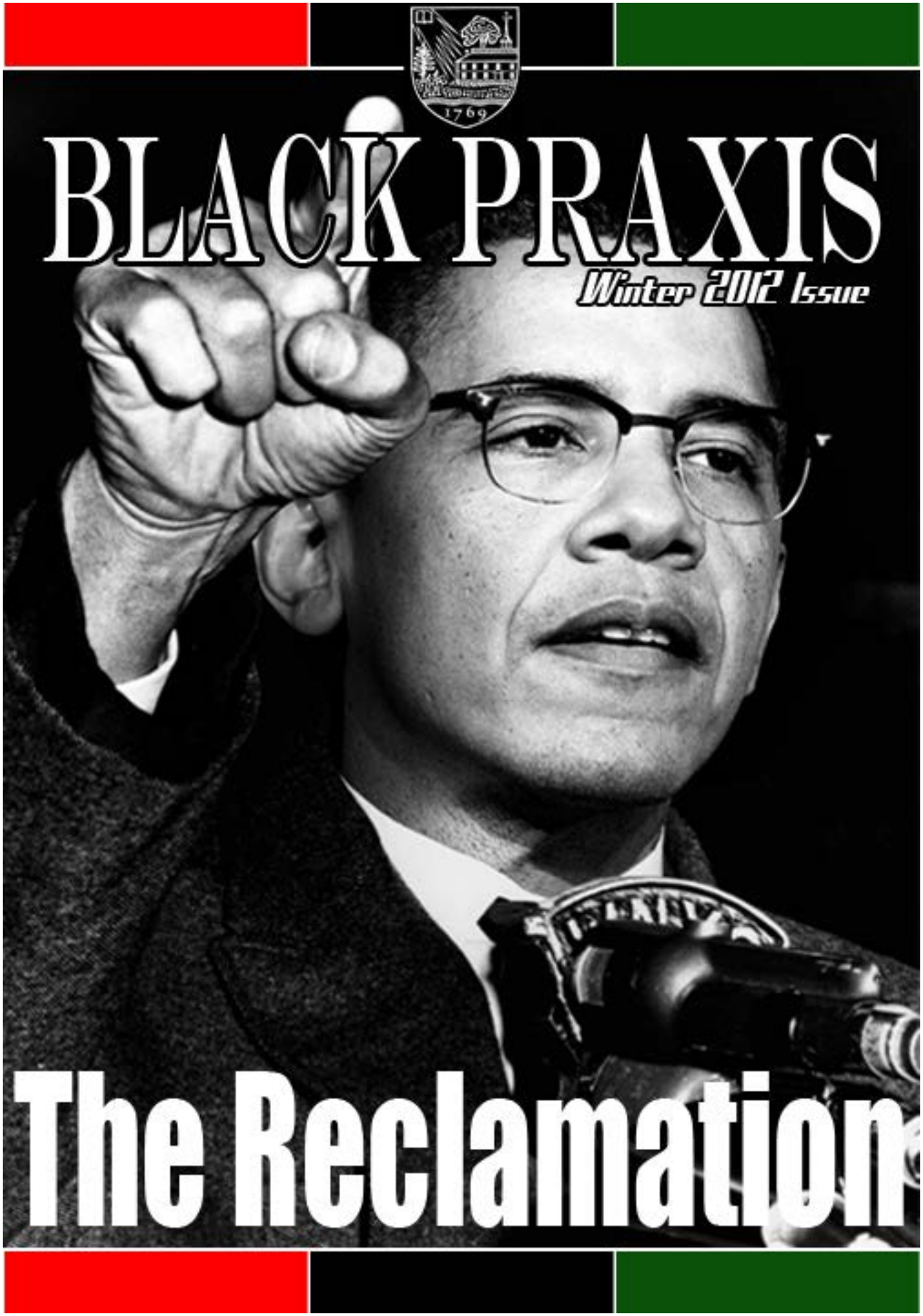
BLACK PRAXIS
Winter 2012 Issue
The Reclamation

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Letter from the Editor

Dear Readers,

It is with great pride that I present to you "The Reclamation." As the winter issue, this edition of Black Praxis has particular significance to our community because it offers a chance to honestly and openly discuss Black History Month. The title, however, refers to more than simply reclaiming February and its meaning. As you'll see from the poems and prose in the following pages, students of Dartmouth's Black community are reclaiming a multitude of things: their heritage, culture, right to expression and self-identification and much more. By asserting and reaffirming what is important to them they are indeed reclaiming.

As always, Black Praxis is more than just a display of exemplary works. This issue is structured to not only showcase talent but to clearly express what February and the history behind it means to members of Dartmouth's Black community. Our community stretches beyond undergraduate students – Assistant Professor of History, Russell Rickford, and Dean of the College, Charlotte Johnson, have offered their opinions on the idea of "reclaiming Black History Month," as well. The support of such key figures in our community sheds light on its growing strength. Surely you can expect that the issue you hold in your hands is packed with skillfully arranged words. Under the leadership of Afro-American Society president, Joan Leslie '12, Dartmouth's campus experienced a series of programs including the Red & Black Affair, discussions with internationally renowned artists like Hugh Masakela, a Black film series and a community-wide celebration of Black History Month. The artwork of Sabrina Yegela '13 brings the Black woman's experience to life and is featured throughout the issue.

So, readers from all walks of life, steal away to your favorite quiet space and enjoy "The Reclamation." Each submission is unique, and I know you'll find yourself thinking about the issues raised, long after closing these covers. I hope you then feel uplifted and inspired to join the movement and reclaim something of your own.

Until next time,

Deidra Willis
Black Praxis Editor-in-Chief

Artwork by Sabrina Yegela '13

Resilience

Ebelechukwu Obi '15

With the word "black" there are so many negative connotations
Burnt, soot, dirty, evil
The associations are endless
But when I think of "black"
I think of the soil in which plants are able to take root and grow
I see the night sky, in which we are able to view the stars
Or the sweet darkness that brings us to sleep
Black to me equates strength, solidarity, courage
The associations are endless
Black as a race is another matter
In this culture "BLACK" means
uneducated, not good enough
But was Martin Luther King Jr.
uneducated?
Was Malcolm X not good enough?
Both of these figures were so good
enough, someone wanted them silent
And they thought death would silence them
But it didn't
Why don't we make black mean resilience?
I want the black to shine so hard, that those that have
their eyes sewn shut can still see it
This black is yours.
This black is mine.
Let's celebrate it.

AMERICA'S AMNESIA

JOAN LESLIE '12

January 20 1990

America, that's my birthday

So when every other January, we'd have no school on Mondays

You convinced me the celebration was mine

I didn't know who this Martin Luther King guy was trying to steal my shine

I couldn't tell which one of us you forgot first

September 25, 2007

The day I stopped calling my ancestors slaves

A term implying submission

Subtle compliance of their state

But to be enslaved

forced into a system resisted at all costs

when being thrown onto ships

Separated from their actual brothers and sisters instead of the hypothetical ones we've tried to reclaim

In 2011

You let us forget that Michele Bachmann thinks THIS institution was preferable to the current state of my people

The same year, You forgot that James Craig Anderson was murdered by 5 white teenagers who suddenly made their mission killing a black man tonight

You let them free

Silently applauding this American tragedy, but I

Am the only one who still talks about it

At times I think im the only one who still cares

Most Americans almost forgot that it's still illegal to be black in Mississippi

A state I remember singing songs to

M-I-crooked letter-crooked letter--I

hump back-hump back-

I will never be the same again

And WE cannot go on like this

I tell people I'm proud to be an American because I remember what you forgot

I remember that my ancestors have been occupying Wall Street much longer than any movement

Literally, their bodies are occupying Wall Street

They are buried under Wall Street

And they were thrown into the ground

One by one by like sacrificed soldiers in trenches

America do you remember that we were soldiers too

Spike Lee and I may be the only two people who remember the Battle of St. Anna

just to carry your name

My ancestors have fought for you America

Just to carry your name

But this marriage is not a healthy one

And I was harshly reminded as you strung black soldiers up from trees in their uniforms

We are American history

Yet have only managed to steal an entire paragraph in your textbooks

Texas-manufactured textbooks

While your amnesia is manifesting

And manages to convince others

To leave slavery out of textbooks

Texas says: Let's move forward as a nation

Let's forget

Because it's easier that way

I'm not convinced

I AM NOT CONVINCED

Because America looks like indigenous populations and enslaved Africans

Swaying in the wind to get your attention

To help you remember what it's clear that you've forgotten

That we

Too

Are America


Artwork by Sabrina Yegela '13

Who is to Blame for Trinidad's Problems?

Sean Penso '15

In Merle Hodge's *Crick Crack Monkey*, male gender roles are influenced negatively by European post-colonialism and American imperialism. Whether consciously or subconsciously, Trinidadian males have no choice but to accept the crippling cultural norms that condition them to venerate foreign-imposed ideals, worldviews, and values. As a result of this systematic displacement, men acquire self-hating practices and subconscious feelings of inadequacy and inferiority; for the Afro-Caribbean male's stories, cultural practices and ethnic identity are not reflected, let alone valued, in his own nation's pop culture. All in all, the post- and neo-colonial environments of the novel hinder male psychological growth and development.

