

SUMMER 2011 EDITION

THE
Black
Praxis

**INTRICACIES AND COMPLEXITIES: UNVEILING
THE REAL ME**

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A Letter from the Editors

Dear Reader,

This Summer 2011 issue of *Black Praxis*, emphasizes personal identity and expression. Our intent is to offer students a medium through which they can freely express themselves and showcase their works in a variety of art forms. We hope that from *Black Praxis* you find a relatable voice in the works presented.

The content within this magazine ranges from gender and sexualized stereotypes to identity but each piece reveals the intimate struggles students face on a daily basis as they let us into their inner self, thus the theme title: Intricacies and Complexities. As you read through this issue, we want you to be engaged, be inspired, and think critically about the perspectives given. We want this movement of ideas to be a continuum that transcends beyond this term. We hope that after reading this issue you feel encouraged to share your experiences.

Sincerely,

Auriell Towner and Deidra Willis
Editors-In-Chief

THAT'S NOT MY NAME: GENDER AND SEXUALIZED STEREOTYPING

Black Women: Call to Action

ANONYMOUS

How do we, as Black women, fight against naturally promiscuous and predatory stereotypes when we play into centuries-old images of uninhibited whores through consciously or unconsciously, supporting those who project negative imageries of us?

How do we, as Black women, speak out on the misrepresentation in song lyrics, music videos, and literature when we subscribe to behaviors and characteristics that imply lack of civility, morality and sexual restraint?

Black women have continued to look to others to answer these questions and provide solutions for shedding the negative characteristics we have come to thoughtlessly embrace and believe about ourselves.

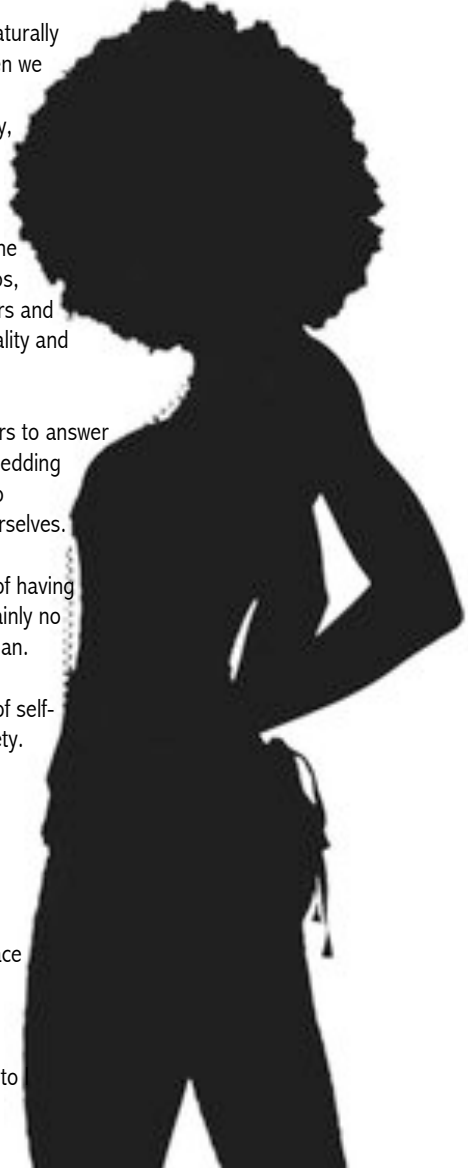
Black women, we must embrace the feeling of having no compulsion, no desire, no need and certainly no occasion to apologize for being a Black woman.

Black women, we must embrace the feeling of self-validation and not that of a patronizing society.

Black women, we must challenge the subtle undertones of disregard, the slights, the rudeness and the hatred we endure.

Black women, we cannot insist that others respect and value us if we do not first embrace these values ourselves.

Black women, in pursuit of certainty, variety, love, and security in our lives, we must dare to love ourselves because society has no idea what a Black woman is truly capable of when we do.



<http://thatsodeep.com/tag/black-women/>

Ain't Nothin' But a G-Strang, Baby

HANNAH GIORGIS '13

Minaj herself reinforces stereotypes of Black women as hypersexual—but this time she asserts more agency over her own sexuality, acting as the aggressor rather than the victimized groupie of some male rapper. Rather than being his sexual plaything, Minaj asserts herself and uses her partner to satisfy her own sexual needs because her “turning down some head” would be equivalent to “a bird turning down some bread:” in that Minaj requires sexual favors to exist just as a “bird,” or prostitute needs “bread” or money. Minaj makes the demands in the quasi-relationship, and things clearly run on her terms; she allows him to “eat it like a treat...squirt it [and] skeet” as long as he doesn’t get any “skeet,” or ejaculate, in her sheets.



<http://mypinkfriday.com/media/photos/5091/11067>

Black Respectability

PAIGE FRANKLIN '12

The black church is a main pillar of black culture, morals, lifestyle, socialization, leadership and sexual politics. The black church also possesses the power to define notions of black respectability, which govern the acceptability of one's behavior, appearance and the way in which one carries himself or herself. Generally the black church is a central vehicle of cultural definition within the black community. It constantly projects notions of black respectability, moral consciousness and distinctions between behavior that is deemed "sinful" and behavior that is deemed "pure". The black church classifies the tenets of a "respectable" black man as someone who is fit to run a household, to carry the race forward, to represent the black family, a black man who is heterosexual with "masculine" qualities. The antithesis of the "respectable black male" or the "strong black male" is the black gay male who is viewed as weak, as a "punk" who possesses "feminine qualities", who is not fit to lead a black family. Within the context of the black church and therefore the black community the black gay male is abnormal. The black male does not fit within the ideology of the black community; therefore in many instances the gay black male feels ill at ease revealing his true sexual identity. As a result, the black gay male experiences a great conflict between the overarching assertions and sentiments of what is deemed acceptable behavior and the thought patterns and lifestyle they engage in. The cogency of disapproval that arises from the black church causes black gay males to urgently conceal their true sexual identity for fear of ostracization, and forms of emotional and

physical abuse. One's self identification as a black gay man in the context of the black community is suppressed by notions of black respectability and black masculinity that are perpetuated and reinforced by an integral force in the black community, the black church.

The characterization of straight black men as the most acceptable and most probable leaders of black families and therefore the black community as a whole originates partially from a phenomenon that is elaborated upon in Patricia Hill Collins' work, Black Sexual Politics: African Americans, Gender and the New Racism called "Heterosexism". The mindset of heterosexism assumes that all black people are heterosexuals. The characterization of homosexuality as an abnormality that is not originally found within the black race characterizes it as something that occurs only among whites. The assumption that "either black people could not be homosexual or those blacks were not "authentically" black ... If authentic Black people (according to the legacy of scientific racism) are heterosexual, then LGBT Black people are less authentically Black because they engage in allegedly "White" sexual practices.^{105 106} Homosexuality is viewed as a white "issue" that does not effect African Americans. As a result the coming out process is intensified among African American homosexuals because one's sexuality is perceived as abnormal in black society. Black people are not expected to be gay. Theoretically, black homosexuality reinforces the supposed "sexual deviancy" which white colonists deemed one of the characteristics of black

people that reinforced their “inferiority”. White colonists deemed black women and black men to be hypersexual beings that “breed like animals” 105. The underlying connotation behind the original thoughts of “black inferiority” is that black people were assumed to be heterosexual. Animals are beings that govern their actions through instinct, without emotional connection and with the sole purpose to reproduce. Sexual acts between animals are purely heterosexual. White colonists viewed African Americans as parallel to animals and therefore purely heterosexual. White people did not assign black men the intellectual prowess to consider themselves homosexuals.

