

Blackworld

MARCH 2008

ONE NATION

WORDS OF WISDOM FROM SOME OF *OUR* BLACK WOMEN

"I freed thousands of slaves. I could have freed thousands more if they had known they were slaves."
- Harriet Tubman



"When you educate a man, you educate an individual, but when you educate a woman, you educate a nation."
- Johnnetta B. Coles



"Don't sit down and wait for the opportunities to come; you have to get up and make them."
- Madam C.J. Walker



"The reward is not so great without the struggle ... The triumph can't be had without the struggle."
- Wilma Rudolph



"It's easy to be independent when you got money. But to be independent when you haven't got a thing- that's the Lord's test."
- Mahalia Jackson



"The true worth of a race must be measured by the character of its womanhood."
- Mary Mcleod Bethune



"You may encounter defeats, but you must not be defeated."
- Maya Angelou



"I have learned over the years that when one's mind is made up, this diminishes fear."
- Rosa Parks



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BLACKWORLD**STAFF:**

Editor-in-Chief
Mamusu Tucker

Managing Editor
Anthony Curry

Business Manager
Jacqueline Richards

Secretary
Jahlecia Smith

Copy Editor
Charlotta Beavers

Circulation Manager
Basira Lawal

STAFF WRITERS

Saajida Stacker

Ava-Dawn Gabbidon

Sarah Demezier

Christine Vargas

Charmaine Alicia Cole

Nicole Ukpabi

Tanya Gorousingh

AFRICANA STUDIES

MASTER OF ARTS

PROGRAM

The Department of Africana Studies announces its Master of Arts Program in Africana Studies, located in the College of Arts and Sciences at Stony Brook University, New York. The M.A. in Africana Studies is interdisciplinary in scope and addresses itself to the experiences of people of African descent throughout the world. It is designed to explore African civilizations and their influences on other parts of the African Diaspora. Issues within the global communities of Africa, the United States, the Caribbean/Latin America and elsewhere will be examined from both historical and contemporary perspectives.

The formation and evolution of the Africana Studies Department are grounded in fundamental assessments that evolved from its founding in 1968 and intersect with the mission of Stony Brook University to provide comprehensive undergraduate and graduate education of the highest quality. The Department of Africana Studies provides a rigorous disciplined intellectual environment to study the histories, literatures, political systems, cultures, arts, and social theories of Africa and the African Diaspora.

We invite you to visit the Department of Africana Studies on the web at www.sunysb.edu and view our University, Faculty, Staff, and programs for further information.

The Department of Africana Studies at the New York State University of Stony Brook can be reached at:

University of Stony Brook
Social & Behavioral Sciences
Stony Brook, NY 11794-4340
(631) 632-7470
(631) 632-5703 FAX



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Room 072, Student Union
Tel: 631-632-6494
Email: blackworldbw@gmail.com

WORD ON CAMPUS

Miss Black and Gold Pageant 2008 By: Ava-Dawn Gabbidon

On February 23, 2008 Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. Rho Rho chapter presented their 8th annual Miss Black & Gold Scholarship Pageant, in the SAC Auditorium at 7pm. Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. was founded on December 4, 1906. Since then they have "supplied voice and vision to the struggle of African Americans and people of color around the world." Miss Black and Gold Scholarship Pageant is an annual event that is produced by the various college chapters of the fraternity in order to raise money for outstanding collegiate women of color across the nation. Many people, including family and friends filled the auditorium and came to support the event.

Every year Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. develops a theme for the Miss Black and Gold Pageant that presents the competition in a way that keeps the audience entertained and in awe. They definitely accomplished that this year! They used an Asian theme that went along with the Chinese New Year, entitled "The Search for the Golden Empress." According to the brochure, the contestants vie for the honor of becoming the Empress who "must overcome various tasks and obstacles...she must be a woman of great intelligence and poise..." This Empress will be Miss Black and Gold 2008.

The contestants were Vivianna Schwoerer, Michelle Mbekeani, Eldine Ciceron, Vanessa Yol-

Cheris, Mamusu Jeneba Tucker, Michelle Beckford-Burrell, and Ashley Nicole Franklin. These seven lovely ladies were judged based on an introductory speech,

talent, swim wear, evening wear, GPA, and questions and answers. Among the judges were Linus Edghill and Patrice Gervias, two distinguished brothers of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc., Sacha Volcy, Miss Black and Gold 2004, and Rashelle Vallon, the National Miss Black and Gold 2007. Out of these seven contestants, three of them were awarded Miss Black (3rd place), Miss Gold (2nd place), and Miss Black and Gold (1st place).

Out of all the Miss Black and Gold pageants I have attended, I can honestly say this one was the most competitive. Miss Black, Vivianna Schwoerer (a sophomore) amazed the audience with her musical talent. She played several songs

on the piano along with a slide show that showed her caring, positive, and humble personality. The second runner up, Vanessa Yol-Cheris (a junior) composed and

read an outstanding, breathtaking poem titled "Address Me as Such" which is about a strong, beautiful, hardworking and successful black woman; who can overcome any adversity and would like to be addressed for who she is. According to her biography, Yol-Cheris strives to be the "pinnacle of what a black woman should be." She is persistent and dedicated to her goals for positive change and growth in her community.

Miss Black and Gold 2008, Michelle-Mbekeani was outstanding in every way and in all parts of the competition. She spoke eloquently, confidently and with a persuasive tongue. In addition she used her strong, pure and beautiful

voice to sing a jazz song that would knock anybody off of their feet. Mbekeani is a freshman and already she has goals and aspirations to be involved in international affairs, attend Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, work for the United Nations improving the political and economic standings in countries throughout Africa, and to be the first black female elected as the President of the United States of America. Mbekeani sets high goals but never settles for less. She is an example of powerful black women; like Rosa Parks, that never gives in to the norm but fights for what she believes. She is everything that Miss Black and Gold should be.

All the contestants worked very hard this year! They prepared diligently for three months and each one contributed a unique style to the show. The competition was very tough but there could only be three winners and each one of them deserved it. Competitions like these inspire and motivate women of color to strive to be all they can be despite the odds of living in a world where adversity comes at them everyday and in all directions.

Mbekeani, Miss Black and Gold 2008, will be going on to the State competition. If she wins she will be going on to the Regionals and then Nationals. Will she be the National Miss Black and Gold for 2008?