The legacy of plantation culture consistently pervades the consciousness of the male in *Crick Crack Monkey*. Merle Hodge comments on these internalized sentiments in her article "The Shadow of the Whip," stating that:

Caribbean society was born out of brutality, destructiveness, rape… the forced uprooting and enslavement of the African; the gun, the whip, the authority of force... But the violence of our history has not evaporated. It is still there. It is there in the relations between adult and child, between black and white, between man and woman. It has been internalized: it has seeped down into our personal lives.[1]

Uncle Nero, one of Tantie's boyfriends, is a living testament of Hodge's words; he embodies a form of hyper-masculinity that sprouted from this system of the "the gun, the whip, the authority of force." In the 18th century Caribbean, the enslaved African man would resort to physical abuse toward his family to compensate for his demasculinization through the white "seasoning" process of physical and psychological abuse aimed at breaking down the African slave's masculinity.[2] Since retaliating against the master would inevitably lead to more lashes or even death, the enslaved male would assert his masculinity in slave communities through beating his wife and children.[3] Nero, a pawn of this hypermasculine development, flashes his belt to reprimand Tee and Toddan. He resorts to physical abuse to affirm his masculinity, his alpha status as a black male, even though a master no longer questions his manhood. He is confirmation of Hodge's assertion in her article that the legacy of plantation culture has been internalized. The utilization of whipping is but another misunderstood means of penalization; Nero threatens to beat the children in an attempt to "civilize" them, akin to the manner in which plantation masters would beat their property, their slaves. Hardened by an antiquated system in which self-assertion of one's manhood was necessary, Uncle Nero flashes his belt because that is what men in the Caribbean have been conditioned to do.

In addition to hypermasculinity, developments of black inferiority and hatred also psychologically impair the novel's higher-class black males. Epitomizing this self-hatred, Mr. Hinds bluntly states that he is above the teaching of a bunch of black children. After mounting frustration from the natural chaos involved with a class of youngsters, the teacher says, "I who have sat on the benches of the Inns of the Court! … marched glory side by side with His Majesty's bravest men – I don't have to stand here and business myself … *with little black nincompoops*!"[4] Mr. Hinds is sanctimonious and vain as he reminisces on his peripheral relations with Western society with esteemed nostalgia. He parallels Tee's next teacher, Sir, in his reverence of all that is European derived and hatred of the African identity. Sir shows extreme obsequiousness and submission toward the schoolteacher Mr. Hinds and toward the school's reverend, yet he continuously shatters his tamarind whips on his black students.[5] These cases of fawning servility toward Eurocentric values and figureheads demonstrate another side of black denigration and abuse. Since the black community and way of life offer no means to gain upward social mobility in the European-in-

fluenced Trinidad, those who wish to escape a life a poverty often lead a pretentious and bourgeois life. Sir and Mr. Hinds are simple props in a system designed to maintain white supremacy and Eurocentric values. On an island where lighter skin and more European-like phenotypes mean better economic opportunities, the males in *Crick Crack Monkey* are left to negotiate complete assimilation and transformation or alienation and poverty. The alienation of the novel's males, however, does not stop here.

Imperial American impulses fabricated unfulfilling dreams for the susceptible young males of *Crick Crack Monkey*. Mikey, the novel's prototype of the contemporary Trinidadian teen, meets his friends regularly at the bridge to live out his fantastical American dream. During one meeting, Mikey's friend Joe pantomimes, "ey boy, forty million o'them against the star-boy and the rest o'them ridin comin and then he bullets run-out… then yu jus' see Red-Indian fallin-dong all over the place…"[6] In this quote, Joe, Mikey and the rest of the guys are imagining themselves in a setting typical of mid-20th century American cinema. The boys, however, will never go to war with Indians, nor will they ever be able to live out the American cinematic figure of the "star-boy" who saves the day. Blindly conditioned by an imported American pop-culture, Mikey and the rest of his playmates waste their lives bantering over tales of Manhattan, cowboys and Indians, all of which they have probably only encountered in American-produced cinemas. Unbeknownst to the teens, none of what they have grown to esteem is relevant to their own lives. These boys are socially bound by an American impulse, which can never be properly mimicked, much less fulfilled; hence, the socio-cultural displacement of the Trinidadian male continues.

At first glance, it may seem appropriate to judge the black male characters of *Crick Crack Monkey* for their perpetuation of a very anti-black value system: Sir and Mr. Hinds worship European values and hate black life, Uncle Nero threatens to whip black children into shape, and Mikey and his friends waste their lives idolizing white American cinemas. However, such an accusation does not further our understanding of the complexities of the novel and the island that it depicts. Trinidad, like other Caribbean islands, is the collection of many diverse peoples, histories and cultures. Its history includes the destruction of a native people, a haunting post-colonial legacy, contemporary American impulses and many more internal and external variables that make the island unique. Its inhabitants originate from Africa, India, Venezuela, Spain, France, England and many more countries. To speak in terms of blaming a particular legacy or people for some of the nation's social or economic problems is far too skewed. For the country is the collection of its legacies' and people's coexistence. Therefore, one should historicize Trinidad's problems objectively in the context of everything that has happened. In writing her novel, Hodge does not blame anyone for the social and economic problems the nation faces, rather, she acknowledges them. While there is no doubt the island is far from providing a healthy environment for black men, Merle Hodge writes *Crick Crack Monkey* for the simple reason that awareness of the issue helps to advance its case.

Endnotes

1. Hodge, Merle. "The Shadow of the Whip: A Comment on Male-Female Relations in the Caribbean." in *Is Massa Day or Dead* ed. Orde Coombs. New York: Doubleday, 1974. 111. Print.
2. Gomez, Michael Angelo. "Tad's Query." *Exchanging Our Country marks: The Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum South*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998. 187-192. Print.
3. *Ibid*.
4. Hodge, Merle. "5." *Crick Crack, Monkey* . London: Heinemann, 1981. 32. Print.
5. *Ibid* 60.
6. *Ibid* 9.

My Voice

Natasha Herring '12

For far too long their voices were silenced,
Yes, those who have come before me and endured
heinous violence.
My ancestors longed for a voice and equality,
But progress was attained, some say, through Lincoln's craze
for political notoriety.

Isn't progress a continual improvement? — that's the
question I ask,
Because discrimination floods our institutions, yet
society seems to be masked.
Some may think this perspective is outdated,
But truthfully it was evident in the death of
Troy Davis.

What does this have to do with my voice,
you may wonder?
Well these social injustices have instilled in
me a thunder.
One that is confident, bold and leads me to
action on the front lines,
Yet my actions aren't always heard, and my
audience is potentially blind.

I'm inspired by the voice representing the
underserved, I want my voice to be at the
same caliber that my actions are observed.

IMAGINEERING GOD

Social Imagination & Construction of God in Wm. P. Young's *The Shack*

BY MICHELLE DOMINGUE '12

"The moment God is figured out with nice neat lines and definitions, we are no longer dealing with God." This quote from Rob Bell's highly unorthodox introductory "manual" to Christianity, *Velvet Elvis: Repainting the Christian Faith* (2005), embodies many of the issues Christians, non-believers, and those somewhere in between on their faith journeys wrestle with, relative to humans' conceptualization of God. One of the aspects of God humans attempt to ration is God's appearance, or image. With much of human knowledge rooted in an anthropocentric understanding of phenomenon, especially that of the spiritual, questions surrounding the image, construction, and nature of God pervade human collective thought.

Does God exist in the Unitarian or Trinitarian? Is God raced? Is God gendered?

Since the inception of the Christian Church, an insatiable desire for visualizing God as a tangible being resulted in the socialization of religion. Androcentric, or male-dominated, spiritual and worldviews governed social interactions and cultural configurations, which eventually infiltrated the realm of religion. The conflation of church and state allowed for the simultaneous suppression of women (and overtly feminine men) and persons who lacked culturally favored phenotypic traits (i.e. fair skin complexion). However, contemporary exegesis of sacred texts and interpretations of doctrine in the Abrahamic religions provide a myriad of worldviews of God's "image." In an attempt to further complicate and offer explanations to these theological queries, William P. Young explores the social imagination and construction of God in his novel, *The Shack: Where Tragedy Confronts Eternity* (2007).

Young refutes the widely held assertion of God's singular identity as an old, White, heterosexual man, by creating depictions of the Almighty as a triune deity manifested as a large, older Black woman named Elousia (God, the "Father"), a Middle Eastern, middle-aged muscular man named Jesus (God, the Son), and an Asian, middle-aged woman named Sarayu (God, the Holy Spirit). By portraying God as three persons, yet fully one united body, Young accepts the Christian construction of God as a "Holy Trinity." Young's re-appropriation of the image of God, the "Father," as a Black woman provokes readers to deconstruct the constraints (and restraints) placed on God's appearance and image, due to the prevalence of Eurocentric ideals and social values. "Papa," one of Young's alternate names for God, is neither male or female, which begins to incorporate the Afrocentric worldview of a supreme, creator being as an unsexed, multi-gendered spirit that intercedes in the necessary capacities of the spiritual adorer (Akbar, 1984). In the following excerpt, the protagonist Mackenzie Phillips questions the widespread notion of God as a father figure versus a more maternalistic authority:

> [W]hy is there such an emphasis on you being a Father?..."Well," responded Papa... "there are many reasons for that, and some of them go very deep. Let me say for now that we knew once the creation was broken, true fathering would be much more lacking than mothering. Don't misunderstand me, both are needed--but an emphasis on fathering is necessary because of the enormity of its absence"(Young 79).