During the era of slavery the black man was seen as the most imminent threat to white domination over blacks as a people. Robert Staples highlights the theory of the black man’s perceived “sexual superiority” as a fundamental reason for the targeted degradation of the black man’s masculinity. “It was during slavery that attempts to emasculate the black male were made, motivated by fear of his sexual power.⁷⁶” The white man feared that he was sexually inferior to the black man and therefore he was robbed of the ability to undergo the roles that define his masculinity. The nature of slavery was such that the black man was not able to defend his wife from sexual assault by the white master, similarly he was not able to protect his children from the cruel beatings and sexual abuse that they might have been exposed to. Black men as separate entities were not viewed as full men in the eyes of the law and were not able to gain their civil rights to vote, own property and so on. They were treated and thought of as children under the reign of white supremacy from the era of slavery to the civil rights era and even into the present. Through all of the injustice that black men and black people as a whole had to

endure throughout history they had one stable outlet, one place of peace, one place of safety support and comfort, the black church. The black church fortified its members and provided them with hope for the justice and equality that they deserved. The black church proved to be a unifying and propelling force in the black community especially throughout the civil rights movement.

As Damaris Walker elegantly highlights in his senior honors thesis on “Meeting the Demands of Faith and Body: Black Gay Religious Identity in the United States”,

During the civil rights movement of the mid 1940s and 1950s there was a noticeable change on the part of some church members as a southern - based movement, churches were integral to the formation and execution of the civil rights movement and these churches became the conservative framing for protest. That is to say, the church adopted a conservative poster in order to meet the demands of a larger political and social culture.

The civil rights movement began to directly define homosexuality as radical and non-conformist, by leaders of the civil rights movement. The homosexual life-style was not “normal” enough; it directly contradicted with the notions of “black respectability” and therefore blacks’ ability to gain the same rights as whites, to appear capable of assimilating into white culture as full citizens who were equal to whites. Projecting a “heteronormative”, conservative image to white society would help black people attain their civil rights with less adversity. The black church perpetuated this notion to the black community, therefore creating a divisive

climate for gay black Americans. The black church was and is a leader in shaping the image of black people on both a small community scale and a national scale. The black church is an essential part of black life and its views are deeply considered by members of the black community when making life-style decisions.

The black church uses passages from the Bible in order to reinforce disapproval of the homosexual lifestyle. Notions of black respectability permeate our thought patterns even in the present day. What began as a strategy to conform the black race with the goal of gaining our civil rights has progressed into an abomination of homosexuals and homosexual acts that leads to the suppression of sexual identity, feelings of homophobia, ostracization of black gays within their own communities, the “down-low” lifestyle and in some cases the condemnation of gay people within black churches. As a result, there is a conflict that has developed between practicing the religion that has been a stronghold in the black community and among black people for so much of our history in this country and identifying as a black gay male. In interviewing my friend, a straight black male who identifies as a devout Christian, it seems clear that the Bible is cited within black communities as evidence that homosexuality is a sin for which repentance is appropriate and expected in order to gain full acceptance as a Christian in the black church.

This deeply-rooted conflict between the definition of a Christian and being gay is solidified in the following quote from my heterosexual friend: “I can never fully understand what a person who is gay would have to go through in terms of being a Christian and being gay. I think they should go to religious counselor for guidance.”

My friend proves my assertion that being gay and revealing and fully

accepting oneself as a homosexual is not welcomed within the context of the black church and therefore the black community. Many times the words of the Bible are magnified and intensified in the pulpit breeding feelings of homophobia. My friend’s responses relate to Patricia Hill Collins’ statement: “greatly influenced by black church teachings, African Americans may have accepted homosexual individuals, but they disapproved of homosexuality itself. Relations in the Black church illustrate this stance of grudging acceptance 111.” As long as a homosexual is member of the church and identifies as a Christian but does not declare his identity as a homosexual openly he is accepted in the black church. Staying within the bounds of “black respectability” and “black conservative notions” is acceptable within the black church and black community; if one was to fully embrace their sexuality they would have exposed themselves at the risk of ridicule.

My gay friend’s interview speaks volumes of the tension between being black and being Christian, of the internal struggle of black gays in this position and of the concept of “passing”. “Passing” is defined by Patricia Hill Collins as assimilating into “heteronormal” black society and surpassing any characteristics that might be perceived as homosexual in nature. It is clear that one who identifies as a black homosexual might experience that valid desire to conceal his identity sometimes indefinitely in order to avoid direct or indirect ostracization. Ron also touches on the tenets of black masculinity and how they are applied to those that identify as

homosexuals. As discussed earlier black masculinity is something that was stripped from black males through their emasculation under the domination of white supremacy. As a result there is presiding sentiment that black manhood must be re-claimed and reinforced by black males in today's society. As Michael Eric Dyson says in the movie entitled "I Am A Man: Black Masculinity in America": "Because masculinity was such a difficult thing for us to obtain in the past, it is the most important thing for black men to claim to define to assert". Another man says, "Masculinity, because it wasn't a birth right, was something we had to earn". During slavery times black men were psychologically discouraged from asserting themselves in their interactions with white society, the result of doing so was often torture and ultimately death. One of the main ways in which black men assert their manhood is through their role as provider, protector, and guardian of the black family. The black man's role within the black family begins to shape the image of the "nuclear black family". The "nuclear black family" is successful and viewed as respectable when the black male is accountable for his actions in supporting his family and being loyal to the members of his family emotionally and financially. The black church reinforces the concepts of accountability, fidelity and respectability within the black church.

Some black males find it so uncomfortable and non-ideal to identify as a gay black males in their communities and churches that they resort to an alternative lifestyle called life on the "down low". Black males living their lives on the "down low" present themselves as straight black males but they betray their families and wives or other female partners by having sex with men repeatedly. This double lifestyle springs from the looming ridicule and disapproval that they

will endure from their loved ones and church family if they were to reveal their true sexual feelings. "Me and my baby's mother ended up being together because of the image that society pressed upon me". This masked identity is a response to the intense pressure to be "heteronormative" to be accepted within the context of the black church, which often the most stable force in the lives of black men. In his autobiography "On the Down Low": A Journey Into the Lives of "Straight" Black Men Who Sleep with Men", J. L. King elaborates further on his double lifestyle and how difficult it was for him to reveal his gay identity to his church. His initial reaction to the thought of revealing himself to his church community was: "I can't do that, I said, ' I can't go before my church brothers and tell them the truth, I can't do it.'" King did not feel as if he would be supported in his church if he revealed his true actions and homosexual feelings.

In his novel entitled "Beyond the Down Low: Sex Lies and Denial in the Black Community." Kevin Boykin comments that:

If we could be honest with ourselves, fair toward others, sensitive to our duties and courageous in performing those duties, we would have no reason to be on the down low in the first place. We can respond to the down low by creating an environment of honesty among ourselves as black men. But far beyond the down low, we should remember that honesty, fairness, duty and courage are important principles for men in any situation. That is what manhood is all about.

The notion that there is something wrong with being gay that needs to be fixed is one of the most problematic views of the church. It is a running theme that must be fundamentally

changed before we can move forward as a community and away from our often times limited opinion of gays. By no means does every member of the community or every black church perpetuate the ideals that are described throughout, however there is an overarching theme of the disapproval of homosexuality that is projected from black churches and permeates black communities. It is disturbing that the act that is considered the most sinful concerning the “down low” lifestyle is not that one engaging in the “down low lifestyle” is committing adultery towards his wife or that he is actively lying to his wife and family, but that he is engaging in homosexual acts.