Congratulations to all the winners!



Spiritual Slavery By: Saajida Stacker

On February 16, 2008 one of Stony Brook University's many Black History Month events took place. Members of the Adventist Youth Ministry put together an event on Spiritual Slavery. There was singing, literature displayed, and the guest speaker was Pastor Ainsworth Joseph from Kingsborough temple in Brooklyn. Attendance was very low so many missed out on the Pastor's words of how he linked religion to slavery and on his experience in Ghana

where he visited the Cape Coast Castle. He toured the castle and was able to see exactly where black slaves were kept. At the entrance where slaves entered the words, "The Door of No Return" was written. Now, Ghana has "The Door of Return," which represents freedom and the acceptance of former Black slaves back to the Motherland in Ghana.

The Adventist Youth Ministry meets on Fridays at 8:30pm in SAC room 304.



BLACKWORLD IS THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE...LET'S SPEAK UP

WORD ON CAMPUS

La Hispaniola: An Island Divided By: Sarah Demezier

When people hear the name, La Hispaniola, they automatically assume it is one country in the Caribbean split into two different cultures. As a matter of fact, although it is one island, it is composed of two separate countries, Haiti and the Dominican Republic. For many years Haitians and Dominicans have had problems among each other resulting in hostility, racism, and disunity between the two countries. La Hispaniola was controlled by both Spain and France at one point, Spain controlled the whole island and later controlled only part of it, which is now the Dominican Republic, while Haiti was controlled by the French. Haiti, which means "mountainous land," was the first black nation to gain its independence from Europe. This revolution overlapped the French Revolution (1789-99); Haiti's revolt was led by Toussaint L'Overture and became an example that caused a series of rebellions in the Caribbean and the United States thereafter. Since Haiti was the first to declare its liberation from the French and ousted the Spanish from the island, they controlled the country for a long period of time causing the Dominicans to grow a hostile attitude against its Haitian neighbors.

Dominican Republic, which was controlled by Spain, was founded

by Christopher Columbus in the year 1492. The native people to the land of La Hispaniola were the Tainos who were decimated by the spread of diseases brought from the Europeans. The country was ruled by Spain but for a short amount of time was taken over by the French but later was regained by Spain with the help of Britain and Haiti. For a short time, the Dominicans had gained their independence from Spain but it was quickly taken away by Jean-Pierre Boyer, leader of the Haitian forces. Finally on February 27th, 1844 three men who founded a secret society called La Trinitaria, declared Dominican Republic independent from Haiti's rule. Later in the year 1931, Rafael Trujillo gained control over the country as a dictator and his reign was known as the bloodiest of the 20th century. With his hatred towards Haitians, despite the fact that his mother was 50% Haitian, he oversaw the massacre of over 35,000 Haitian people. Trujillo's reign ended after his assassination on May 30th, 1961.

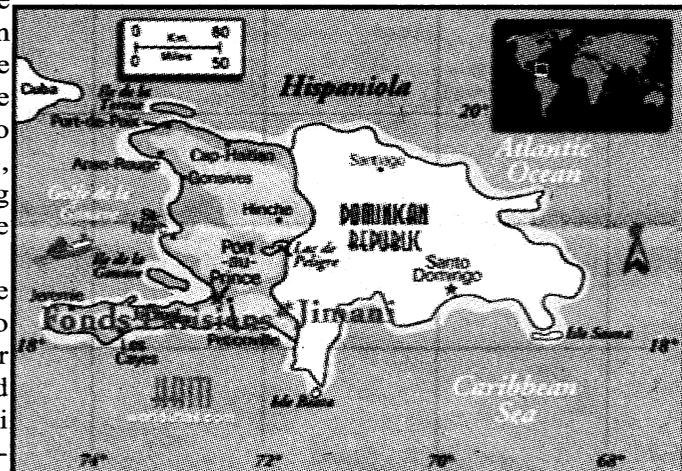
The Sisters of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. and the Latin Brothers of Lambda Upsilon Lambda Fraternity, Inc. held a special program in the SAC Auditorium on February 20th, which was dedicated to the problems that exist between these two countries. With a panel composed

of Dominicans on one side and Haitians on the other, the audience and was able to interact and give their opinions on the issues facing these countries. The panel consisted of students and Professor Karl Jean from the Department of Mathematics. During the program the hosts presented three videos from YouTube about the feelings between the people of these two countries, exploitation of Haitian Migrants who come to the Dominican Republic seeking jobs, and street children in Haiti. The videos showed the racism that exists toward the Haitians, who have darker skin than the Dominicans, who consider the Haitians inferior; problems such as the capitalist system, which is tearing the Haitians and Dominicans apart because Haitian laborers come to the Dominican Republic to do the work that the Dominicans do not want to do, such as working on the sugar cane plantations.

"Haitians are being pushed to work wherever they can find work," said Franli Guzman, a mem-

ber of L.A.S.O. club. Haitians are not only being exploited at work by the Dominicans but they are also mistreating one another. Children who are sent away to other family members often become subject to abuse and work as slaves. Although this may occur in the Dominican Republic it is worse in Haiti.

The program was followed with food from the Dominican and Haitian cultures, which was delicious. This program brought tension even among the people in the room but the audience sympathized for each other and although they might not be able to have a strong impact on both countries to unite as one, they can certainly affect those on this campus in order to stir up a movement to promote change and help these countries settle their differences soon.



Randall Pinkston Recalls a Day as a Young Black Boy By: Christine Vargas

It wasn't easy growing up in the 1960's in Mississippi during a time of segregation, especially while being black. Such was the case for Randall Pinkston, CBS New York News Correspondent. He lived in a place where whites were prohibited from sitting next to blacks, because of their skin color. Children were victims of a segregated society which their parents constructed years before they were even born. Children were lured into hating each other. Pinkston was the guest speaker at Stony Brook



University's Black History Month Opening Ceremony on Wednesday, January 30, 2008. At that event, he recalled a day in which he experienced segregation in his life. He gave a lecture named, "Reporting While Black: An African American Journalist's Reflections on the Impact of Race in His Work." The theme of the lecture is that no matter what the circumstances are people should never stop trying to achieve their goals. "If one door closes, another one opens," said Pinkston. It is a universal message that transcends race and gender.