Though Young insinuates the dominant view of God as "masculine" as an accurate conceptualization, he offers rationale behind the supposed necessity for a traditionally envisioned father figure. The societal expectations and structures created by humankind (mostly by European men) crafted men as being incapable of nurturing and emotionally supportive, but as experts in protection and making material provisions for loved ones. However, non-western religious traditions emphasized the fluid nature of sexual and gender expression among deities (Kambon, 1998). Since those deities, much like the Christian God, are more perfect extensions of the human

spirit, we may presume if humans were truly made in the "image" and "likeness" of God, then character traits lack gender, and the introduction of social constructs and values into religious expression taint the purity of the spiritual experience. Consider the nature of birth within the Christian context. Birth requires the participation of both sexes. Women physically give birth to humankind, while re-birth in the Spirit occurs at the hand of Jesus Christ, who appeared as a man on Earth. Therefore, the physical and spiritual phenomena of birth require dialogic intersections of both sexes. This reiterates the contention that God is an unsexed, multi-gendered entity who acts in the necessary capacities for humans at certain instances(Young 83).

To borrow the concept of Afrocentric philosopher and scholar-activist, Marimba Ani, the process of "cultural othering" occurs when differences among the collective are made salient, thereby creating factions and false notions of self-appointed power in a formerly co-equal and consubstantial space—the place where God abides, be it physical or spiritual (Ani, 1994). Communalistic, not nomadic, attitudes accomplish the love of God, according to Young's God, Elousia. Particular love, i.e. God's love, is an interdependent event, and its success is contingent upon the genuine contribution of all humans. In contrast, abstract love, i.e. the philosophical notion of love often applied by humans in spiritual encounters with God, enables certain people to further themselves from reality into a more ethereal state where humans are expendable, and God's love is compartmentalized for use and adoration at their leisure. The pervasiveness of abstract love, instead of particular love, also contributes to this singular identity construction of God. Young explores the idea of "collective difference for greater benefit" when Mack begs the question of the need for variance among humans. God responds by saying, "To reveal myself to you as a very, large white grandfather figure with flowing beard, like Gandalf would simply reinforce your religious stereotypes, and this weekend is *not* about reinforcing your religious stereotypes" (Young 78).

Because of a predominant Eurocentric orientation, Christians often categorize or impose a hierarchy of authority, relative to the Trinitarian God—God, the Father is first and most dominant, God the Son is second and most closely associated with the lived human experience, and God, the Holy Spirit is third, esoteric, and holds the least value and place in more refined Christian practices. The linearity of this imagination of God reinforces notions of anthropocentric modes of power and authority; ultimately, religion becomes a socializing tool of its practitioners. Mack's apparent discomfort with God's revelation as a Black woman addresses a larger issue of acceptance (not just tolerance) of all God's people, irrespective of gender, race, class, age, etc.

Furthermore, some readers may question Young's decision to use Mack, the White, Christian, heterosexual, middle-class male protagonist, as the individual "privileged" to this pre-death, vis-à-vis encounter with God. Some may think that Young's choice may reinforce, or perpetuate the notion that God only loves and accepts those who are White, Christian, heterosexual, male *and* belong to the middle or upper class. However, Young's character *needed* to be, characteristically, the aforementioned in order to illustrate the ill-constructed and unequal social values generated on the basis of "empiricism" and sustained by members of this ruling order. Young's Elousia remarks that humankind's "Fall from Grace…divorced the spiritual and the physical," which introduced notions of separating subjectivity and objectivity, or cognitive from affective, when in essence, the two were originally designed to work in tandem.(Young 189).

William Young's *The Shack* boasts a great deal of theological debates regarding God's image and nature that have plagued theologians, both academic and lay, for centuries. Constant themes in his book are how religion becomes subjected to socialization and how it acts as a socialization tool. Humans construct images of God based on lived experiences, and no malice or harm occurs until that personal construction becomes imposed on others with the intent of "othering" the cultural systems and belief undergirding the imposee's perception of God. The most important message Young makes clear in his book is that the uniform image of God should be one of love, truth, and respect. Envisioning God through human faculties evolves into a level of complexity in which God often abides in the periphery. Therefore, we should "see" God as love and love, only.


Artwork by Sabrina Yegela '13

Outsider

Taylor Luckadue '15

Big hips round lips
Cha mere gal!
Beauty at its best
Caramel skin gleaming in the sunlight
All eyes on her
That girl is beauty
Her blackness is beauty
Walking into a room full of pale faces
Her confidence staggers
Their eyes affirm her beauty
But their mainstream minds fight against it
Big hips round lips
Don't belong 'round here
Don't fit their what is beautiful
But she knows, she knows...
They want to touch her
Big hips round lips
She's definitely not from around here
Come here girl.

DIFFERENT SLAVERY

KEVIN GILLESPIE '15

In the *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass,* Frederick Douglass illuminates the exceptional experiences of an exceptional man. Frederick Douglass had the will power and hunger for freedom that was not embedded within every slave. Though he was severely beaten and tortured just as many other slaves were, he chose not to be content with oppression and to relinquish the cruelty of slavery by escaping to freedom. The economic prosperity of his master, Douglass's relationship with white youth, and his incredible mental and physical perseverance, allowed him to fully understand the injustices of slavery. He was, therefore, able to acquire freedom. The same cannot be said for many other slaves. Though many slaves tried escaping to freedom, they may have been caught and/or killed. Douglass resisted subjugation to the likeness of a beast. As a result he achieved freedom and forever remains a prolific man.

Frederick Douglass' exceptionality is rooted in his genes. His mother was a slave who lived on another plantation, while his Father is believed to have been his very own master (Douglass 42). In his narrative Douglass writes, "by law established, the children of slave women shall in all cases follow the condition of their mothers (Douglass 43)." He also writes, "the slave holder in cases not a few, sustains to his slaves the double relation of master and father" (Douglass 23). In a general context, Douglass is in the same category as several other mulatto slaves in that he is still a slave just as his mother, yet possesses the genetic makeup of his white father. However, Douglass' situation is narrow and specific to his own oppression, because he has no factual evidence to prove that he is indeed the son of his master. His mother does not live with him (Douglass 42), which gives him no foundation of an identity. Thus Douglass must struggle with loss of identity that is perhaps not felt by other mulatto slaves who may know that their father is indeed their master, because his or her mother lives on the same plantation.

Frederick Douglass was born on an economically complex plantation, stereotyped as "uncommon" in both the Chesapeake Bay region and the antebellum South. Douglass' first owner's name was Captain Anthony (Douglass 44). Though not rich, Captain Anthony owned three farms and thirty slaves. Despite the possibility of his financial misfortunes, Captain Anthony was well-to-do in that he owned more than one farm. Most plantation owners owned one farm or even worked farms for other rich men. He also possessed thirty slaves. Because of the hefty price that a slave could cost, most slave owners owned few slaves and may have even rented or loaned their slaves for profit. Although Captain Anthony is Frederick Douglass' first master, he too was an overseer for an even more economically advantageous plantation system. Aaron Anthony was a Lloyd plantation overseer (Douglass 44). Edward Lloyd V, the head master over the Lloyd plantation system and Frederick Douglass' actual master, was the governor of Maryland and a U.S Senator (Douglass 45). Under his ownership, the Lloyd holdings included 550 slaves; by the end of the Civil War, his son Edward Lloyd VI owned 700 slaves in Maryland, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Mississippi. Slaves and land were quite expensive. The Lloyd family is a rarity and that their plantation system was a stimulating business that provided them vast riches unlike many other plantation owners in the U.S. Douglass is a rare case for a slave, because he is one of hundreds of slaves belonging to one master rather than one of few slaves belonging to one master.

As a slave Frederick Douglass also had the pleasure of being well received by Master Daniel Lloyd. Douglass writes, "My connection with Master Daniel was of some advantage to me. He became quite attached to me and was sort of protector of me (Douglass 59)." Douglass is exceptional because he was one of many slave children on Master Lloyd's plantation who was preferred by his owner and even protected by his owner. Mas-

ter Daniel saw Douglass as a friend rather than his property. Douglass writes, "He would not allow the other boys to impose upon me, and would divide his cakes with me (Douglass 59)."Douglass builds a foundation for prosperity among himself and his white superiors. Even when the daughter of his master, Ms. Lucretia, sends him away to Baltimore he is chosen because he is well received by his masters. The life of Frederick Douglass takes an unexpected turn when he is sent to serve Hugh Auld and his family in Baltimore. For Douglass, the three day transition between the Great House farm and moving to a brownstone in Baltimore City were three of the happiest days of his life (Douglass 60). Because Douglass had little-to-no knowledge about the origin of his family, he was fortunate to leave the plantation. Many other slave children, who did know of their family and identity, might have been reluctant to be taken away from the Great House farm.

