his comrades were clearly a part of the progressive side of our history. This led them to have a positive sense of their African origin. I learned that many people in our communities did not fully realize our African history, because of insufficient education.

I was introduced to a book called the *Miseducation of the Negro* by Carter G. Woodson. I learned about the

need for people of African descent to have an African centered perspective. This helps you to define yourself and speak for yourself, instead of allowing others to speak for and define who you are.

People usually discuss their origin in relationship to the land of their forefathers. For European-Americans, that can mean Germany, France, Portugal or other European countries. For African Americans, that means the continent of our forefathers, because we were stripped of the knowledge of exactly where we came from during our enslavement. We may have been Yoruba, Ibo, Fulani, Akan, Luo or any host of ethnic groups, but we were bred by our slave masters and homogenized into one class of African Americans.

I'm proud to be an African and I'm proud to be an American. Africa has a rich history of proud kingdoms in the West, like Mali and Songhai. In North Africa the great kingdoms of ancient Egypt gave us the pyramids, the Sphinx, number systems. These nations shared their knowledge and wisdom with the Greek historian, Herodotus and others. My forefathers in America worked to build this nation to become one of the mightiest in the world.

I realize that the African suit doesn't feel comfortable to many of my

brothers and sisters. It will take a bit of adjusting, just as moving from Colored to Negro to Black did at various points in our history. It's really just the old connection being made again. Total acceptance requires dieting and a bit of mental exercise to make it fit. Check it out with your local religious source, oracle, the bone thrower or the root man. You might find that it's not such a bad fit after all.

**Do You Have
An Idea For A
Column?
Let Us Know,
And Maybe
Your Column
Could Be Fea-
tured In
BLACKWORLD!!!**

INFO/TAINMENT-Upclose

The Bowlegged One!

Stony Brook - Thirteen years after the group **Full Force** wrote the hit lyrics, "*Roxanne, Roxanne*" for the rap group UTFO, mega producer Sean "Puffy" Combs, remixed the song, along with Sting's, "*Roxanne*" for the newly released hit single titled, "*Roxanne - 97*."

In a recent interview with Full Force member, Lou George better known as, Bowlegged Lou, at his slammin' house on Long Island, I got a chance to tap into the secret of his success and longevity.

He was born in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, on June 24, 1965. He's a Cancer, Ladies! He came to New York at the age of five and lived in Brooklyn most of his life. Lou began singing at a young age and the group was officially formed in 1980.

The six-member group is composed of three brothers and three cousins: Paul-Anthony, B-Fine, Baby Gerry, J.R. (formerly Shy-Shy), Curt, and Bowlegged Lou. Lou came up with the name **Full Force** because of the stamina that they have when they perform. "On stage we have non-stop energy, a lot of sexual thrusts, and we can dance our asses off," he said.

Back in the '80's, along with releasing two albums, including the self-titled, **Full Force**, with the hit single, "*Alice, I Want You Just For Me!*" and the second album, **Full Force Get Busy One Time**, they managed to produce and write songs for successful artists like: Lisa Lisa and Cult Jam "All Cried Out," James Brown "Static," Patti LaBelle "I Got It Like That," and Cheryl "Pepsi" Riley "Thanks For My Child."

Bowlegged Lou and the fellas even got to perform the entire musical score for one of the biggest selling sports video of all time . . . **Michael Jordan's Play-ground**. Lou says he enjoyed working with Jordan, especially when he tried to get him to dance. "It was great working with Mike," Lou said. "He's real down to earth. We even hung out at a club in L.A. It was a mob scene. We tried to have a good time but the ladies wouldn't leave Mike alone!" Since doing this video, Lou and Jordan still have a tight relationship.

As you might already know, Bowlegged Lou is a pretty versatile guy. He can sing, dance, write, produce, and he even act! After major success in producing and writing, Lou and his two brothers, Paul-Anthony and B-Fine, decided to try their hand at acting. They landed the roles of thugs that bullied rappers, Kid & Play in the 1991 hit movie, **House Party**. Bowlegged Lou played the part of Pee-Wee, the squeaky voiced villain, notorious for saying the line, "I'm gonna kick your f***ing ass!"

Lou felt very comfortable being in front of the camera instead of being on stage, performing live for thousands of screaming fans. He mentioned that he al-

ways wanted to be an actor and singer. "It was a dream come true," Lou said. "Theater Arts was my major in college. So, it was really a dream come true."

Soon after the release of **House Party 2**, in 1993, where he played the recurring role of Pee-Wee, Lou was in a near fatal car accident with his brother and group member, Curt. They were driving home after a night of partying at Bentley's, a Hip-Hop and Reggae club in Manhattan, when they were hit head on by a car that ran a red light. Lou suffered severe injuries from that accident. He needed sixteen stitches to close a deep wound in his head.