Misconstrued notions of black masculinity as being the opposite of homosexuality and the dishonest lifestyles that spring from the desire to be considered a “respectable” black male hinder the black community from solving immense problems within the black community. One of them being the spread of the AIDS epidemic that arises as a result of concealed sexual identities. Homophobia hinders black men in particular from being honest with themselves about their sexuality and also discourages black gay males from expressing their sexuality freely. Boykin comments that “the burden to challenge homophobia falls onto the shoulders of all black men, regardless of their sexual orientation”. He goes on to say that many black men have been silent on lookers through “homophobic sermons, anti-gay comedy routines, vicious music lyrics and offensive conversations with our friends”. Boykin writes “being a man is about standing up for what is right, even if you are sometimes afraid to do so”. The first step in standing together against homophobic views is opening the dialogue. The second step is reevaluating the integrity of our actions and of our feelings concerning our sexuality. The

question that remains is whether the open dialogue about lifestyles that are homosexual in nature breed action against homophobia. The black community must critically evaluate their definition of manhood and the characteristics of masculinity and the “respectable black man” in order to accept their fellow brothers whose only difference in many cases is their sexual behavior. We must realize that the qualities of a man can be embodied regardless of his sexual orientation.

Photo by Shan Williams '12



Lines

I DEFINE ME, BECAUSE YOU
CAN'T: LOOKING AT WHAT
IDENTITY MEANS TO ME

Big ups to the economic cowards
That squeeze the life out of freshly ripe babies
Whose sun kissed skin have been enveloped by sins of unjust capitalist
slaves
Whose markets have shattered the possibility of reform
Of allowing a select few like myself into the doors of these big business
ventures of continued capitalism
Labeling it as an Ivy League education
When you sit in classes unable to speak up
Not because stones clog your vocal cords
But because molten lava is the only thing that will erupt from your lips
Dripping the un-forsaken truth that scares the shit out of the future
leader on the left side and right side of you.
Who believe they have a right to ridicule and suggest that the fight for
rights are useless and unreasonable.
Child of God, brother of Christ
I sit before you with shackles of sin, sin imposed on me by secular desires
to be a leader in the classroom but an incoherent unjust ignorant jackass.
Rather, lets not disrespect the donkey because he understands his place in
relationship to the world.
Privileged?
Acquiring an education makes me, makes him, she dem privileged?
Well I am privileged to say I am done with being forced to criticize the
wrongs of my ancestors and their faults.
I am done listening to any of you attempt to comment on ideologies that
have oppressed families and oppressed my people, my human beings.
Homo sapiens, these mammals that return to dust at the end of their lives
that have been taken from them because of the constant rape of their
bodily, labored resources.
I am privileged to say I will exploit your educationally backward business
ventures to assassinate your very being of not acknowledging the need to
support human beings.

Nikkita McPherson '13

The Flight

RACQUEL BERNARD '13

*Atey Five Red 'ills road
From di doar leadin from howa bedroom you cyan glance
Out an si di dirt road
Turn
Back to howa bedroom
I look around the small quarters
Capture the whole dwelling in just one glance
One full size bed shared by four
Three now since Mummy gone a 'Merica fi work a likkle
Two steps left bring me to the bathroom with the shower whose
wata
Always seeks to cool yu down no matta 'ow cool di breeze is dat
day
Walk 8 steps
An yu reach outta doar*

*Unto the tiled patio its ledge filled with plants
Red, yellow, green, purple tango on the same leaves
Look hova di pot dem, coo di wooden walls of the zinc roofed
Buildin where wun Uncle fix clothes and di ada make sintin outta
wood
Jungle of mi great gran parent's ya'd
I never followed the path pas di guinep tree over to the plum tree
Whose plums neva really mek much sense to mi
Why were these big an' purple?
Step into th-
"Racquel come now wi leavin"
I step down from the tiled patio walk through the crickety front
gate
Great grand ma waves from the rocking chair
"Soon come greatgranma!"
We on di way*

...
*Now in my grandmother's bedroom
Sitting on the floor surrounded by mi clothes dem
My brother, Dominik, is packing too
Midnight fudge skin on slim limbs
Peas all pon di side'a 'im 'ead*

Mi broda needs a haircut
"Yu wan' carry dis tu?" my grandmother asked
Pointing to the hot green overalls laying to the right "No
I will leave it ere an use it when a come back"
Grandma was sitting on a beige
Arm chair "helping" us pack
Remaining seated
Leaning *hova*
Han flingin di tings dem in howa dyrecshan
She red ee?
Even though my grandma is clearly
Only one shade up from *baeby powda* hue
With no hint of roses in her complexion
Coo 'ar hair
In three *plats reachin down to 'ar shouldas*
An 'ar eye dem?
Cho!
Deepest dark brown abysses of wisdom *in'a'di worl'*
Her pillow laden limbs laid back *in'a'di chair*
I pick up a yellow tank exposing the
Burgundy carpet below



...
Air Jamaica, peering right outside the window, *Daddy a wave pon di roof*
Outside'a'di plain, the tall and slender figure
Propelling long arms in the air
Soon come back Daddy we soon come
Kingston is getting smaller and smaller
Chicken or fish? I should've chosen chicken
Mi no know di lady pon di lef'a mi but shi seem nice
What a people cyan smile so
The stewardesses bring back the lunch
My fish is sided by calaloo
Cruz ova di wata to new place, new land
10:30 touched down
Wun'a di smilas walk me and mi broda chru di airport
Because 8 and 9 year olds *mustin travel ahlonge*

Crowded

A we dem people ya really a go so fas' man?

What am I supposed to do in this line *wit dis*

Bloe book in'a mi 'han

So much metal colared tings around me

At the front of the line, talk to the lady, see *Mummy*

hlf yu coulda heva see 'ar face, shi appy, tru tru

She hugged us both and lamented over my neat but damaged hair

That's what months without your mom does, I suppose

Light brown hands pull the luggage of her children down the airport passageway

She must have been very nervous about something that day

Her voice more fragile than usual

Maybe it was *jus de way* she smoothed down her dark brown ponytail

Over *han ova*

Mi no too sure 'ar slim frame cyan 'andle alla dat de worryin

Aunt Gerrie is with her

Even though she supposed to be my aunt

Mi no really know 'ar

Miami

Humid exhaust fumes perfume the air flowing through the car windows

Where is di dew-scented hill aroma now?

Pull into the driveway of Auntie Maureen's beige house

Jus' who exackly ar dese peopluh?

So where do we sleep while we're here?

Next day

It's the fourth of July and for the past eight years, that didn't mean anything

But now it meant that we go to *Aunty Dorret house an' meet* many cousins

Now bursting sparks of color are a MUST

Dis cousin 'ere need fi go pon wun diet

'Ar atleast share some'a 'imself wit dis ya maga wun ova yaso

Why am I like the only girl here?