Frederick Douglass' initial relationship with Mrs. Auld is significantly different from that of most slave children, because his mistress does not oppress him through anger and violence. When Frederick Douglass finally arrives in Baltimore, he is greeted by a mistress who is kind-hearted and unintimidating. Frederick Douglass writes, "She did not deem it impudent or unmannerly for a slave to look her in the face" (Douglass 55). Douglass tells of his wife's cousin who was murdered by her mistress when she forgot to keep her mistress's baby from crying. His wife's cousin was beaten to death by her mistress who broke her nose and breastbone with a stick (Douglass 46-47). Unlike the belligerent oppression Mrs. Hicks displayed upon her slave, Mrs. Auld taught Frederick Douglass the alphabet. Slaves were not to be taught how to read or write. Learning the alphabet was a segue into Douglass' understanding of the oppression of slavery. He now possessed the tool that was necessary for acquiring freedom. His mistress was frightened by the possibility that her very own slave would be an educated slave. As a result, she began oppressing him just as Mrs. Hicks did the cousin of Frederick Douglass's wife.

Rather than allowing the contradictive ire of his mistress and master to hinder his education, Douglass became proactive. He furthered his literacy through the street children who would teach him how to read his book in exchange for scraps of bread (Douglass 63). When Douglass read Sheridan's speech on universal emancipation, he grew to detest his enslavers (Douglass 64). Furthermore, while working in the ship yard, Douglass mastered the art of writing by observing the letters etched on pieces of wood meant for specific workers (Douglass 67). Contrary to most slaves, Douglass was well traveled and capable of writing.

Douglass' fury transferred into tactical planning for escape to freedom. However, as Douglass was travelling towards life back on the plantation in St. Michaels, he longed for his poor white colleagues back in Baltimore. Douglass writes, "It was those little Baltimore boys that I felt the strongest attachment" (Douglass 74). While most slaves feared all white people, Douglass longed for the friendship of his poor white friends in Baltimore.

The turning point in Douglass's career as a slave occurred when he stood up to the cruel punishment of Mr. Covey, a slave breaker. Douglass accounts of Mr. Covey tying his legs one morning while he was tending to the horses (Douglass 97). While Mr. Covey thought that he could now break the spirit of Frederick Douglass, Douglass found the will to fight his oppressor. Douglass writes, "I seized Covey, hard by the throat, and as I did so, I rose (Douglass 97)." Fighting off any white man, whether it was a slave master or slave breaker, was unheard of during this period of oppression. Slaves that were known to have resisted their masters were either severely punished or killed. Douglass was aware that there was a choice between liberty and slavery.

Frederick Douglass emancipates himself from slavery. His hunger for freedom trumps contentment with slavery. In the eleventh chapter, Douglass speaks of reaching New Bedford, Mass. and being embraced by a community of anti-slavery abolitionist. He soon became an abolitionist himself and spoke out against the hardships of slavery. Though Douglass faced many of the same hardships that other slaves faced, his ability to use oppression as the motivation for freedom makes him exceptional.

BLACK PRAXIS wants to know...

"Is there really a place for Black History Month in today's society?"

"We have a responsibility to learn about the achievements, struggles, challenges, and triumphs of our ancestral and contemporary heroes. The contributions and histories of African Americans serve as critical threads in the tapestry of world history, and we must recognize, celebrate, and remember."

Jordan M. Terry '15

"I think having a "Black History Month" is bullshit, because it relegates the contributions that blacks have made to history and to society to just 28 days. I think that black history is world history; it's American history; it's just as integral to the discipline of history as white/European history. Black history should be talked about and discussed along with 'history' as we know it everyday."

Katelyn Walker '14

"Yes. There will always be a place for black history month, because to understand where we're going, we have to remember where we've been. In a society where the downfalls of blacks are highlighted by the media, we need at least a month to show the positivity that exist within our community."

RJ Griffin '13

"There is of course a need for Black History Month in today's society. While our society has of course undergone changes, the purpose of Black History Month is to remember those who persevered in order to help our entire nation become one that supports equality for people, rather than discriminate against them based on race. To remember and to celebrate Black History Month is to celebrate a commitment to ensuring equality for all people."

Ashley Afranie-Sakyi '13

"Designating a special month for commemorating the contributions made by African Americans is a lovely gesture, but it is a concession to the belief that African American identity and history are somehow separate from American identity and history. If we agree there is a need to recognize, respect and honour the contributions made by African Americans as a response to racism, then we should expand this approach to include other disenfranchised groups. Why should efforts to combat racism against African Americans be privileged as compared to efforts to counter sexism, homophobia or xenophobia directed at other groups?"

Javed Jaghai '12

The Curious Case of Black History Month

Charlotte Johnson,
Dean of the College

I grew up in a family where individual accomplishments, large and small, were celebrated. Our family history was (and is) a point of pride. The contributions of African Americans, though not emphasized in the schools we attended, were emphasized by my parents and extended family members. The souls of black folk were alive and well in my household. Consequently, I have, from the time I was a teenager, found the notion of Black History Month somewhat curious. Singling out one month to acknowledge and celebrate the accomplishments of a people with a history as rich and powerful as African Americans has always been for me an ironic reminder of the systematic marginalization we have experienced.

As an adult who now understands the origin of Black History Month and who can better appreciate its symbolic value, my cynicism has lessened, at least a bit. I better recognize the value in designating a specific time to come together and celebrate our rich and diverse culture, honor those who sacrificed so we could be here, and unite around the vision of a better future for those who come after us.

Still, I hope for a day when Our History is seamlessly interwoven with American History, a day indistinguishable from other days of the year, a day hopefully not too far away.

Post-Racialism, Black "Dap" and the Age of Amnesia

Russell Rickford,
Assistant Professor of History

Many of our sisters and brothers in this nominally "post-racial" society have begun to exercise the dubious privilege of questioning the validity and legitimacy of black solidarity. Having internalized white supremacist ideals couched in the language and framework of pluralist democracy, they unconsciously repress themselves, reflexively suppressing or questioning the reality of persistent structural racism and the organic necessity for black unity and community. Many have accepted the twisted logic of "colorblindness," thus embracing the absurd premise that raising questions of racial inequality is somehow itself an act of racism—a disruption of the ostensibly triumphant social consensus around the irrelevance of race. Since race either no longer matters or plays a marginal role in our day-to-day lives, they argue falsely, clinging to blackness is essentially a self-defeating exercise that undermines the assimilationist, integrationist project in which we must all engage: incorporating ourselves further into the corporate mainstream and vigorously practicing the private accumulation that was once the exclusive prerogative of white men.

In this post-post-Civil Rights era, the increasingly distant aftermath of the 1960s Age of Reforms, the pervasiveness and perniciousness of this kind of reasoning represents one of the most significant rationales for the reclamation of not only Black History Month, but of black history itself. Black folks, especially that fragile, compromised tribe known as the black petty bourgeoisie, desperately need to revive the ancient debate over integration that has shaped African-American thought and political culture almost since our first arrival on these shores. What is the cultural meaning—for black people—of the stunning social changes that have recently enabled a handful of us to overcome several of the remaining barriers to wealth and access in this opulent land? What has been gained by the still-new and still-unfolding journey of integration? What has been lost? How do we reap the benefits of full citizenship in this society while preserving our soul and our commitment to the many brothers and sisters who remain trapped at the bottom?

Rather than address these questions in new and necessary ways in forums designed by and for us, far too many of us seem to have chosen the sterile, individualist path of white conformity. Mind you, I am not endorsing black essentialism. The principle that blackness is a global panorama of eclectic identity, style, behavior and sensibility is essential to enlightened black consciousness. But it would be foolish, even suicidal, to believe that black people's experiences are now so disparate, both in the U.S. and internationally, that we no longer possess the basis for collective awareness, deliberation or action. Indeed, this very sense of linked fate has always underwritten the bloody struggles and communal gains that many of us now casually dismiss or in-

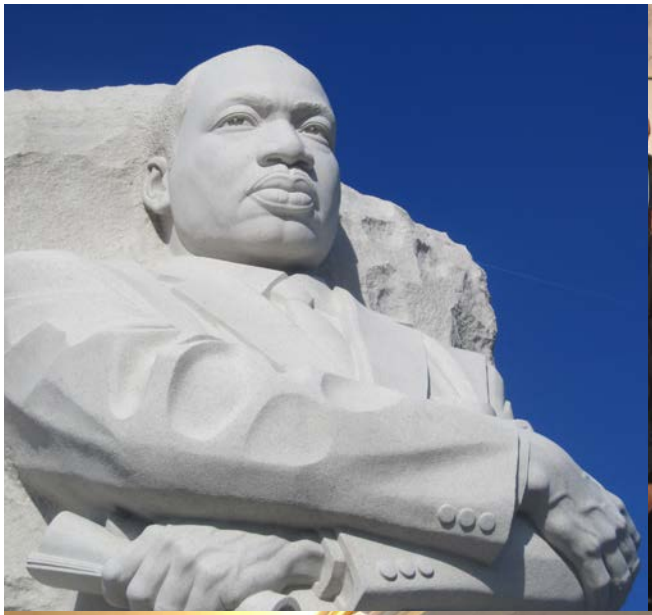
terpret as individual license.