The accident took the group out of the spotlight for a couple of years. A lot of people wondered if they fell off. Lou said, "We always believed in ourselves. Even though after the accident we kind of chilled, we always knew we'd be back." Sure enough, they burst on the scene again, co-producing and writing songs for the late Latin vocalist Selena (who was tragically murdered), rapper Fat Joe, and most recently, the Backstreet Boys.

During his rehabilitation, Lou gave back to the community by attending speaking engagements where **Full Force** gave positive messages to kids and adults. One of his most recent engagements was at his alma mater, James Madison High School in Brooklyn, where 400 students showed up to hear what the group had to say.

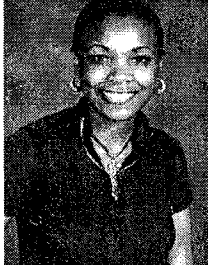
Some say the group **Full Force** is partially responsible for female rappers getting into Hip-Hop. Until the song, "*Roxanne, Roxanne*," there were no female rappers on vinyl. The battles between Roxanne Shante and the Real Roxanne, led to renowned female rappers like Queen Latifah and Salt & Pepa. I asked Lou, what did he think of current female rappers Lil' Kim and Foxy Brown, who are raw about their sexuality and refer to themselves as "Queen Bitches"? He said, "I like Lil' Kim and Foxy Brown. To each his own. You can't knock people and their art, besides, I like their music. I especially like the fact that Lil' Kim writes her own lyrics."

For the new millennium, **Full Force** has a lot of projects planned. Already in the works is a new movie titled C.A.T (Conflicts And Termination), written by **Full Force** and being directed by Reggie Hudlin. It is an adventure and comedy movie that will possibly star Angela Bassett.

Lastly, Lou's words of encouragement to all of his fans at Stony Brook are, "If you truly believe in yourself, keep on going after the prize. Don't let negativity get you down!"

Full Force get busy one time!

C. Lina Garner



Bowlegged Lou and Full Force

Leaps and Bounds

Study Reveals Denied Eligibility for Black and Needy Athletes

By: Jim Naughton

A report released this week by the National Collegiate Athletics Association showed significant increases in the percentages of black students and students from low-income families who were denied initial eligibility to compete in intercollegiate sports.

According to data from the N.C.A.A.'s Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse, the proportion of black students who were denied eligibility rose from 16.3 percent in the 1995-96 academic year to 26.9 percent in 1996-97.

Among students whose families earned less than \$30,000 annually, the proportion of those denied eligibility climbed from 14.7 percent to 22.2 percent in the same period. For the second straight year, the proportion of black students from low-income families who were denied eligibility was the highest in the survey, rising from 21.0 percent in 1995-96 to 34.7 percent in 1996-97.

The report was one of three statistical analyses of initial-eligibility issues released by the N.C.A.A. The other reports demonstrated that the grade-point averages and standardized test scores of athletes who receive initial eligibility were substantially higher in 1996-97 than those of athletes who received eligibility in 1995-96. The N.C.A.A.'s stricter initial-eligibility standards went into effect in 1996-97. The rules require that high school students complete 13 core courses, including four in English; achieve a grade-point average in those courses of at least 2.5; and score at least 820 on the SAT or 68 on the ACT. (Students with grade-point averages as low as 2.0 can become eligible by exceeding the minimum on one of the standardized tests.)

The stiffer standards were contained in Proposition 16, a controversial piece of legislation passed at the 1992 N.C.A.A. convention in response to com-

plaints that the association was taking advantage of athletes by allowing them to compete even though they were unprepared for college study.

Opponents of the proposal, who had argued that it would limit access to athletics scholarships for black students and those from low-income families, said the new studies proved their point.

"My first reaction was, 'Well, what's new?'" said Dale Clayton, president of the Black Coaches Association.

"We knew all along that this would happen," said Clayton, who is the men's basketball coach at Carson-Newman College. "History has shown that African-American students don't test well. Individuals from low-income families don't test well. And many times, these individuals are one and the same."

Charles Whitcomb, a member of the N.C.A.A.'s Minority Opportunities and Interests Committee, said he was planning to attend a meeting of the Division I Academics, Eligibility, and Compliance Cabinet, in Hilton Head, S.C., to discuss the reports.

"We now have an opportunity to reevaluate our decisions based on that data," said Dr. Whitcomb, a professor of recreation and leisure science at San Jose State University.

Christine H. Grant, a member of the Academics, Eligibility, and Compliance Cabinet, said she was "surprised" by the high proportion of black students and students from low-income families who had failed to gain eligibility. However, she said she did not foresee a relaxation of the initial-eligibility standards.

"I think the [college] presidents have made a commitment, and it would be extremely difficult to change," said Dr. Grant, director of women's athletics at the University of Iowa.