Pinkston remembered when he and his sister went to the zoo with his mother and experienced a form of discrimination. His mother tried to get the children to drink water from a fountain. A zookeeper approached them and told them to go drink water in a bathroom from a faucet behind a toilet. As soon as the zookeeper left, his mom ran to the fountain and allowed them to drink water. The zookeeper turned around and their mother anxiously grabbed them with fear. At the time of the incident Pinkston did not

realize the huge risk his mom had taken. She could have been jailed.

When Pinkston became an adult he realized what happened that day. Never once, though, did he allow the color of his skin to define his place in society. His differences in society never stopped him from dreaming. Pinkston decided that when he became an adult he would like to pursue a job as a military pilot. He joked that when the Vietnam War started he changed his mind.

Pinkston first became interested in media as a child by listening to AM radio. He joined his university radio station in Connecticut as an after school activity, never actually thinking he would pursue a career in the field. Now Pinkston is a three-time Emmy Award winner. He won an Emmy for covering Princess Diana's death.

After the death of Pinkston's dad, his minister showed him a picture his dad kept of him working at the university radio station. The minister told Pinkston that his dad loved seeing him working at the station. He suggested that he

look for a job at a Mississippi radio station. In the beginning, Pinkston objected, arguing that he did not have enough experience on a radio job, but eventually he became convinced to pursue a job in the field. He found a job with a radio station through the connections of his minister. The station hired him, because they needed people of color in order to avoid being shut down for discrimination.

Today discrimination has greatly waned. "These days we are seeing the manifest of a more diverse America, especially in the past three months," said Pinkston referring to the presidential candidates, Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama. Pinkston believes that the key to succeeding is staying focused on "what's important." He hopes to inspire young journalists of all races and genders to never give up in pursuing their dream. "You are the future, and our hope," said Pinkston to the students.

WORD ON CAMPUS

What you think is Ghetto Fabulous is probably a Ghetto Fab-u loss! By: Ava-Dawn Gabbidon

On Wednesday, February 13th, in SAC room 305, Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Inc. hosted a program entitled "GHETTO FAB-U-LOSS". Many students and members from various clubs and organizations (including the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc., Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc., Malik Fraternity, Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Inc., Omega Phi Beta Sorority Inc., Zeta Phi Beta Inc., Minorities in Medicine and others) attended the event. As we examined the meaning of "ghetto fab-u-loss" we realized that many of us in the minority community live and breathe this lifestyle. Through this

place great emphasis through their lyrics and videos, on the clothes and jewelry they wear, the cars they own, and the houses where they live. These artists often come from poor violent backgrounds and neighborhoods. It is as if their goal in the entertainment industry is to become the richest entertainer and to obtain all the materialistic delicacies that they previously lacked. Their "power" or status is reflected by what they own.

The media is one of the most powerful tools that forms culture and produces change in our society. Being a successful individual from a minority group is very

Daddy and Britney Spears (among other artists) started advertising for Proactive, the sales have increased substantially. Because of celebrity "role models" the pressure for materialistic gain rises among many who look up to them as role models. Kids get teased at school if they are not wearing gear that is up to par. People get robbed or caught up in violence just for things as simple as a pair of Jordan's. So many people are in debt because they are trying to maintain the ghetto fabulous lifestyle. Not only do children feel pressured but often times the parents struggle with two or three jobs so that their children can wear the finest clothing. The reality of the situation is that both the children and the parents that participate in such lifestyles are really living the "ghetto fab-u-loss" life. Do clothes and material things equal power in the social realm? Does it make one "fit in" or better than another individual that doesn't possess these things? It is said that money is power but most of the time people are spending money they don't have, which results in debt and ending up poorer than they began.

"Ghetto fab-u-loss" does not only apply to the United States. It can be seen all over the world, yet there are still countries where this term does not necessarily apply because their nation does not put great value on "materialistic wealth." But here in America many people are enticed into the consumer society through the media. It is true that America's culture as a whole, especially the entertainment industry, places great value on possession but let this not be an excuse! At the end of the day each individual makes their own choice. It is often said that this is a problem that hinders minorities from excelling to the best of their capabilities. Whatever happened to the important things in life—the things that really matter such as obtaining an education or investing in things that appreciate in value, such as property? Living the "ghetto-fab-u-



loss" life just diverts us from what is really important in life and causes people to accumulate debt.

What are some solutions to this problem? First, every individual needs to examine their priorities. Do you really need to buy expensive shoes rather than paying your phone bill? Does your baby need to be wearing Gucci shoes when their feet are growing so quickly? If your answer to these questions is yes, then you need to rethink your priorities and pay your bills first. Calculate how much money you will be getting when your next check arrives. Divide it up and distribute it accordingly. Charge only what you know you can pay back. Pay your bills on time so your credit can be built up. Every check that you get even if it is \$5, try and save a portion. People frequently get new phones just because a better phone is available that has features they probably will never use. If you are stuck on doing that then wait until your contract ends so the cost will be cheaper. If you have an old phone that you are not using sell it. Invest in things that will get you money later, such as an education or property.

Living the "ghetto-fab-u-loss" life could never be good if it results in negative outcomes. Hence, that is why it is considered to be a loss. You are spending money you do not have! For what? To make it seem as if you do have money. How much value shall we put on things that will fade away? Our minorities should strive to succeed and then enjoy the delicacies of life that you not only worked hard for but that you can afford. When will our stuff stop owning us?



discussion we were able to pinpoint the reasons why we may live this way, its downfalls, and the steps that may be taken to overcome its flaws.

It is very common to see people living way beyond their means, especially among minorities and people from poor backgrounds. Why is it that the poorest people sometimes have the fanciest cars and clothes? By examining the entertainment industry we can see that many, if not most of our black performers, such as 50 cents, Lil Wayne, and TI amongst others

uplifting to other individuals in that particular ethnic group and they become role models through the media. As a result these people from the entertainment industry shape the views of many people, especially children. It was argued by a participant in the discussion that if 50 Cent was known to shop at Wal-Mart, others would follow his example. Some people may disagree but the fact remains that using celebrities to advertise tremendously increases consumer sales. Proactive is a perfect example! Statistics show that since Puff

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WE WILL BE WAITING.....