We must reclaim black history in order to revive black consciousness, rebuild a sense of community, and confront the sobering possibility that some of us have become victims of our own success. The historical process of integration, undergirded by the heroic sacrifices of our predecessors, has now entered its secondary and tertiary phases, inevitably dissolving much of the black cohesiveness that existed (for better or worse) under segregation. Black America has diffused to such an extent that some of us now feel free to sever any communal feelings, any bonds of shared experience or cooperation, especially under the thrall of largely welcoming, white environments. This process of self-denial is apparent to any black person who walks this campus. Like many others, I have never quite adjusted to the blank stares and averted gazes of many of the black people that I pass while crossing these grounds. The fact that so many black folks feel obliged to avoid the eyes of those few individuals who actually look like them suggests that many of us still do not love ourselves, do not like what we see in the mirror.

"We must reclaim black history in order to revive black consciousness, rebuild a sense of community, and confront the sobering possibility that some of us have become victims of our own success."

When we Africans and African Americans take ownership of our collective past, our shared experience, we form a powerful weapon against the self-hatred that continues to corrode our spirits and psyches. We also resist erasure and fragmentation in a society that remains committed to our subordination as a group. Asserting black particularity—by recognizing both the bittersweet distinctiveness of our inherited past and the cultural uniqueness of our existential present—does not mean compromising the ideals of human universalism. On the contrary. The intervention of blackness, of blackness without apology, has always represented the only hope for the redemption of the universalist creed that the West defiled with slavery, colonialism, imperialism and apartheid. Unflinching blackness, a blackness awash with love—for black people, for oppressed people, for all people—is a vital defense against the murderous violence of whiteness, the violence of war for conquest and for venal, soulless profit.

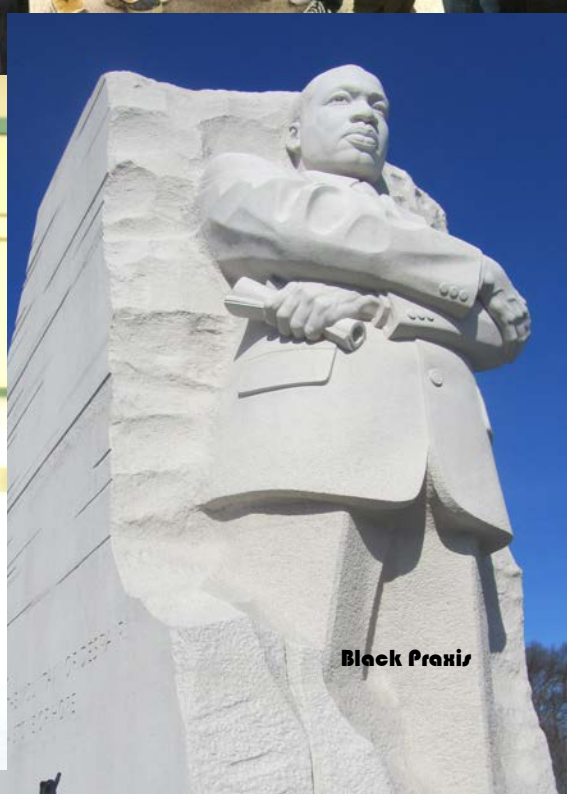
Amilcar Cabral, the great, martyred revolutionary of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde (West Africa) once wrote that the purpose of liberation is to return the people to their history, to restore the self-ownership and human agency that slavery, colonialism and imperialism ruptured. Today, as the lie of post-racialism seeks to penetrate our consciousness, another such reclamation is required in Black America. Let us rededicate ourselves to confronting the black past, not just as a way to come to terms with our familial present, but as a means of ensuring the survival of our total humanity, even as we rise in this antihuman society. As a first step in the quest to humanize ourselves, let us also recommit to the black "dap." Never let a black person pass without some acknowledgement, even if your only apparent commonality is African heredity and a historical experience of rupture and displacement. After all, a smile, a nod, a gesture, an embrace may be all that stands between us and historical erasure in the new day that we now prepare to enter, which must surely become, for us, the Age of Recollection.




EXIT


DARTMOUTH
COLLEGE


ΔΦΑ
ΔΦΑ
AKA
AKA



Unity?

SHANI BROWN '14

The problem with our community is that we're at odds with each other. My sistas are in the struggle to fight for our men. Black History Month comes around and everyone's got their fists up screaming "Black Power!" But how powerful can we be individually? My brothas and my sistas, it's time to unite. Why are our men making a movement toward White?

Am I too *curvy*?

Too **STRONG** for your taste?

Do I have too much attitude that makes our relationship a waste

of your time?

You claim to admire the Black silhouette,

But most of you Niggas ain't picked one of us yet.

Niggas are all about the White women

If she gives you your needed validation,

I see that as a violation of our skin-toned bond.

Do I need long hair? Should I straighten it too in order to be more like my light counterparts to which you were drawn? You fantasize about us, maybe even dated us back in the day, but now that we grown those fantasies have died away. Or maybe you've neglected us for just a short while, and we'll meet up for marriage as I'm walked down the aisle. But for now we're rejected while you fellas have your fun.

Now I found my solution: FUCK IT, I'M DONE.

Where Her Sorrows Lie

Miriam Jerotich '14

Every day at 1 o'clock sharp, she closes down her computer, pushes away from her desk, gets up from her seat, walks out of her office, takes the elevator down to the ground floor, trudges out of the building, and crosses the street to the building where her sorrows lie.

She approaches the manicured lawn in front of the main building. Today, her favorite seat is taken—the metal seat that heats up in the noonday sun and burns her cheeks, reminding her that she's still breathing. She opts to sit on a wooden bench facing the tall jacaranda trees that line the borders of the lawn.

And then she takes in her surroundings.

Several women are lying on the grass. She can't make out any of their features, but one woman stands out. The woman is dressed in a green tailored suit, with a white *kitamba* wrapped around her head. She's laid her head on a brown *kiondo*, the kind that are sold on your way to Nakuru. From the way her back is arched, you can tell that she's weary. Perhaps she's waiting to see a sick relative, perhaps she's just said good-bye to her love, and can't summon the strength to get back up.

Then a gangly *warrior* in a purple shirt and grey trousers walks into the lawn. He strides towards one of the jacaranda trees, and begins praying. He crosses his arms, closes his eyes, mutters quietly, and reaches to the ground, his mechanical movements reminiscent of a man in a deep search for his Maker. He gets up, mutters a few words, and repeats his movements. Perhaps he's praying for his ailing friend, drawing on supernatural powers to deliver healing; perhaps he's just fulfilling his religious duties, and can't wait to get back to his friend's side.

But she soon stops looking at all the people. She's observed enough. Even the model, who crosses the lawn in her red micro mini and killer heels, can't avert her gaze. She arches her eyes to the place where her sorrows lie. She imagines how it must have been, the pain, the madness, the uncertainty.

She relives that time that she never lived. She can hear the cries, and the voices that call to the departed. She feels the knife that sears the heart, the blood that drips uncontrollably, and the adrenalin that rushes through the body to sustain the vital organs. But she can't take the pain. Her heart rate increases, and she's back to the time when she first heard that...

"He's gone…and he's not coming back."

A tear drops down her face. Then two. Then rivulets. And soon, she sobs, she weeps, she can't control the overwhelming pain. The immense sadness envelops her, and all the people on the lawn disappear from her view. She calls into the vast unknown, holding her breath, longing for a reply from the one who left first. But she feels nothing, hears nothing, except the wind that blows into her face, and the sun that cracks her skin and dries her tears. Then she looks at her watch. It's almost 2 o'clock, and she needs to get back to work. She wipes away the remaining tears, for now. She gets up, walks off, crosses the street, gets into the building, takes the elevator back to her office, walks to her desk, and sits down. She's back to her life.

But she's hurting. She's still hurting.

Photography by Janna Fennell '11

Psychological Hedonism

Stephan Johnson '15

Circle, circle, dot, dot,
now you've got the cootie shot
circle, circle, square, square,
now you have it everywhere

Circle of confusion, dotted with affection
Circle of illusion, plus the square of rejection?
Surreptitious actions, reclusive personality
Knowing only fractions, of your reality
The books are your asylum, although you party sometimes
The time is my adversity, although it's not yet halftime.

"Pardon me Cinderella, do you own a glass shoe?"
Maybe I'm tryna bag, or tryna get to know you.
Most come and go, so I usually pay no attention
But from our first conversation I had but one question
Our eyes spoke curiosity, I wasn't sure
If this would be another friendship, or something more
I've got the mental fortitude of a Stromtrooper,
Assigned the mission to investigate you, no snooper.