Well, there is Allaneisha but

She doesn't want to hang out with a little kid like me

But I will boda 'ar anyway

Because it's better to irritate somebody with your presence than sit around bored

In a sea of boy cousins

Aunty Dorrett 'ouse 'av a pool in di back like grandma 'ous

Except it isn't as big and the neighbors' yards are much closer

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Than at Brigdemont, their yards are as close
As di neighba dem at Atey Five
But at 85
You could only see the yard of the people to the left
Because the zinc fence *in di back ya'd*
Was too high to look over
An mi no even tink se mi di eva fin' out
If we had neighbors to the right because
The grass was too tall and the purple plum tree in the back had a
wall behind it
But here?
You can see all *di neighbors ya'ds*
Because you're not really trying to keep other people out
You're just marking which part of the ground belongs to you
It smells like home again
Aunty Dorrett still know 'ow fi mek jerk chicken
Aldough shi no live in'a Jamaica
Rice an' pease
Fried plantin
Curry chicken
Alla dem in'a dem own dutch pot
Mommy fixes me a plate like she would if we were back in
Jamaica
Something is different though
My plate is paper and my fork plastic
'An we 'ar not at a restaurant
Tings jus different a foreign I guess

"Dominik 'an Racquel come look at di fiyaworks"

Mommy calls

Wat is so excitin about dis?

As I watch one of the cousins light a bottle neck fire cracker

And run away from the peaceful beer bottle

Scrrreeeeeeeeee POP

The streak of amber goes up maybe three feet

I much prefer the grand bursts of Roy G. Bif that I can see over
the trees of the park across

The Street

As multi-hued sparks slide down the sky

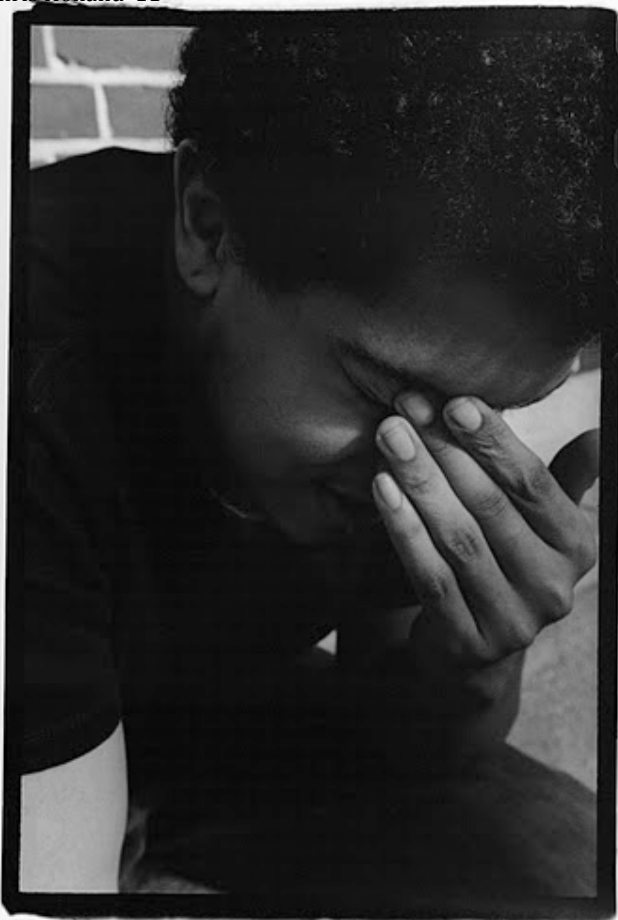
"So Mummy, when har me han Dominik gohin back to Jamaica?"

"Uno not going back"

John Mensah '12



Chris Holland '11



Binding **A**ccosted **T**enacity
SAMANTHA AZINGE '12

**This morning I
woke up and ran to the
mirror to lift my shirt. I wanted
to see a skinner me but the mirror did
not comply to my desperate request. The
mirror regurgitated the obvious so loudly; I
had to close my eyes to block myself from seeing
the mirror's response.**

**To people I was neither skinny nor fat. I played the mid field
without a catching glove.**

**The place in New York I was from the girls' outfits did not play
softball.**

Not at all,

**Those girls wore their skinny jeans with their body tight shirts that
outlined their great tummies and accentuated their firm booties.**

**Even though I had a pair of skinny jeans and can pull off a mini
skirt in the dark I could not fool me.**

**The amount of stretch marks on my body could not stretch my
self-esteem.**

**I grew up in Coney Island NY so I lived by the beach but I
never bought a bikini because I thought I did not even
look good in a one piece.**

**I cover myself from myself for so long that
now regardless of what the mirror
said I decided to choose what I
want to believe.**



I Was Going To Tell You (Black Girl Me)

SABRINA YEGELA '13

*I was going to tell you,
How left out, out of place
How useless, insufficient,
unappreciated
Black Girl Me
Like clockwork you remind me,
I do not belong.*

*I was going to tell you,
That fateful day
I saw
The colour of my skin,
The texture of my hair,
The width of my nose,
The fullness of my lips,
The curves of my body.
On a crumpled piece of paper, you
drew
Black Girl Me
You called me ugly.*

*I was going to tell you
Oh how frustrating, your prejudice!
Your laughter, it haunted me
Oh how I struggled!
My spirit it broke
Almost.
You lied.
I am perfect.
I am beautiful.
Black Girl Me*

I am enough.

*I was going to tell you
Once, I envied you
You see,*

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*Normal it looked so easy.
To be liked
To be wanted
To be loved, by you
I craved
So,
your rules I learnt
your games I played,
Black Girl Me
I lost.*

*I was going to tell you,
I
Me, I was going to tell you,
Black Girl Me,
Self-segregating
Intimidating
Unattractive
Loud
Angry
Black Girl Me,
Invisible
Hyper visible
Asexual
Hypersexual
Black Girl Me,
Strong
Independent
Warrior*

*Black Girl Me,
Black Girl Me,
Black Girl Me, I was going to tell
you,*

But,

What good would it do?

Second Chances

A PLAY BY JANNA FENNEL '12

Cast:

Dion Foley 28 years old; a high school economics teacher for about a year; looking for a higher paying job as a Financial Analyst at Cameron Investments; very educated

Shawna Atkins Middle aged and 2 months divorced mother of two; the recruiter of the job for which DION is applying; went on a date a few weeks ago with DION; ultra-sophisticated, but overly emotional; enjoys playing mind games

Time: Present day

Place: New York City in SHAWNA'S human resource office of the Cameron Investment Building

Scene:

Lights come up to reveal SHAWNA ATKINS sitting in her Human Resource office of the Cameron Investment building. She is very put together, her attire accented with a pair of pearl earrings. SHAWNA'S office is small and square; it's pretty bland and depersonalized with just her PC and a large bottle of hand sanitizer on the desk. Her bookshelf is neatly stacked with finance related reading material. The resume of DION FOLEY is also on her desk. DION walks in holding a cup of coffee.

SHAWNA

So tell me Mr. Foley, why are you here?

DION

You know--

SHAWNA

No, pretend we know nothing about each other, okay? Just answer my questions. Can you do that Mr. Foley, or should I end this interview?

DION

(Stutters) I--no--it's fine, that's fine.

SHAWNA

So, tell me, why are you here, Mr. Foley?

DION

(A bit slowly at first, confused) To interview for the financial analyst position.

SHAWNA makes sure to write down what he says as the interview continues. Looking up every so often.

SHAWNA

And how did you hear of this position, Mr. Foley?

DION

From...you.

SHAWNA

I see...

DION

(Very confused) You know, you can just call me Dion.

SHAWNA

No, Mr. Foley is just fine. And tell me where you currently work, Mr. Foley.

DION

You know that private high school I told you about?

SHAWNA

(Shakes index finger) No...remember, Mr. Foley, we don't know each other.