WORD ON CAMPUS

"The Fact of Blackness" By: Charmaine Alicia Cole

Can the fact of blackness be defined simply as the color of our skin? When we alter our bodies with bleach are we violating our natural identity as black people? Should the hegemonic conceptions of blackness be allowed to map us as static objects, as opposed to a flexible, unfinished people? In honor of Black History Month, Dr. Winnifred Brown-Glaude, Assistant Professor of Africana Studies, presented a powerful analysis on such questions. Entitled "Fact of Blackness: The Problem of the Bleached Body in Contemporary Jamaica," this event was geared to answering the previously posed questions, along with a few others. Brown-Glaude has multifaceted interests in race and ethnicity in the Caribbean and Latin America, gender and development, intersectionality, women and informal economics, sociology of the body, black feminism, and much more. In this lecture, Brown-Glaude challenges two ideas usually associated with skin bleaching: the pathology of bleaching and the idea that the bleacher is suffering from a racial identity crisis.

Many professionals in the medical sphere categorize black bleachers as unhealthy individuals

and frame bleaching as a psychological behavior of self dislike. According to these authoritative medical voices, these people hate their blackness and must be re-educated about their black identities.



This attempt to regulate the bleachers bodies does not solve anything. Rather it labels bleaching as a sickness that needs to be cured or controlled, while recentering the hegemonic views of blackness that demeans who black people are by defining them merely by the color of their skin. Brown-Glaude pointed out, whereas tanning is a frequent and ordinary activity for whites, bleaching is classified as a psychological problem of low self-esteem. What these doctors choose to ignore is the fact that just as bleaching is a medical danger to the bleacher's skin and ultimate health, tanning also has serious medical ramifications that are casually swept under the rug by whites.

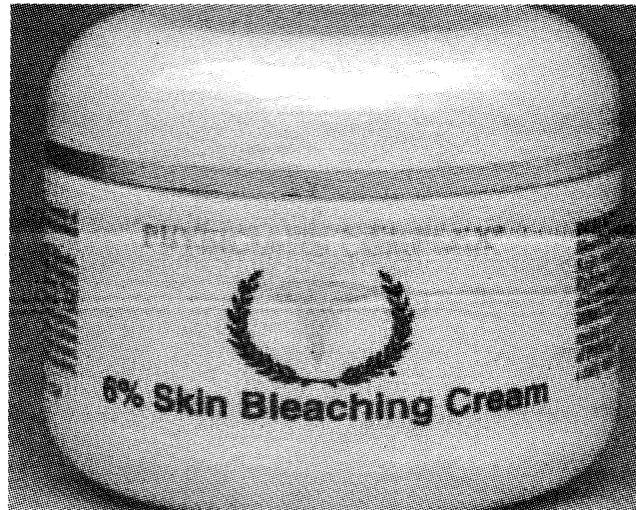
Clearly, the implications made of an inner sickness that a bleacher supposedly suffers are an absurd and unfair decree of the situation.

Obviously, whiteness is invisible. Race is not called into question when whites go to tanning salons or go under the knife for that 'perfect European nose.' The racial identity crisis is only a factor when considering blacks. Furthermore, whites who go to these salons, even when it endangers their health, are not seen as unhealthy, self-hating individuals. Brown-Glaude affirmed that just as these white individuals are not racially interrogated because of their physical alterations, bleachers have not erased their sense of blackness and do not necessarily want to exchange their black identity for a white one. Right here in the United

of the body is made for aesthetic reasons all the time and yet only the bleachers are questioned for their unhealthy, psychologically influenced behaviors.

Other reasons for bleaching that Brown-Glaude shares include the desire to look like the mainstream black entertainers such as Beyonce, Mary J. Blige, and Lil' Kim, not a white person. Also economic benefits and privileges afforded those with a brown complexion fuel many poor Jamaicans to bleach. Thus, modifying their skin color allows them resources for success. In such instances, racial hatred and self dislike is not the issue. In summation, the reasons for skin bleaching are numerous. While it may be true that some blacks bleach for a white mask to hide their identity, some are reconstructing themselves

for beauty, and others are simply trying to survive. Noteworthy is the fact that authentic blackness is not mapped solely by color, but it is our powerful heritage and black pride that naturally marks us—so incredible and intangible that the strongest cream could not erase.



States, there is a striking parallel between bleaching and cosmetic surgery for whites. Reconstruction

HSO "THE MUSICAL" By: Jahlecia Smith

On March 7, the members of Stony Brook's Haitian Student Organization put on their first musical. The actors and actresses in the musical represented different West Indian Islands. The Musical started off with the Professor telling her students to write an essay on ethnicity. While the students were

trying to find different ideas for their essay, the musical touched on various topics that seemed to plague many West Indians abroad. Some of the students had doubts about their identity in American culture. One student named Adam felt that he had to conform to American culture so he wouldn't be

ostracized by his community. Another student named Jackie felt that she had to prove that she was Jamaican since she didn't fit the stereotypical views that surrounded Jamaican Women. In the end of the musical these problems were resolved. Adam realized that he no longer had to deny his Haitian her-

itage and in his essay expressed pride in his country. Jackie realized that she didn't have to prove who she was to anyone and expressed a Jamaican saying that defined her situation, "Out of many, one people." Overall the musical was a success. I look forward to future events given by HSO.



News Beyond the Brook

The Representation of Black Women on Television By Nicole Ukpabi



We have come a long way from the archaic stereotypes of the “mammy” or “sapphire” stereotype. Or so we would like to think. We may have positive examples of how black women are portrayed on television, but African-American women are still overly represented in a negative, unattractive manner—in a way that only the most astute individuals notice.

Let's start off with the phenomenon of reality TV. The black women that gain the most notoriety in shows like “The Apprentice,” “The Real World” and “Flavor of Love” are those that exemplify the “sapphire” stereotype of a loud, in-your-face, bitter-about-the-world shrew. Omarosa of “The Apprentice” was ambitious, and she does deserve respect for her drive and integrity, but she was also overly dramatic and always had something to complain about. Coral from “The Real World” is commendable because she stands up for herself and says what is on her mind. But her honesty becomes a problem when she intrudes on other people's relationships in the house. In “Flavor of Love,” the black girls that had the most camera time were those that frequently got into fights with other

members and sabotaged the time that they had with Flavor Flav, who himself is reminiscent of the “coon stereotype,” goofy, inarticulate, lazy, foolish, and the top hats he decides to wear don't help much.