Now, you may question the veracity of my intention
But there is something I forgot to mention:
Do you know me? Oh, yes, you do?
Then tell me, who am I, to you? then explain what is on my mind or try to tell me where was I defined or when I became spellbound to why I must succeed and how I live by my father's creed.
You-don't-know-me.

You would never know me like a blind man knows Picasso
You would never know me like a cowboy without his lasso
Wouldn't see me like Bloods walking Crip
Wouldn't see me like an OG unequipped

"He's not the type to wine and dine, he just wanna beat it like the drum line."
"Maybe I am tryna smash like the Mario Bros, but there's something else you should presuppose"
If you recite that old line
We will only waste time

Losing the opportunity to wine and dine
And my adversary doesn't allot for overtime.
Instead, I have a proposition, but only on one condition
That you drop all suspicion and grant me with permission
To isolate our situation, dropping all expectation
And start collaboration to end segregation
Between the real me and you
But only if that's what you want to do.

You can know me like the Prophet Muhammad knew religion
You can know me like New York bums know the dove pigeon
See me like *Avatar* in 3-D
See me like high school chemistry.

Or. Or, we can go back. Back to middle school, if you like…

Circle, circle, dot, cot,
now I've got the cootie shot
circle, circle, square, square,
now I have it everywhere.

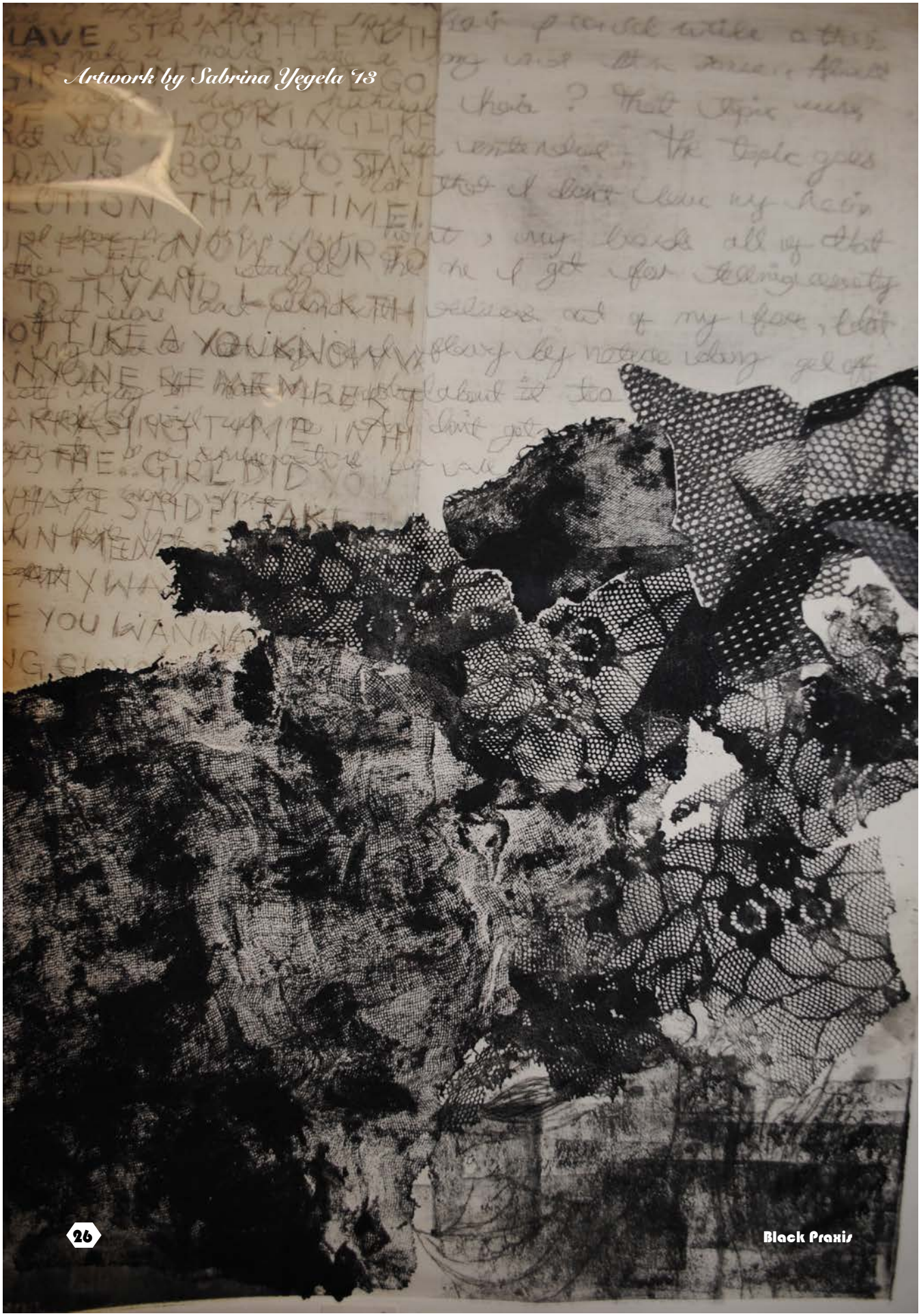
We can go back to the playground and play pretend
If living in the past is something you want to extend.
But, lets not dwell there too long,
For the present time is where we belong
Childhood doesn't promote an exemplary state of mind
Childhood is where you go to unwind
Childhood is only a simpler time
Childhood keep us confined.

Circle, circle, dot, cot,
now we've left the sandlot
circle, circle, square, square,
now we are living in the here.

The here and now is present time
The here and now is the current time
The here and now will not always remain
The here and now is germane.

It is germane to disseminating who we are, what we do, where we came from, when we arrived, why we are who we are, and how we became who we are, in the here and now.

Circle, circle, dot, dot,
are you ready to be taught?
circle, circle, square, square,
are you now ready to share?



Artwork by Sabrina Yegela '13

MY LAST MEAL

Jordan Are '15

Feed me
Hope
Dreams
Expectations
Fulfill the hunger which bellows the vacant corpse of liberty
Liberty of individuality
Making name to a,b,c,d whose definition is merely a symbol of society's syntax
But when converged, brings an unlimited flow of meaning
May I eat
May I consume
I am hungry I am starving
I am famine
I am empty
I am malnourished
I am without ingredients
1 cup of prosperity
Mixed with an ounce of determination
Baked in a flame of life embellished with sparks of happiness
My last meal
I shall eat

The POWER of the Performance

Bennie Niles '15

In *Their Eyes W ere Watching God* and *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man* , Zora Neale Hurston and James Weldon Johnson, respectively, create narratives in which their characters simultaneously transgress and maintain hegemonic lines between, both race and class. These novels continuously question the reality of race as an act to be performed, complicated by the deception of the audience and the obligation of performing up to the standards of the director.

ACT ONE: The Performance of Race

An actor's performance may be perceived as either a vocal or physical presentation, which, through deception, forces the audience into distinguishing the credibility of the act. In Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* and Johnson's *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man* , the characters of Janie and Johnson, swindle their given audiences into believing that they are white based on the believability of their physical presentations. After being on trial for murder, Janie is set free. Subsequently, the white women "cry and stand around her like a protecting wall" (Hurston 188) while the Negroes leave the courtroom and discuss the trial. "Aw you know dem white mens wuzn't gointuh do nothin' tuh no woman dat look lak her" (189). This statement speaks to the importance of the deception aspect throughout a given performance. The actor is given the upper hand if s/he is able to trick the audience into believing the character that is being acted out. Although Janie's whiteness is not exuded in her vocal presentation, in fact, none of her personal words are relayed in the text, the jury, her audience, cannot help but notice the physical presentation of her light skin and straight hair and attribute those characteristics to her whiteness. A similar effect of the performance of race is prevalent in *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man.*

While Johnson is on the train, he converses with "one of the Pullman car porters" (822) about his going to Atlanta and asks him about a place to stay until the start of school. The man informs him that he should accompany him to the place that he stayed at during his "lay-overs" (822). Johnson obliges, and he follows his new companion to a "rickety looking frame house" (822). After getting a room for a few nights, the two men walk around the neighborhood and find themselves in an "eating-house" (823). Johnson's escort tells him "it was the best place in town where a colored man could get a meal" (823). Johnson then inquires about the community's inability to "accommodate" the city's colored aristocrats. "[His companion] answered: 'It wouldn't pay; all the respectable colored people eat at home, and the few who travel generally have friends in the towns to which they go, who entertain them.' He added: 'Of course, you could go in any place in the city; they wouldn't know you from white'" (823).

This dialogue offers insight into the nature of deception within a given performance. Even without vocally presenting himself, James Weldon Johnson is given mobility throughout the city based solely on the physical presentation of his lighter skin. As previously mentioned, the actor, Johnson, is able to benefit from his skillful deception of his audience, which in this case is the white population of Atlanta. Similar to the character of Janie in *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, Johnson's character speaks to the certain liminal ties of race. These particular incoherencies with the color lines not only question the reality of race, but also shine light on the social construction of race.