DION

(Mumbles a bit frustrated) Right, sorry. (Beat)

I meant to say, at St. Peter's Academy; I'm a high school economics teacher.

SHAWNA
(Looks up with a light smile) Oh, that's lovely...

DION
Um...yeah.

SHAWNA
You don't agree?

DION
No! I do. They're great kids, so it's very, very lovely.

(Beat)

Kind of like you?

There is a hint of a smile on SHAWNA as she looks at DION.

SHAWNA
(Regains focus) Excuse me?

DION
Yeah, I shouldn't have said that.

SHAWNA
Wait a minute, are you hitting on me?

DION
No, not at all! I mean...you're very beautiful woman...and that blouse is nice on you...I mean, I'm not--

SHAWNA
(Back to serious) Wow, the EEOC would have a field day with this.

DION
(Shock) Wait, what?

SHAWNA
I'm kidding, Mr. Foley.

DION
Oh. Good. (Mumbles) Next time, you could smile when you say that?

SHAWNA
You know, Mr. Foley, I'm still trying to really figure

out why you are here?

DION
I told you...

SHAWNA
No, I mean really why do you need this job? On our date you told me you love to teach and never want to work in corporate again. Are you here to play with me now or were you playing then?

DION
No, I'm not. I really want the job.

(Beat)

I thought you said we were going to pretend we didn't have a history.

SHAWNA
I changed my mind. So, once again I'll ask why are you here? (Picks up pen to write)

DION
Well, you have my resume in front of you. As you can see, I'm highly qualified for the position. I was an economics major at Columbia, where I had investment banking internships with JP Morgan and Goldman Sachs. Shortly after, I got my MBA while I worked as a bank teller.

SHAWNA
(Not amused) A lot of candidates are qualified, Mr. Foley.

DION
But I have drive, motivation, and the experience. I'm perfect for this job. Once I got my MBA I landed a job at another financial consulting firm. I was good, I mean good. (Smiles)

SHAWNA looks uninterested as she occasionally glances at DION. He cheerfully continues to recount his employment background.

I made a lot of money on commission by helping clients invest in the right stocks, bonds, and commodities. I'm not bragging, but the numbers don't lie. I can do the same for Cameron Investments.

SHAWNA

If you were so good, why did you quit?

DION

Many, complicated reasons, but basically...I realized that maybe it wasn't for me. I know that's the exact thing I shouldn't say, but I want to be honest.

The two stare at each other for a brief moment in silence.

The long hours, the cut throat competition...I was good at my job and made it up in earnings, but being a teacher ... has been really rewarding.

SHAWNA

(Softens) If that's the truth, then...that's really sweet.

DION

Honest.

SHAWNA looks at DION with softer eyes and a slight smile.

(Beat)

That's why I'm sorry for what I said to you--it came out the wrong way...

SHAWNA

(Leans in) When you said what?

DION

When we had dinner a few weeks ago...I said--

SHAWNA

(Crosses arms again) Oh, that. No, you were right...I'm divorced, have two kids, and to add the cherry on top am older than you; that combination would never work.

DION

That's how I felt. But I shouldn't have put it so...boldly.

SHAWNA

Don't apologize--I like confident, assertive men.

(Eyes to DION) I mean, it was an attractive trait is all, but we're past that.

DION

Right.

SHAWNA

Let's continue. You're back ground is extensive, so I'm just going to need to verify some information. (Looks at his resume) But, I see on your resume you don't list any references. Why is that?

DION

Oh...um...you know I must have forgotten.

SHAWNA

Well that's no problem; I'll just give your boss a call. What's the name and number?

DION

(Shows sign of nervousness as intelligible noises stuttered out from his mouth) You know, that one's complicated...see my boss is now my new boss...but my old boss...he, he knew me better than this new one, so I'm not sure--

SHAWNA

(Annoyed) What's the number?

DION

Oh...well, the Academy's main line is 917--

SHAWNA

No, the principle's main line please.

DION

That one? I'm sorry I really don't know what's wrong with me today, I'm drawing a blank. But I'll make sure to get that for you soon.

SHAWNA starts fiddling with her computer.

SHAWNA

No worries, I'll just Google it. (Begins her search)

DION

Are you sure that's necessary? I mean, I can just get the number when I go back in. Plus, from what I hear our school's website is down.

SHAWNA

Nope, here it is, up and running nicely. (Skims the monitor) The principle is Mr. Higgins, correct?

DION

You found it? Yes, that's his name.

SHAWNA

Give me a minute while I place the call, I just really need a reference before we continue this interview.

DION

(Quietly) Okay. (Looks more nervous)

SHAWNA takes a pen and writes the number on DION'S resume. She glances toward DION who looks uneasy.

SHAWNA

Mr. Foley, are you okay?

DION

Yes...sure...no. Can you not call right now, please?

SHAWNA

Why not? That's absurd.

DION

(Takes a deep breath) Okay, I need to tell you something, and you may be disappointed.

SHAWNA

(Unsure) Okay...

DION

I don't want you to think I'm a liar or anything or that I don't care about work ethic. In fact, I cared too much about doing what I believed, which is why--

SHAWNA

Is there a point to this story, Mr. Foley?

DION

Yes. The point is...well...I don't have any references because...(Inhales) I'll just put it out there.... in all honesty... I was fired last week.

SHAWNA

Fired?

DION

It's not like I did a horrible job or anything. We just had a disagreement and I lost.

SHAWNA

And what exactly was this disagreement about?

DION

This will sound completely ridiculous--

SHAWNA

What was it about!?

DION

But I swear it's the truth.

SHAWNA

(Gestures for him to hurry up and talk) Okay....

DION

I was fired because...I wouldn't sign their new Loyalty Oath.

SHAWNA

Their what?

DION

A Loyalty Oath. Other people at other schools have been fired for the same thing...it's ridiculous!

SHAWNA

Are you serious right now?

DION

(Emphatic) Yes. It's a contract that forces a teacher to report any students believed to be misbehaving or inappropriate. The student doesn't even get a warning or a talk, just sent straight to punishment.

SHAWNA

You really expect me to believe that?

DION

It's the truth. (Passionately) To me that was a complete violation of rights; some kids could be

having a bad day and just need a talking to. Plus it really put teachers in a tight spot since we wouldn't be trusted.

(Softer. Hinting) Everyone deserves a second chance...

(Beat)

(Back to emphatic) And just because it's a private school shouldn't mean--

SHAWNA

Wow, I can't fathom how after all your talk about honesty you were actually lying to me--

DION

To give me a fair chance. I--

SHAWNA

(Shakes head) You are something else, Dion Foley.

DION

I was going to tell you after this anyway, but I needed you to hear me out first--I know I can do this job if you just give me a chance, please. I'm sorry...

SHAWNA

Sorry is not going to cut it.

DION

I just wanted to be honest.

SHAWNA

After you were afraid of getting caught!

SHAWNA stands up from her seat.

DION

Well...

SHAWNA

Mr. Foley, I'm going to have to ask you to leave.

DION

No, why? Please, I admit I should have told you sooner, but don't kick me out now.

SHAWNA

(Not listening) This firm will not have a fraud as an employee.

DION

I am not a fraud! Really, just give me a chance. I want this job... I need this job--(Side. A bit sad) I was thinking of the children...

SHAWNA

(Wavering) I can't...

DION

Ms. Atkins, ask me anything. Anything! I promise I am right for this position; don't let my mistake get in the way. I know you have the empathy to do that... please. If I'm not right for the job, then I'm not right, but give me the chance to prove myself.