Flavor of Love's spin-off, “I Love New York” focuses on one of the loudest, most obnoxious black women in the house, and that would be Tiffany Patterson or as she likes to call herself, “New York.” Her weaves are horrific, her eye makeup resembles that of a clown, and everything from the way she dresses to the way she acts is over-the-top. She has no class as she constantly argues in public and puts her sexual business out there for everyone to see. She is constantly making a fool of herself, crying and yelling at the few good black men that are in the house, and she apparently has problems pronouncing words that even a third-grader would know. Everything about her is made-up and fictionalized, and she proves to be shallow by being easily bought by money and gifts of the likes of “Tailor Made.”

Now, the opposite end of this spectrum is Tyra Banks. She seems smart, articulate, easygoing, perfect, right? Not. She is a sell-out

because she thought that becoming famous in Hollywood necessitates whitening her features. She lightened her skin to alabaster white, wears fake green contacts, and insists on wearing Bozo-red lace-fronts. Miss Tyra also emulates the “Mammy stereotype”, the woman that would shelter white children while ignoring or berating her own. She belittles Karrine “Supahead” Steffans for breaking up marriages by sleeping with half of Hollywood, but goes easy on Kim Kardashian even though she clearly put out her tape with Ray J for media attention. Although what Karrine Steffans did wasn't right, you have to understand how she grew up. She was poor, abused, on drugs and comparatively, being a video vixen seemed like heaven. What did Kim Kardashian have to escape from? Essentially, she was privileged (she lived under Daddy's shelter and inhaled luxury), so she should have been scrutinized more. Also, instead of talking about black issues on her show, Tyra used that time to talk about what girls (predominantly Caucasian) do on spring break, but those girls are not oppressed by being exposed on TV and they actually look at that activ-

ity as “fun.”

The two main shows that have positive examples of black women are “Girlfriends” and “The Game.” “Girlfriends” has a wide-ranging cast, with biracial Lynn, light-brown Joan, toffee-brown Maya, and beautiful espresso Toni (even though she left due to contract differences). The main idea behind it, however, is that it shows these women of color with diverse experiences that black women can relate to, and then those black women that feel awkward because they don't fit a stereotype can look at shows like “Girlfriends” and “The Game” and know that being “Black” is not a preconceived notion of what one should be, but what that “Black individual” brings to the table. There should be more media exposure like this on TV, but unfortunately the presence, which is small, of black women on the small screen has been relatively negative and insignificant. We as a people could collectively take a stand against these representations by demanding more equal representation on TV or defy these stereotypes by how we choose to act in our daily lives. Either choice is a step in the right direction.



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BLACKWORLD!!!

News Beyond the Brook

The Black Wall Street By Saajida Stacker

I often sit and wonder why certain topics were not taught to me and other children in elementary, junior high, and even high school. Why are the social studies and history classes either filled with issues that do not keep the attention of most students or are about topics that are not relevant to black people? Plus we are taught of few black leaders whose life stories are recycled to us as though there were/are no other black leaders present.

As youngsters we were taught that Christopher Columbus discovered America—A LIE, Abraham Lincoln had an interest in freeing black slaves—Another LIE, and the list goes on. But we later grow up to learn that of course Christopher Columbus did not discover America because the indigenous people already occupied the Americas. Contrary to popular belief, Abraham Lincoln did not have an interest in emancipating slaves. His first priority was to save the union, not to abolish slavery. Lincoln is quoted in many documents as saying, “My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is not either to save or to destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave I would do it, and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone I would also do that.” Therefore, if

the slaves are freed in the process then cool, and if not then, oh, well! What about the Emancipation Proclamation? The Emancipation Proclamation did not end the legal institution of physical slavery, the 13th Amendment did. Lincoln also encouraged and supported plans of removing blacks from the United States and shipping them to Africa. I also remember hearing stories about Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King Jr., and Malcolm X many times but not much was mentioned about other leaders. While these people are important in black history, I feel that it is vital for us to learn about even more black figures so it doesn't seem as though there was/is a shortage of black leaders.

Why are we lied to in school and some of us even at home in regards to history? It seems as though we don't learn the truth until we go to college, decide to pick up a book and read for ourselves or unless someone decides to enlighten us when we get older. This can cause major confusion! While I know that it is almost impossible to teach the whole history of black people, I still feel that certain topics should be included in teaching curriculums; such as BLACK WALL STREET.



Most people don't know what Black Wall Street was. Many may associate it with Wall Street in the Financial District in lower Manhattan, New York and may assume that it is a particular area that is heavily populated by black people. However, this is not the case!

I know most of us are familiar with areas named Little Italy, China Town, and Spanish Harlem. Well in Tulsa, Oklahoma from 1830 to 1921, there was the Black Wall Street a.k.a Little Africa. This was a black community that had a population of approximately 15,000 black people. Even though black people were segregated because of the Jim Crow laws they were able to develop a thriving community where they were dependent on one another. Tulsa contained thirty-six blocks of black owned and operated businesses such as churches, grocery stores, hospitals, jewelry stores, banks, post offices, libraries, schools, restaurants, pawn shops, law offices, private airplanes, movie theaters, bus systems and, the list goes on. There were many wealthy black people who lived there, who were successful black attorneys, doctors, bankers, dentists, local and global businessmen,

and many black people who had found oil on their property.

On May 31, 1921 through June 1, 1921 Little Africa was destroyed. This time period is known as the Tulsa Race Riot of 1921. Black Wall Street was bombed from the air and burned down by white mobs who were jealous of the success of this black community. Some of the white men were poor soldiers who had returned from World War I and they were envious that the black people, who they deemed inferior to whites, were doing well for themselves. It has been recorded that about 3,000-6000 blacks were killed, about 800 individuals were wounded, over 600 successful businesses were destroyed, and those who survived had to leave town. Overall, not a single white person involved was ever prosecuted.

To say what took place is sad would be an understatement! There are not even words to describe this catastrophe that is apart of our history. After all these years there still has not been any form of restitution given to the victims or their families. This is one account in black history that many people are not aware of because it just isn't talked about. We shouldn't just rely on what we are taught in school. We must research our history for ourselves because it is important to bring our buried history to the surface!