ACT TWO: The Performance of Class

As an actor, the role you assume is beyond your control. One must act, behave, and talk in accordance with someone else's standards, explaining why thespians feel obligated to please their directors with their performance. Throughout *Their Eyes Were Watching God* and *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man,* Janie and Johnson "perform" their class based on their obligation to please others. "Then she starched and ironed her face, forming it into just what people wanted to see, and opened up the window and cried, "Come heah people! Jody is dead. Mah husband is gone from me" (Hurston 87). During this scene in the novel, Jody dies; thus freeing her from his domineering rule. Instead of mourning over the death of her husband, Janie gets up and walks over to her "dresser [to look hard at] her skin and features" (87). She gazes at her reflection, noticing the maturation of her beauty. Janie is no longer a "young girl, but a handsome woman" (87). After a while she realizes that she must rightfully uphold the image of the mayor's wife and lament over Jody's death. This act brings the performance aspect of her class into question. Janie feels obligated to "perform" for her directors, the citizens of Eatonville, and carry out the duties of a mayor's wife due to the fact that she is "sittin' in de rulin' chair" (87). The people expect an accurate portrayal of a distraught widow, and Janie plays her role. In *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*, Johnson's character is expected to perform certain roles, as well.

While acting, one must put him/herself into someone else's shoes, allowing a transformation to take place over their thoughts, words, and actions. In his *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man,* Johnson is given a set of scripts to act out by his teacher. She tells him to "rise with the others" (808) after he stands when she asks all of the "white scholars" (808) to rise. Johnson identified with the white children, but he finds out that he has to perform the role of a Negro. After being classified with the other colored child in his class, Johnson learns "what their status [is], and … [realizes] that theirs was [his]" (811). This is a performance of class for Johnson, because he is told to act out the "status" of a colored child, when, in reality, he was "dressed very neatly" and considered himself to be an "aristocrat" (805). This statement alone points to the socioeconomic differences when comparing whites to blacks during the early 1900s, meaning that it was atypical for colored children to be, in terms of social and economic class, equal to or better than whites. Johnson goes on to say: "I am sure that at this time the majority of my white schoolmates did not understand or appreciate any differences between me and themselves" (810). As a child, Johnson feels an obligation, similar to that of Janie, to behave a certain way and to act out a role in order to please others around him. This indebtedness to perform a role speaks to the performance aspect of class, and Johnson is forced to perform according to his script even if he has "a very strong aversion to being classed with [the colored children]" (811). *Their Eyes Were Watching God* and *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man* both allow one to see how someone is able to perform class and how one must be given a certain script in order to accurately perform their status.

The relationship between race and class is close. Although the terms "impoverishment" and "underprivileged" are broad, in America, blacks are often the ones that shoulder these loads. In *Their Eyes Were Watching God* and *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man,* Zora Neale Hurston and James Weldon Johnson both show, through their delineation of ambiguous characters, that it would be unreliable to illustrate distinct boundaries of color within race and class. This is due to the fact that people can assume certain roles and "play" particular characters, indelibly tricking their audiences. As actors, individuals are faced with the challenge of *becoming* the character that they are supposed to perform. Once fully in costume, however, they are no longer themselves. They must relay a given script and must perform to the liking of their director. Negroes are America's most intriguing actors. The hues of their characters' wardrobes are derived from the external influences of their audience, and they are faced with the pressure and obligation of accurately presenting these curious characters to the masses.

END

Artwork by Sabrina Yegela '13

For Colored Girls

SADIA SHEIKH-HASSON '13

No one can love someone with that much hurt in them.

Are you sure?
Seems to me we have to.
Darling, we are the colored girls
who have considered suicide when the rainbow wasn't enough.
We are the wounds being plucked by their roots
and shoved back under the foul stench of silence and familial obligation.
I see the way he looks at you. And you at her.
You gotta ash the bitter from your mouth,
and smile with all of your teeth showing
and your gums too.

There is too much life wrapped in your voice, you gotta get up f om here.

You gotta pull the ounds out by the root,
lay hands on the hurt
pry back lips swollen shut
eyes swollen shut drowned in shame and shadow. You
gotta sc eam, bloody fucking murder
he took something from you you got to voice!

You cannot wear guilt like a necklace,
cannot wear silk like
your mother's skin will not keep you
not warm
not sane
not dry from the rains that come wrathful
not anything at all
it didn't do her no good these sixty years
and she's still dragging it around
still breaking her back 60 years old
no rest, no water for her blistered throat

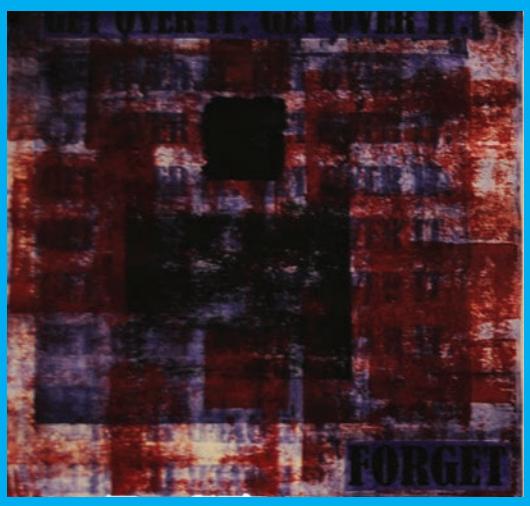
In this world, you gott
lay hands on yourself and
paint your own damn rainbow
you have to be the sun,
dammit
because your mother will cry
your best friend will cry
your sister, that pregnant cousin of yours too
but you gotta learn o
make music
child,
you got to learn to sing.

**The parts in italics are quotes from Tyler Perry's 2010 film, For Colored Girls.*

Artist Feature

Sabrina

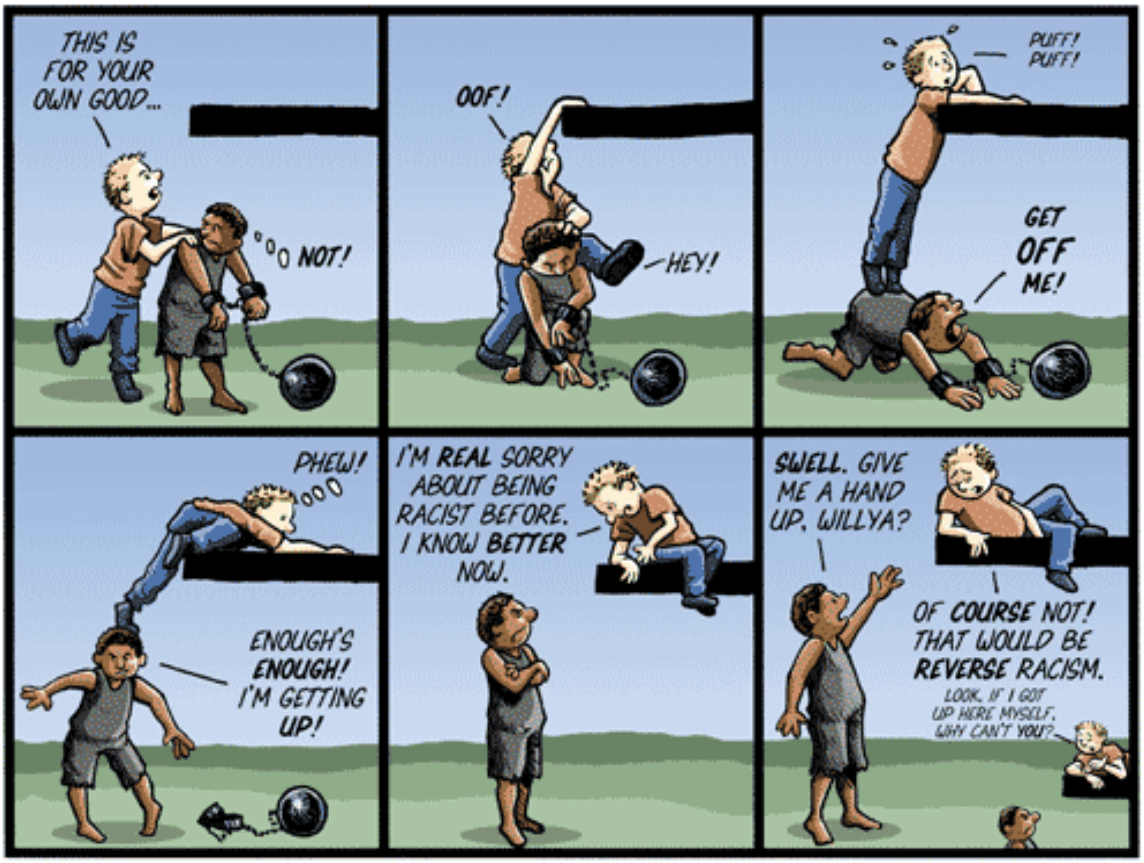
"Art is just something that I do - have to do, like talking and laughing and being with family and friends. Life would be painfully dull without it."