SHAWNA

(Stands for a moment with her arms crossed before she, with great hesitation, reseats herself. Inhales heavily) Okay... well it's standard procedure for me to ask a few easy finance questions. How do you secure investments?

DION

I like to be more traditional, investing a part of the money in the growing companies, while creating a small nest egg in government and government subsidized companies. As we know, diversification is key.

SHAWNA

So not a risk taker... (Writes on pad of paper) Now, tell me how the underwriting process works.

DION

So, I got the job?

SHAWNA

Thank you for coming in, I'll get back to you when I've made a decision.

SHAWNA stands to leave as she picks up the papers and her note pad. DION sits still trying to process what is happening while SHAWNA walks over to her office door and opens it.

You can go now, Mr. Foley.

DION

(Bewildered) No, really, what is going on here?

SHAWNA

Sorry, if I wasn't clear. The interview is over, Mr. Foley.

DION

(Takes a breath) Ms. Atkins, I thought you were going to hear me out--

SHAWNA

I did and believe I will find more qualified applicants. I appreciate your time, though.

(Beat)

DION

Bull.

SHAWNA

What was that, Mr. Foley?

DION

Bull. Bull. Bull. It's all bull!

DION rises from his seat and walks over. He now stands face to face with SHAWNA.

SHAWNA

Pardon?

DION

You're really good at that, you know?

SHAWNA

(Smiles) What?

DION

Faking.

SHAWNA

Alright, you need to leave.

DION

No, you're being bias against me.

SHAWNA

That's absurd, Mr. Foley.

DION

It's not! From the moment I walked in here you have done nothing but try to make excuses for why I shouldn't be hired.

SHAWNA

No. You are not qualified and you lied. That pretty much explains it!

DION

I am qualified. (Now he gets it) Oh... I know what this is really about.

SHAWNA

By the way, I am not being biased! Unlike you, I'm a kind hearted person; I would never do such a thing.

DION

See, right there! All of a sudden you're telling me I'm not a good person, so you don't want to hire me?

SHAWNA

That's not what--

DION

I know it's all about our date!

SHAWNA

Stop.

DION

No, it is! You're upset with me for not accepting a second date with you. Aren't you? That's why you're acting like this not because I omitted being fired.

SHAWNA glances out her doors she slightly closes it. She turns back to DION.

SHAWNA

Shh...this is not the place...

DION

I took you up on the first date since you seemed like a good woman, but this, this is ridiculous.

SHAWNA

Mr. Foley, what is wrong with you?

DION

You can stop with the act now, Shawna. I played your silly game and answered all your cryptic questions. You know what, I'm done.

SHAWNA breathes a sigh of relief.

(Close to SHAWNA'S face) The EEOC will have a field day with this. one. I'm sure they'd love to know more about your interviewing technique.

SHAWNA

Okay, let's just calm down and talk this through.

DION

I'm done talking.

DION tries to get out the door, but SHAWNA keeps hold of the knob and stops him.

Open the door! You know, I hope your other super qualified candidate can get this company out of debt. Good luck with that. Let me through!

(Pause)

SHAWNA

Wait, how did you know that?

DION

(Finds this amusing) Guess no one else did their research. Well, I did. Looks like Cameron Investments has been making some bad deals.

SHAWNA

(Slight laugh) Okay, I admit, that's impressive. You're the first to bring it up.

DION

I told you, I know what I'm talking about. This company needs someone like me. I can do this!

SHAWNA

(Touches her ear) You don't have to shout. Please sit.

SHAWNA shuts the door. The two make their way

back to their original seats.

It's true; we haven't been up to par with our competitors lately and need huge turn around. But I only hire the best.

DION

Then hire me.

SHAWNA

How can you be so confident? What would you do to get us back on track, Mister--Dion?

DION

(Smiles) Simple, you target new clients, start small, get them interested in our services by offering discounts. May sound like a bad idea, but will pay off in the end. Once we make them returns on their investments, with help from better financial analysts, like me, our old clientele will start to trust us again. That's what we need, their trust and faith in this company again. If we can't get that, we're screwed.

SHAWNA

(Serious) You're right.

DION

(Surprised) Huh?

SHAWNA

You're right.

(Beat)

I admit, we need someone like you on our team. You're exactly what this company looks for--the passion... (Smiles) I like you're attitude.

DION

(Shocked) Wow, thank you.

(Beat)

You know, it's funny, as much as I enjoy being a teacher there is still something about the drive and excitement that comes with succeeding in this job. I don't know... I love it and--

SHAWNA

Hate it at the same time? At least, that's what the other analysts always say.

DION

(Smiles back) Yeah.

The two sit in brief silence as they smile at each other.

Wow, so, um, did I get the job then?

SHAWNA

Yes, Dion, I think I can safely say welcome to Cameron Investments.

DION

Thank you so much--

SHAWNA

But! Can you answer one more question for me?

DION

(Unsure) Oh, okay.

SHAWNA

Want to go get a cup of coffee?

DION

(Wide eyed) Uh...

SHAWNA

(Quick) As future coworkers!

DION

(Relieved) Oh, yes, that sounds nice. (Smirk) Venti mocha?

SHAWNA

You know it.

The two get up and proceed toward the door.

(Beat)

Don't let me regret this.

DION

I won't Ms. Atkins, I promise, I won't.

SHAWNA

(Smiles) It's Shawna.

Exeunt.

THE END

Artwork by Olivia Scott '13



The Son's Love

OLIVIA SCOTT '13

*That warmth I felt was Innate, Unlearned, Taken For granted
I thought I'd always have his loving touch.
Just a budding flower, I knew I wasn't much:
He told me otherwise
Great, he shown just for me, watching as I grew from a bud to a
flower.
It was early spring, His rays singing songs of new life.
Redemption from seasons before, the warmth an open door to vitality.
Strong and young, beckoned by duty I walked through,
Symbolizing my promise to do as he had for me;
A covenant between planter and seed, that in his Garden of Love I'd
spread the love given unto me.
I stood in that place Embraced
Summers Love and grace, filling the space between my petals from stalk
to tip.

But seasons change and of course one day the Rain came
So I wondered.
It fell and I questioned.
Hail, Wind, Thunder, my storm
Faith failed me.
Springs renewal had left with a breeze, Summers love had taken leave.
It was Autumn now and that sweet assurance seemed nowhere to be
found
Surely if he was so divine, he'd show himself return the shine.
"Give him time," I know he'll come.
Impatiently I waited for a glimpse of that goodness but storms came
and passed,
His warmth now a forgotten repast, so to myself I ask "Why am I to
spread his light?"*

Born in sin and shaped in iniquity,
I thought I knew how all things were supposed to be
Confused by his refusal to run on my clock,
I turned away, sealed my heart like a lock
Others, bright, looked and knew that Grace had left me.
I, no more than a shadow of past self,
Turned from the good of the sun, I sunk.
Shriveled within the ground, colorless petals surrounding me
Sending regretful memories of what I used to be
Realizing my wrong, I longed
To turn back to what I'd lost.
Feeling the loving hand, holding and guiding, nourishing and growing

But Time passed and now that clouds do break
Cause from that seat below, I saw just a trace,
A trace of his love, mercy, grace
Comprehension, Understanding, Confession
How Could I be forgiven?
How Could I Have Left Him?
What am I without the sun?
Understanding: My Admission, Repentance, Submission
He parted the sky, golden arms, crying of his love for a sinner like me
Engulfed by mercy from above, that day I learned my place.
To know regardless of the season, it is he who is the sun.
I, but a flower created to glow for him. To love and adore him, as he
does I
The son, A gift Presented from the father who sits above, and sees our
cloudy days,
And in his sight makes a way, Right on time.
Cause my faith in him means trusting that what he has for me is all
mine
In that knowledge I watch days pass until seasons have no hold
Because, on cloudy days, I bask in the warmth of his undying mercy and
grace Convicted. I've been blessed by the sons love.