Can't We All Just Get Along? By Tanya Gorousingh

“Black Americans are lazy.” “West Indians don't think they're Black.” These two popularized statements have described the conflict between African Americans and West Indians. The two cultural groups have found themselves to be at different points of the spectrum and it has been a continuing issue in predominantly urban areas. Historically, they have been geographically separated because of slavery and their experiences within their societies are different. However, these two groups have more in common than they normally admit. Both groups are descendants of Africa and therefore, share a common slave history. They have a strong sense of family and religious practices. Food in both cultures has been used as a communicator in times of celebration and distress. Their similarities could have bridged these two minority groups in the United States, but has played a reverse role.

The media has illustrated to the West Indian community that

African Americans are lazy, disillusioned, uneducated, and ungrateful. On arrival to the United States, many West Indians find themselves in employment, most times taking more than one job. West Indians themselves find it hard to understand the plight of the African American experience, being that they are able to gain employment and climb the ladder. What is not explained to them, is that employers purposely hire West Indians over African Americans to prove they have control over the African Americans. West Indians are involuntarily used as pawns against the African Americans. Employers use the West Indian's lack of racial knowledge to paint the African Americans poorly, believing that a hard work ethic is all that is required for success in America. They are not aware that race has and continues to play a major role in American society. The West Indians' reliance on stereotypes to educate them about American society misleads them to view African

Americans in a negative sense. That only results in a further discrimination and dislike on both sides.

African Americans find it hard to understand the racial/ethnic labels West Indians choose as their identity. African Americans reasoned that West Indians are descendants of Africa, therefore categorizing them as Black. The West Indian community view their “labels,” although socially constructed, [is there a reason to point out that their identity is social constructed? Black is as well. Perhaps you want to drop this.] as a concrete definition of themselves. They find pride in stating their ethnicity by naming a geographical location. The consequence of slavery has destroyed a direct connection to Africa, leaving West Indians to be directly connected to their country of birth. Their ethnic identity is compromised of their culture, traditions, morals, and history that are unique. West Indians view African Americans as socially, emotionally, and mentally disconnected in America. However,

many African Americans have expressed great patriotic pride, especially around war time. Where African Americans view race as a determining factor, West Indians view class as an overriding social structure. Class in the West Indies determines your social status within the society. One flaw to this happens to be that the class structures have a direct link to shades of blackness: Whites, Browns and Blacks. There is an institutionalized racism that West Indians gloss over when the issue of race is brought up. They often state that there is no racism, relative to the United States.

The conflict on a whole has a lot of depth and can be fleshed out in multiple directions, socially, economically, culturally and historically. However, if these two group could analyze their dissimilarities, they may find out they have more similarities than anything else.

News Beyond the Brook

The Black-American Muslimah By: Basira Lawal

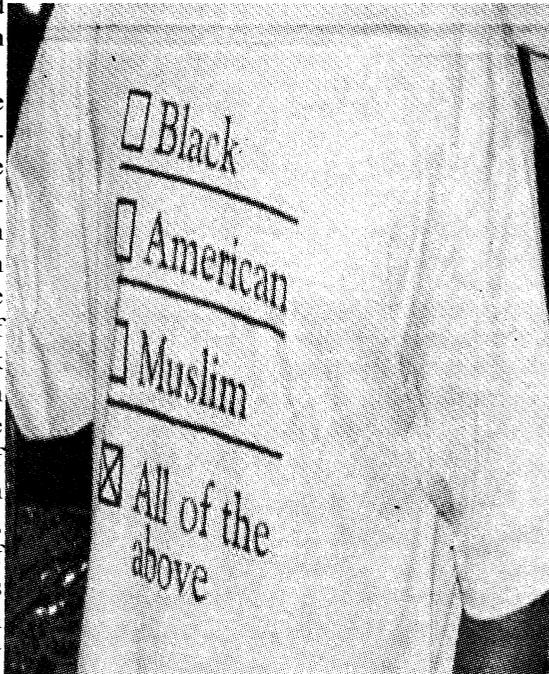
Stony Brook University is known as one of the most diverse institutions in the world. It is also gaining recognition as one of the top ten schools in the world. But what makes this institution so reputable, so exceptional?

In my opinion the student clubs and organizations are a crucial extension of how we as students apply ourselves in the classrooms. It is an essential microcosm within which we operate as academics and pursuers of our life goals. Blackworld is definitely an example of a student-based club which seeks to allow students, specifically students of minority descent, to capture their thoughts through one genre of literature and expand their critical thinking by examining our campus as it relates to humanity. But there is a subgroup within these groups and organizations, which seeks to help us achieve greater more, complex goals in life, and interpersonal connections with our peers in these groups and organizations. And in this case this would be to unify the African-American Muslim woman population.

Nurah Morgan, a vibrant freshman whose goals extend far beyond undergraduate college is fervent in pursuing her medical degree some day. With her extreme discipline and focused concern for her own community, she has opened a door many of us wish to open but may not have the financial means to do so. Upon receiving a grant from The Sadie Nash Women's Leadership Program to serve the community from which she comes, she chose to focus closely on the Black American Muslim Woman (BAM). She receives this grant as a step to becoming a participant in The Ella Fellowship. Utilizing this generous grant wisely, she organ-

ized a meeting among a diverse group of young BAM's to meet every second weekend of the month to discuss and converse about their daily routines, their lives as Black-American Muslim women, issues such as marriage, relationships with parents and a plethora of other sub-discussions. Through these meetings the young women participating will create an anthology based on all the work done over the course of the program. This stupendous initiative is the kind of attitude we as a minority community must encourage and embark upon ourselves.