Source: Chronicle of Higher Education

Senior Profile

Larry Gibson

By: Ronke Adeniyi

Standing at six feet one inches, 175 pounds Larry Gibson, better known as "The General," is the point guard that holds the Stony Brook men's basketball team together like glue. He is the current team captain, leading this year with an average 11.2 points per game.

Born and raised in Far Rockaway, Queens, Gibson began his basketball career at Beach Channel High School.

Gibson came to Stony Brook for a better education and he greatly appreciates the diversity of the campus. A business management major, Gibson anticipates becoming a successful entrepreneur. He hopes that his classes will prepare him for a career in business.

Like most students, attending classes is a regular part of Gibson's day. Unlike most students, however, he then has to go to basketball practice for three hours. After practice Gibson attends some evening classes and then goes to study hall for two hours.

In his four years at Stony

Brook, Gibson has always been a member of the men's basketball team. He was named the 1997-98 tournament Most Valuable Player. He has been a recurring athlete of

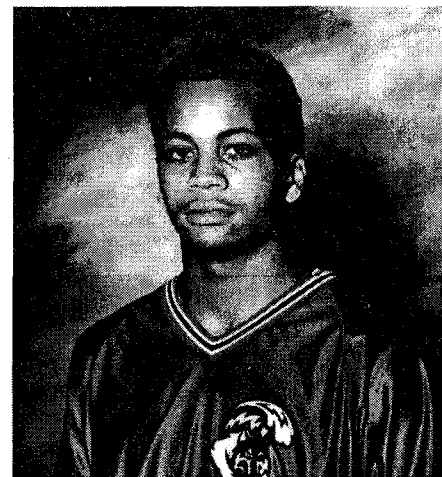
the week in the Athletic Media Relations week-in-review release. Most recently Gibson was an NECC All-Conference Honorable Mention selection.

On February 14th, 1998 in the season finale against Albany at the USB Sports Complex,

Gibson scored the thousandth point of his Stony Brook career, giving himself the sweetest Valentine's Day gift he ever received. "I feel it's a pretty good accomplishment," Gibson said. "I worked hard for four years." Gibson became the 17th player in USB history to score 1,000 points.

Gibson notes that Mark Jackson of the Indiana Pacers and Earvin "Magic" Johnson of the Los Angeles Lakers are two of his favorite professional basketball players.

His words of advice to his teammates and to future Stony Brook basketball players is to work hard and never give up.



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BLACKWORLD SPORTS

Stony Brook Athletics Week In Review

Lacrosse (0-1)

Division I, Independent

The Stony Brook lacrosse team suffered a heartbreaking 9-8 overtime loss in their opening contest of the season at Colgate.

The Seawolves raced out to a 5-0 lead in the first period two goals by Dominic D'Orazio (So., Bethpage, NY/Bethpage HS) including one unassisted extra-man goal at 12:42 of the first period. Vin Miller (So., Bethpage, NY/Island Trees HS) scored one goal and an assist on a goal by Robb Aitchison (Sr., Marietta, NY/Marcellus HS) in the opening quarter.

Colgate bounced back in the second period with three goals to pull within 5-3 at halftime and the two teams traded goals in the third period to make the score 7-5 in favor of Stony Brook to start the fourth. Colgate scored the first goal 4:42 into the fourth period to cut the lead to one. The Seawolves bounces back just :59 later when Craig Schmalz (So., Rocky Pt., NY/Rocky Point HS) slipped one past the goalie off a pass from Aitchison. That goal was Stony Brook's last as they would be held scoreless for the duration of the game.

The Seawolves held an 8-6 lead with under two minutes to go when Colgate's Eric Farber put one past Stony Brook netminder Greg Taylor (Sr., Lynbrook, NY/Lynbrook HS) with just 1:31 minutes left. Mark Bain put in an unassisted goal with :49 remaining that knotted the game at 8-8 and sent it into overtime. The game ended 2:54 into overtime when Colgate's Adam Michaels netted his only goal of the day to make the final score 9-8. Aitchison led the Seawolves with two goals and three assists. Taylor had 24 saves in net for Stony Brook as he played all 62:54 of the game. Ken Lorenz (Jr., Williamsville, NY/Williamsville South) and Eric Schaeffer (Fr., Greenlawn, NY/Harborfields HS) each added a goal for Stony Brook.

Men and Women Indoor Track and Field

Division II, NECC

Steve Sayegh (So., Mahopac, NY/Mahopac HS) took second in the 55-meter hurdles with a time of 7.74 for Stony Brook at the Division II ECAC Championships in Kutztown, Pennsylvania. Patrick Harding (Fr., Guyana, NY/Queens College) took sixth in the put at a distance of 47'-2". For the women's team, Karen Lahey (Fr., Lake Grove, NY/Smithtown HS) placed third in the 400-meters with a time of 59.73.

FOR MORE
BLACKWORLD SPORTS
SEE PAGE 14