Artwork by Olivia Scott '13

Photographer: Sabrina Yegela '13
Dancer: Teninlanimi Ayo-Ariyo '13



SOLACE

NIKKITA MCPHERSON '13

Yes I know who was nailed to the cross
Blood dripping to the earth that I glide on
From which my food grows and
cultivates.

Yes, I believed that come judgment day,
I may not need to even be in line.
Cause underneath fresh skin lies grim and
rubble

Suited solely to burn.
But then I found an effervescent peace.
I have found a place
That causes blood to run faster from only
thinking of the majestic movements
The power of a wave of a hand
The kick of a foot, the gaze of eyes.

I worship through dance.
I do not perform for anyone,
Not even our Father.
I dance in worship of him.
When you feel moved
Because of the power of a twirl, the tear
provoking bended knee
Thank me for offering you a place to find
solace.

Thank me for allowing you a space to
worship with and through me for Him.
This is not a job.

Do not say good job.
This is not a burden, don't acknowledge
how hard working I must be.
I do not perform

So do not utter a good performance.
Too many times God's soldiers are drawn
into secular battle fields,
Where money is the motivation
In the capitalist lustful nation,
Where desires are only to appease solely
for the survival of your name
Stomping out what one begins to
perceive

as your competition
When we are solely your sistren and
bredrin.
Selling out grand stadiums to exploit his
name for one's profit.
Nah, see this is not a Performance
This is a 3 dimensional, holy matrimonial
tie to He that art in Heaven.
Leave the performance for the
Characters, Actors, Ensembles.
Because they are in it to make that green
that all wish could grow from rooted
figures drawing nutrients from the
ground from which His blood ran free.
Imma Praise.

I'm going to praise because no one will
tell me
To mimic what I did, because his spirit
comes through me
And remains the same, powerful and
forgiving.
No one will decide whether or not
I am ready to invite you into his arms
through the vehicle he has chosen to give
me to praise Him.

I use his name to uplift and invite by
sisters and my brothers into His house of
worship,
His house of worship being everywhere
His children are
So I thank you for allowing me to be a
vessel through which you can praise,
Where goose bumps crawl into your
spirit and salt water falls from your eyes.
That suddenly you feel inclined to
worship
Because all I think of after I exalt His
name
Is how much I thank you for worshipping
with me.





A BRIGHT AND SUNNY DAY IN A DARK AMERICA

JALIL BISHOP '14

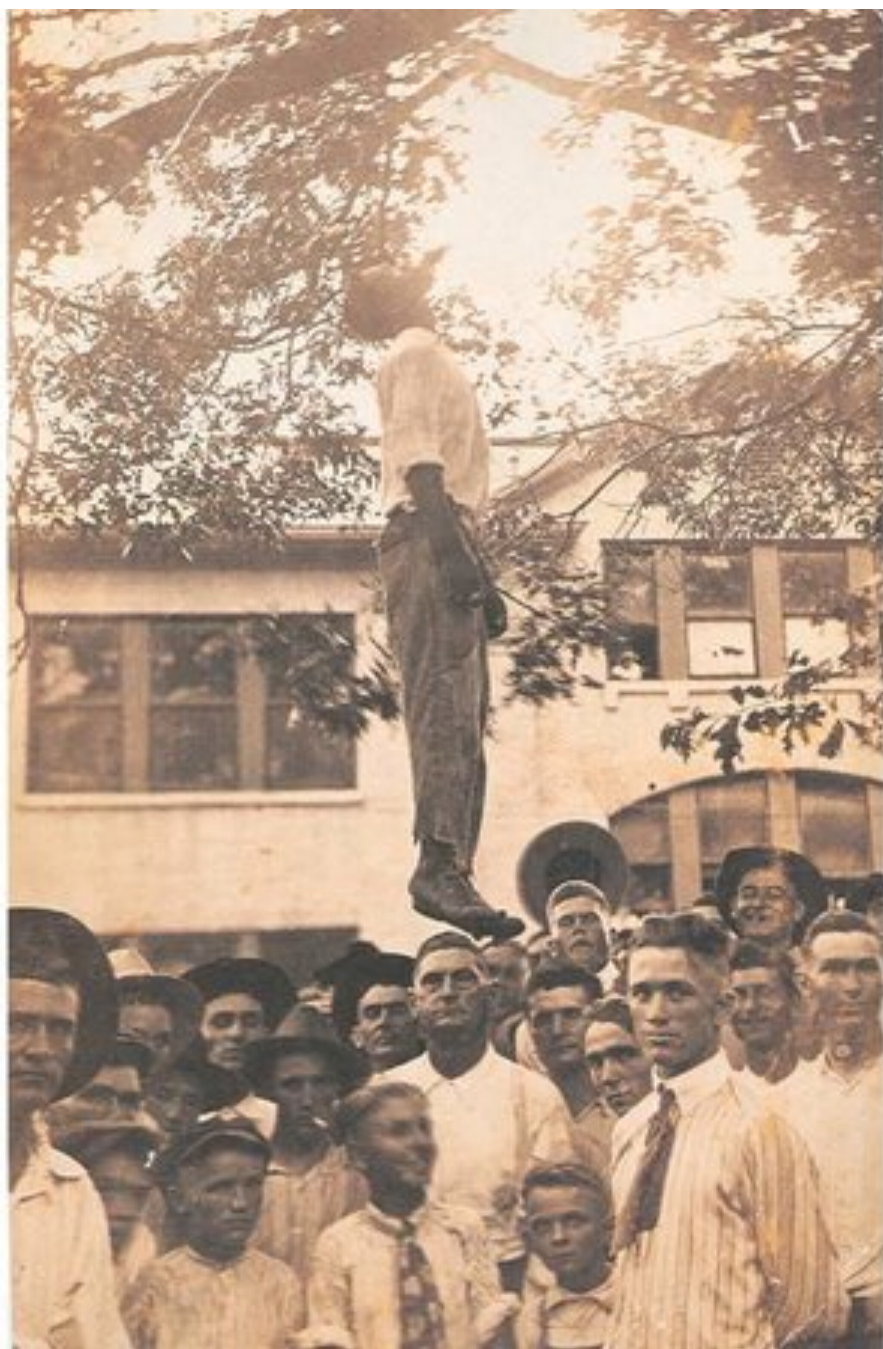
The boy's name is Lige Daniels. His story is my story. His story is your story. And his story is America's story.