Many people are very ignorant about the Black-American Muslim. Often times people assume that if one is Black and Muslim they must be followers of Elijah Muhammad, the Nation of Islam. This is not true. In fact very few



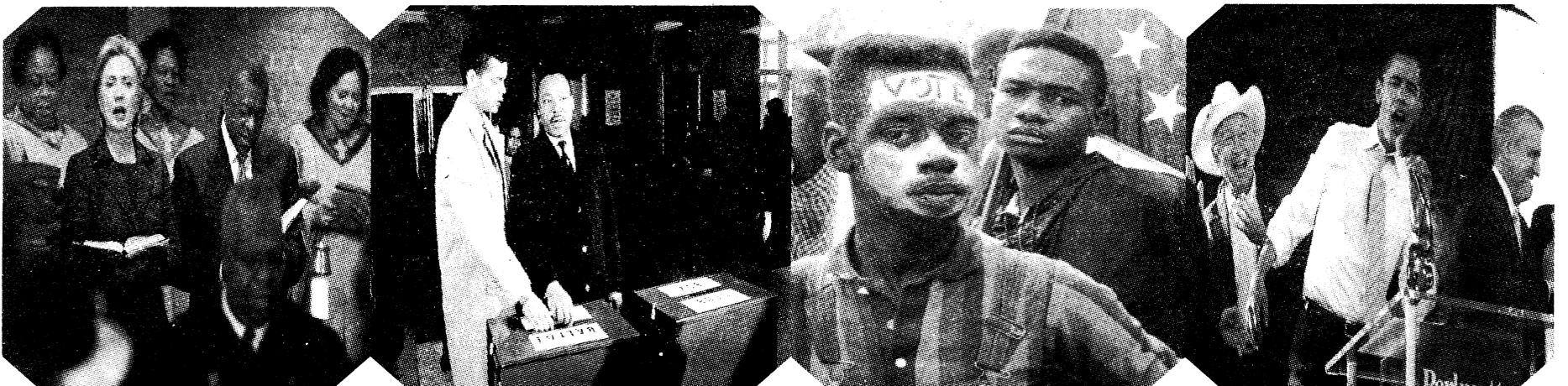
Muslims like these exist, as compared to the larger Black Muslim population. Many people even assume that if a person is Black then he or she should not be Muslim because of the generalized theory that all Black people go to church on Sunday. This misrepresentation and lack of knowledge regarding this world religion, this monotheistic religion—there are only three in the world—destroys unification within the Black population. On campus even when people see Black Muslim women it is as if they have seen the end of the world because we seem to be so scarce. However, just because many of the black Muslim women on campus refuse to cover their hair or wear loose clothes does not mean that they do not pray, in fact it is unknown whether or not they adhere to the

rules of Islam, however if you ask what her religion is most likely she will say she is a Muslim.

A friend of mine gave a little anecdote about her friend who is a bartender, drinks, perhaps smokes, I do not recall the exact details, however my friend almost in a state of awe told me that her friends said she is Muslim. Ordinarily we are inclined to say well this bartender is genuinely not a Muslim because Muslim women do not go to alcoholic bars let alone bartend in them. However these pre-conceived notions we have of people and our innate, guttural reflex to judge should be eradicated simply because you just never know. We as human beings are not the boss of anyone; in fact we have no say in someone else's deeds, because we are only held accountable for whatever we do. Whether one is an atheist, agnostic, Buddhist, Hindu, Christian, or Jewish we all have a sense of what is right and what is wrong and some people believe in Karma; the idea that whatever we do whether good or bad will follow us and affect us in some way in the future. But this emphasizes the point I am making: the pre-conceived notions that many students and people have about Black America and Islam are completely incoherent and insufficient in their conclusions. With that being said, as a student population from such a prestigious institution as Stony Brook University, we must respect our mind's curiosity and seek the knowledge about that which we do not know. Islam and Black America are intertwined in so many beautiful ways however we may not know if we do not find the paths to that light at the end of the tunnel.

Here is just a little sidebar/reminder to keep you ladies and gentlemen

focused... VOTE....It Counts!!!



News Beyond the Brook

The Little Rock Nine: After 50 Years, Is the Vision Discontinued? By: Jacqueline Richards



ing. This was probably not intended but the Guard stayed with the students for the duration of the school year.

A key figure in assisting the Little Rock Nine was Ms. Daisy L.

Bates, who was the president of the Arkansas chapter of the NAACP, who played the role of advisor and mentor. This was very necessary due to the lack of support from the whites in the community and the daily harassment of the students by their peers. Of the nine, one student retaliated when harassed and that was Minnijean Brown and she was suspended and then expelled from school. Ernest Green was the first black student to graduate from Little Rock Central High School.

In another blatant move to contest integration, the governor closed all the high schools in the district forcing the remainder of the Little Rock Nine to find other means of education. He went so far as to sacrifice the white students' education in order to prevent black students from getting equal education. This is something to think about. The governor's decision was eradicated one year later, but students lost a year of schooling because of his



decision. It would take more than a decade for all grades in Little Rock Public schools to be fully integrated.

To commemorate their struggle, a sculpture, which is displayed at the Arkansas State Capitol, was created in 2005 by John and Cathy Deering entitled "Testament" The Little Rock Nine are: Thelma Mothershed-Wair, Minnijean Brown-Trickey, Elizabeth Eckford, Gloria Ray Karlmark, Jefferson Thomas, Melba Pattillo Beals, Terrence Roberts, Carlotta Walls Lanier, and Ernest Green.

Little Rock Central: 50 Years Later is a documentary by Craig

and Brent Renaud who are natives of Little Rock, Arkansas. They made this film to honor the 50th anniversary of the forced integration of Central High School. What is most ironic about



the high school now is that segregation is not forced but very much a reality. There is the "AP world" where the students taking the advanced placement courses are predominately white. These students are either driven to school or drive themselves to school. Their parents send them to Central because of its prestige and the rate at which Central graduates are accepted into Ivy League schools. Then there is the "other world" comprised of Black students who are bused to that school because it is in their district. Many of these students are below standard reading levels for their grades and come from lower class neighborhoods. Their neighborhoods are actually closer to the high school than the upper-class areas which means the white parents go out of their way to send their children to this particular school.

When the principal was being interviewed, she did not give the

this out and when she did, she stated that "all the black kids are sitting on this side and all the white kids are sitting on that side." Other students shrugged it off as the standard and justified it by saying that "we sit where and with whom we are comfortable." The film also highlighted the stereotypical students and the students who operated outside of those stereotypes. There was the white female whose parents were wealthy and who drove herself to school and the Black female with two children at 16 years old who was bused to school. In contrast to this was the Black male student who grew up in an upper-class neighborhood, took AP classes, and was class president and the Black female who was living in the lower-class neighborhood in enrolled AP courses.