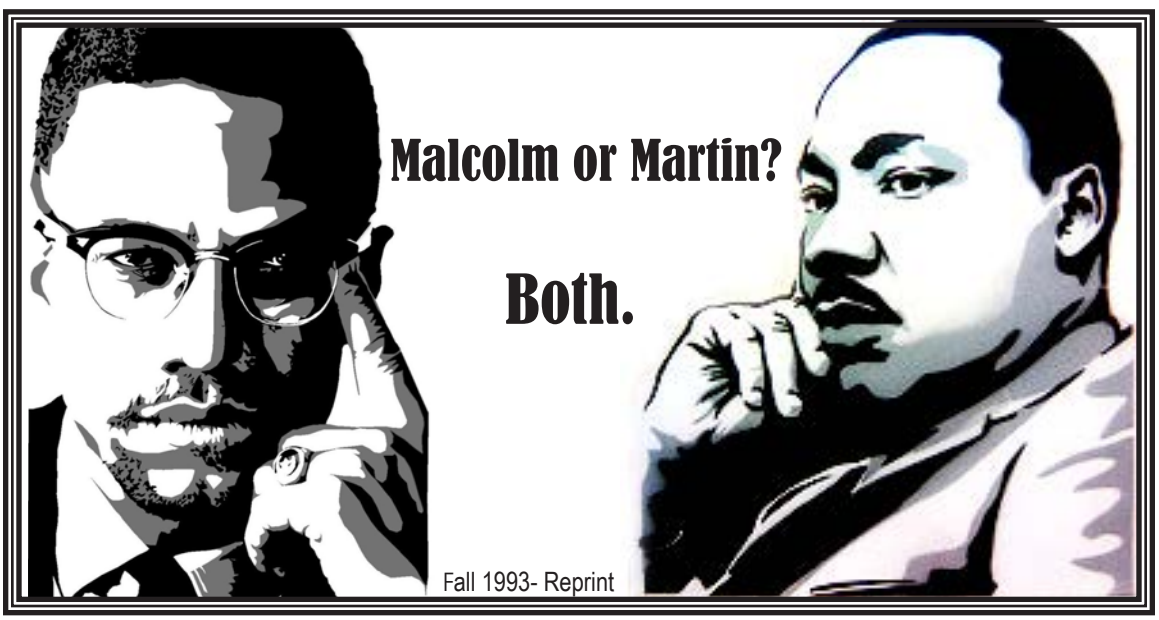
Yvegela

Hometown: Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania
Year: 2013
Major: Economics and Studio Art
Post-Grad Plans: Co-found a not-for-profit art-related business in Tanzania

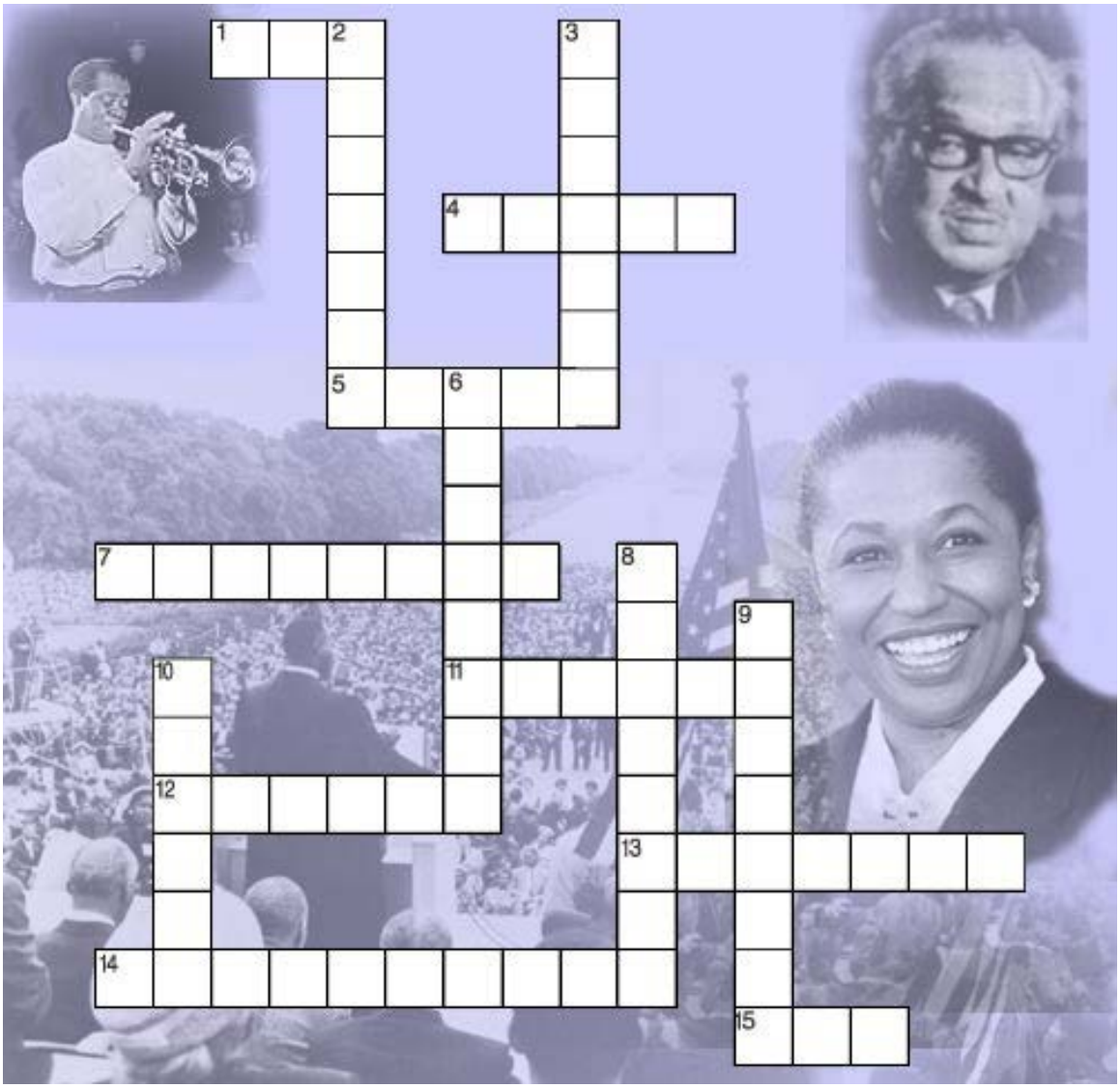
COMICS



A CONCISE HISTORY OF BLACK-WHITE RELATIONS IN THE U.S.A.
by Barry Deutsh



How well do you know your history?



ACROSS

1. Four black college students in Greensboro, North Carolina inspired the 1960 -in campaigns

4. Matthew Henson was a famous African-American explorer. In 1909, he traveled with the Robert E. Peary expedition to discover the __ Pole.

5. Wilma Rudolph was born with polio, which left her with the use of only her right leg. But she overcame this challenge, and joined the __ team in college. In the 1960 Olympics she became the first American woman to win three gold medals.

7. Harriet Tubman led hundres of slaces to freedom along the Underground ____.

11. In 1967, Thurgood Marshall became the first African-American to be appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court. Marshall had been a lawyer who fought for civil rights. One of his most famous cases was Brown vs. Board of Education, which opened the door to desegregation.

12. In 1950, Althea Gibson changed the game of __, becoming the first black woman to play in the U.S. Nationals (now the U.S. Open). Seven years later, she won the tournament. (Venus Williams would be the next black woman to win this title in 1999.)

13. In August 1963, thousands of civil-rights supporters attended a March on Washington, D.C. At this event, Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his famous "I Have a Dream" speech in front of the __ Memorial.

14. Oprah Winfrey is a popular talk-show host and actress. She is also the first African-American woman to own her own television company.

15. Ruby Bridges was the one of the first black students to attend a formerly all-white elementary school. The white parents were so upset, they kept their own children home from school. Ruby was only years old.

DOWN

2. Louis Armstrong was a popular jazz musician who played in the 1920's and 30's. He played the jazz cornet and the __.

3. At 23 years old, Tiger Woods became the first African-American to win the prestigious Masters Golf Tournament. Although he's known around the world as "Tiger," his real first name is __.

6. In 1957, Melba Pattillo was one of nine teenagers who were the first African-American students to attend Central High School in Little Rock, _.

8. In 1947, Jackie Robinson became the first African-American to play major league baseball. He played for the _ Dodgers for ten years.

9. In 1992, Carol Moseley-Braun became the first black woman elected to the U.S. Senate, representing the state of _____.

10. In 1955, Rosa Parks refused to give up her bus seat after a long day at work. This brave act sparked the Montgomery Bus Boycott and changed history. For her actions, Rosa Parks is often called the " __ of the Modern-Day Civil Rights Movement."

ANSWERS

1. sit
2. trumpet
3. Eldrick
4. north
5. track
6. Arkansas
7. Railroad
8. Brooklyn
9. Illinois
10. Mother
11. school
12. tennis
13. Lincoln
14. production
15. six

Want to Get Involved?
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