A first look at the picture draws my eyes directly to the boy, young and black and lifeless, with a noose around his neck. As a black man I feel anger, as an American I feel anger. But most importantly, as a human, I feel anger. As my eyes scrolls down the picture to a group of white men standing under the body, that same jolt of anger simmers again. The men are of all ages, their faces convey smiles and stern looks, grouped together for a picture. I realize that these men are posing, making sure they are in the photo shot that will capture death of another human being. The images of the holocaust emerge as I think of how prideful these men pose for a picture that vividly expresses inhumanity. The picture presents another victim, the boy in front, who has a smile of enjoyment, conveying no signs that he has just witnessed another human being hung from a tree. His whimsical demeanor shows the indoctrination he has already been through, so he cannot see it as killing a boy, but sees it as an activity on a bright, sunny day. This same indoctrination has been part of the whole community surrounding the event as the hanging is done in front of a public building, meaning the action was in a public place, and meaning the inhumanity was in a public space. The sun in the top of the picture serves as the spotlight, highlighting the boy, showing the immaturity of his body, the poverty of his ripped pants legs and the past struggle of his shoeless feet. As the boy's body hangs limp, all signs of life are gone, the sun's light opens up through the branches of the trees, as if

God, himself, is opening up the doors of Heaven for Him. Barely being able to see the noose as it blends in with the tree, the boy's head seems to be looking up, but nevertheless I know the noose is there and nevertheless, I know divinity is lost, overtaken by the diabolical actions of men.

This was not just a photo, but also a postcard that read: "This was made in the court yard in Center, Texas. He is a 16-year-old Black boy. He killed Earl's grandma. She was Florence's mother. Give this to Bud. From Aunt Myrtle." The word "made" suggests some creation put on display in the courtyard, a type of power over a subject. In this situation, that power made this boy nothing but an object that was wilted by the force of society. A subject that is less than human with more value dead than alive. The person writing the message does not care that the grandmother is dead as no sign of sympathy is expressed, suggesting that the boy's murder was not about the death of a grandmother, but was fueled by something else, an unquenchable hate, and the writer's only concern was that "Bud" got the postcard so he could get his taste of the hate too.

A New York Times article explains how 1,000 men stormed the local jail for Daniels, in order to lynch him. Captain W.A Bridges was told to protect the prisoner from being lynched, but was unable showing the failures of the police, who had sworn to protect the rights of the citizens, leaving the black Americans up for slaughter by their fellow Americans. But the photo has forever captured America during that time, catching the inhumanity of people and maybe not the "systematic", but the focused, accepted, targeted killing of a race.



Summer 2011

IT'S STILL HERE

Institutional Racism & the System of Privilege it Creates ANNA-KAY THOMAS '12

"Racism is dead." It is said over and over again, but without clarification. I ask, to whom? Racism is dead to whom? It seems to be that racism appears to be dead largely to Caucasians who do not witness acts of racism perpetuated directly against them.

Racism is similar to gender and class issues in that it is socially constructed and largely unquestioned by the dominating group. Racism is engrained in our society and thus it can mask itself from being seen as a perpetual problem. This masking phenomena can be seen when analyzing U.S taxation codes, entitlement programs, socioeconomic backgrounds of the children in the poorest rated K-12 schools, and so on and so forth. In "Conceptualizing Race, Class, and Gender", Margaret Andersen and Patricia Collins claim:

Racism in a system of power and privilege than can be manifested in people's attitudes but rooted in society's structure and is reflected in the different advantages and disadvantages that groups experience, based on their location in this system. Racism is structured into society, not just in people's minds ... Institutional racism creates a built-in system of privilege (81).

Anderson and Collins believe that racism is systematic in that racism is part of society's structure and not just present in individual racists. People may not be individually racist but can still benefit from a system that is

organized to benefit some at the expense of others (81). This leads to the incorrect assumption by the dominating race that racism doesn't exist because the system of racial privilege becomes invisible to those that benefit from it, even though it structures the everyday life of both White people and people of color (81). Whites often do not see themselves as unfairly advantaged because society innately hands them exclusive assets while simultaneously training them not to question the integrity of gaining the assents non-Whites do not. Attainment of these exclusive assets such as an expensive education, family networking connections, stable healthcare, among others, are masked under ideas that these assets were somehow earned by the individual and that if the lower class, who is largely non-White, were to work harder, they could attain these items as well. What is often untaught is the idea that there is a ideological counterpoint being that though there are often monumental socioeconomic barriers systematically in place and largely inconceivable to those on the other side of the barrier that do not allow for those who have been socioeconomically retarded to advance. In essence, much of White oppressiveness is unconscious. In her article, "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack," Peggy McIntosh claims that whites are taught about racism as something that puts others at a disadvantage, but not about it's corollary 'White privilege' as something that puts Whites at an advantage (1).

McIntosh sees white privilege as analogous to an invisible package of unearned assets that Whites can count on cashing in each day, but about which they were 'meant' to be oblivious (1). She even continues to say, "I was taught to see racism only in individual acts of meanness, not invisible systems conferring dominance in my group."

bell hooks, in her book "Feminism Is For Everybody," makes the claim that "All white women in the nation know whiteness is a privileged category. The fact that white females may choose to repress or deny this knowledge does not mean they are ignorant: it means they are in denial (55). When discussing the first wave feminist movement Hooks also brings up another major point, that many Whites, in their desire to promote racial equality, often neglect race altogether. She states, "[White women] entered the movement erasing and denying difference, not playing race alongside gender, but eliminating race from the picture (56). Anderson and Collis support this idea by saying:

Many people believe that being nonracist means being color-blind – that is, refusing to recognize or treat as significant a person's racial background and identity. But to ignore the significance of race in a society where racial groups have distinct historical and contemporary experiences is to deny the reality of their group experience. Being color-blind in a society structured on racial privilege means assuming that everybody is "White." Such practices of everyday racism are powerful because, instead of seeing them as components of patterns of institutional racism, we experience these interactions as

ordinary occurrences (82).

If being color-blind means assuming everyone is "White" then that makes "White" the standard, or ideal. Whatever is non-white is substandard. Our society is so habituated to racism that it isn't even viewed as racism anymore, unless the racism is particularly extreme. This societal attitude inherently creates an environment where Whites perpetuate unconscious racism, and non-whites become tolerant of this behavior.

Biologically, there are no genetic markers in the human genome to define race, according to the documentary, "Race: The Power of Illusion," directed by Christine Herbes-Sommers. The documentary claims that humans are so similar that there is only a 1% genetic difference between any human, impartial to race. Scientific data like this only further supports the idea that racism is a social concept and not a biological one. Anderson and Collins support this idea also; they state, "...the meaning and significance of race stems from specific social, historical, and political contexts. It is these contexts that make race meaningful, not just whatever physical differences may exist between groups (83)."

Racism, as with many societal problems, needs to be personal in order for people to care about it and react to it. Anderson and Collis state the following:

Despite evidence, Whites continue to be optimistic in their assessment of racial progress. They say that they are tired of hearing about racism and that they have done all they can to eliminate racial discrimination. People of color are less sanguine about racial progress and are more aware of the nuances of racism. Marked differences in race are still evident in employment, political representation, schooling, and other basic measures

of group well-being (85).

If our society constantly favors one majority race, Caucasians, and racist events are not often perpetuated against them personally nor represented well in the media, then it is somewhat easier to understand why many Whites are disillusioned by racial disparity issues and more importantly why the vast majority of Whites are not to blame directly for perpetuation of their privilege and racism itself. It is the system that was put into place centuries ago that has mutated due in part to modern non-White complacency that is to blame. If something is not often seen or heard, or seen but idly accepted, does it lose some of its social existence? Probably. Race "disappears" because it is not being seen by Whites not being targeted, who hold the majority and monopolize in many societal sectors crucial to creating systematic change such as government policy making. Change seems to be on the cusp, with numerous non-profit organizations being developed all over the country promoting socioeconomic equality and using "privileged money" as leverage for social change, such as Resource Generation, Wealth for the Common Good, and Patriotic Millionaires. Still, in order for racism to truly "be dead," it needs to become everyone's personal problem.

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Want to Get Involved?

Have Comments?

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