What makes me curious is where the disconnect happened within 50 years from students who braved angry mobs (and the National Guard at one point) to go to school and those who barely show up to school now. I am not placing blame solely on students. There are instances where teachers pass students and neglect the long-term consequences of having a student being passed on grade-to-grade without being well-equipped with the knowledge necessary to grasp what they are being taught. There are also a number of single-parent homes and young women having children at early ages, as well as infestation of drugs and gang violence in the low-income communities. The problem as I see it, is trying to find a solution to the disparities in rates of success in education between Black and White students. The situation at Little Rock Central is in total disrespect of the vision that the Little Rock Nine and the NAACP had for schools across the nation, but it is a mirror of schools everywhere. In most situations, Black students are concentrated in one area and Whites students are across town in another. It just so happens that the two worlds collide at Little Rock Central.

impression that there was anything wrong at the high school. When one Black teacher was interviewed, the first thing she said was, "if you asked a white faculty member, they would say there is no problem." Black students are very much outnumbered in the AP classes. In other classes, the setup is reminiscent of segregation. Part of the documentary was having Minnijean Brown-Trickey, one of the Little Rock Nine, visit and speak to classes. When standing in front of the class, she noticed something that bothered her. She invited a female student to come up and point it out. It took the student a while to figure

Any group of people in the world who has had their education so contested as to have it denied by law and physical force should celebrate and value their education now. This is the thought that comes to mind when I think of the Little Rock Nine. This was a group of black students who met very strong resistance when they attempted to integrate Little Rock Central High School, now Central High School National Historic Site, in 1957. Fifty years later, it is debatable whether or not barriers to education for Black Americans no longer exist or if they are more institutionalized and more subtle than angry mobs.

The Little Rock Nine did not start as nine. In the district that Central High School was located, there were 517 Black students. Eighty of those students expressed interest in participating in the process that would integrate the high school. They were interviewed by the school board and out of that group, seventeen students were chosen. Out of this group, eight students opted to attend the all-black Horace Mann High School. And so the Little Rock Nine came to be.

At the time of the attempted integration, Arkansas was considered a more progressive state when it came to race issues. Despite this fact, the Governor at the time, Orval Faubus ordered the National Guard to Arkansas as a means of preventing the students from entering the school on their first day of classes, which would have been on September 4th. This all took place three years after *Brown v. Board of Education*, the landmark case that made segregated public schools unconstitutional. It did not stipulate any plans for how long integration should take place. By ordering the Guard to keep the students out, Faubus made a deliberate move against federal sanctions and covered up his actions by stating the Guard was there to keep order. It took weeks before President Eisenhower ordered the 101st Airborne Division paratroopers to escort the students inside the build-

Poetic Power

Promises
Rita Dove

Each hurt swallowed
is a stone. Last words
Whispered to his daughter
As he placed her fingertips
Lightly into the palm
of her groom.

She smiled upwards
to Jesus, then Thomas,
turning her back as
politely as possible.
If that were the case
He was a mountain of shame.

Poised on the stone
Steps of the church,
She tried to forget
His hulk in the vestibule,
Clumsy in clue serge,
His fingers worrying the
lucky bead in his pocket.

Beneath the airborne bouquet
was meadow of virgins
urging Be water, be light.
A deep breath, and she plunged
Through sunbeams and kisses,
rice drumming
the both of them blind.

Phillis Wheatley

Boston, October 12, 1772

ODE TO NEPTUNE.

On Mrs. W----'s Voyage to England.

I.

WHILE raging tempests shake the shore,
While Ætlius' thunders round us roar,
And sweep impetuous o'er the plain
Be still, O tyrant of the main;
Nor let thy brow contracted frowns betray,
While my Susanna skims the wat'ry way.

II.

The Pow'r propitious hears the lay,
The blue-ey'd daughters of the sea
With sweeter cadence glide along,

10

And Thames responsive joins the song.
Pleas'd with their notes Sol sheds benign his ray,
And double radiance decks the face of day.

III.

To court thee to Britannia's arms
Serene the climes and mild the sky,
Her region boasts unnumber'd charms,
Thy welcome smiles in ev'ry eye.
Thy promise, Neptune keep, record my pray'r,
Not give my wishes to the empty air.

Boston, October 12, 1772.

Black Love
Gwendolyn Brooks

**Black love, provide the adequate electric
for what is lapsed and lenient in us now.**

Rouse us from blur, Call us.

**Call adequately the postponed corner brother.
And call our man in the pin-stripe suiting and
restore
him to his abler logic; to his people.**

**Call to the shattered sister and repair her
in her difficult hour, narrow her fever.**

**Call to the Elders—
our customary grace and further sun
loved in the Long-ago, loathed in the Lately;
a luxury of languish and of rust.**

**Appraise, assess our Workers in the Wild, lest
they
descend to malformation and to undertow.
Black love, define and escort our young, be
means and
redemption, discipline.**

Black Woman
Jahlecia Smith

Black Women are blessed with it
Full of it
Sensually dipped in it
Mmmm these different flavors of chocolate
They have smoothness
A richness
A motherland thickness
And its all evident in the fullness
Of their nose
Their lips
And the way they're easily equipped
With the capability to deal with anything
That's right,
They possess it.
Connoisseurs of dealing with it
By use of a stare
Or a pout
Or persuasiveness in their shout
They not only command attention
With their verbal ability
But demand respect
With the extent of their mental agility
Because they own it
True representations of it
An embodiment of confidence
Skillfully created for it
And with a smile that radiates beauty
And is symbolic of everything good
Black women truly are
The epitome
Of Womanhood

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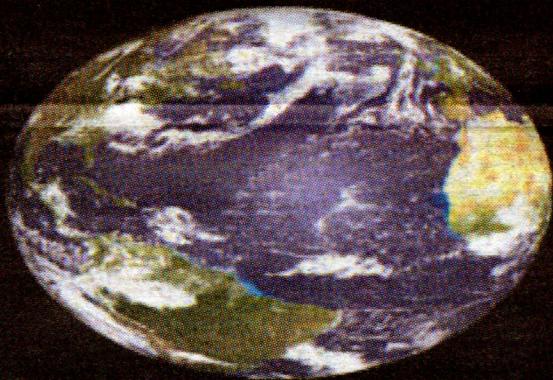
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