Cultural Revolution

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Let them lead the way—Teacher’s project seeks culture
By Sandra Gainer

Kent State University and Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C) are jointly sponsoring a program to attack one of the teaching profession's toughest problems—the lack of People of Color actively pursuing teaching careers.

The program called the Teacher Leadership Project (TLC) has the primary goal of preparing students from underrepresented groups in education for fields in the teaching profession. It allows students to earn an associate degree at Tri-C, then complete their bachelor's degree requirements at Kent State University. The participants in the program, called Teacher Leadership Consortium (TLC) Scholars, are then certified to teach when they satisfactorily complete the bachelor's degree program and the National Teachers Exam. Agreements will be made with participating Ohio school districts to facilitate the hiring of the graduates. Approximately 30 prospective teachers of color each year will be selected to participate in the Teacher Leadership Project. Those selected to participate are encouraged to complete their careers in Ohio. After the TLC Scholars are employed in one of the participating Ohio school districts, ongoing staff development support will be provided cooperatively by participating school districts, KSU, and the Teacher Leadership Consortium Project for three years. Three years after certification each TLC Scholar will have completed three years of successful teaching experience in Ohio, a master's degree, and will meet or exceed National Board Certification requirements for teachers. Members of the Teacher Leadership Project are benefited in many ways. They receive undergraduate training for careers in Education, financial aid counseling, opportunities to network with and be mentored by experienced professionals in the field of education, special workshops, seminars on topics of interest to prospective educators, job opportunities, personal attention from counselors and financial aid officers at Tri-C and KSU, and a student support system.

According to Sonja Singleton, a TLC Scholar, the student support system is the most beneficial aspect of the project. “The program provides us with what we need and supports us. The members of the program have the same interests and goals. We help each other out. We are a family,” she said. Diane Ezell, who is a TLC Scholar and a non-traditional student, said, “I can depend on the members of the program. We study together and keep in close contact with one another. Transferring from a small college (Tri-C) to Kent State was not difficult because I was not alone. I feel I will be successful at this large institution because I belong to a smaller group that I can rely on for support.” Dr. Avelda Hamilton, Director, TLC Project (Kent) and Dr. Dorothy Merchant, Campus Coordinator, TLC Project (Tri-C) try to make the ‘TLC Scholars’ transition from Tri-C to Kent as smooth as possible. They assist with registration and conduct organization meetings.

Dr. Fredrick Chambers, Faculty Mentor, TLC Project also aids the TLC Scholars by conducting an education-related seminar along with Dr. Hamilton. Dr. Don Hoyt, Assistant Vice President Academics/Special Programming, Dr. Grace Brown, Provost Tri-C (Eastern), Dr. Leo W. Anglin, Associate Dean Graduate Studies and Research, Dr. Paul Mooradian, Coordinator of Collaborative Programming, Marvin E. Peck, Graduate Assistant, TLC, and several other graduate assistants and counselors at Tri-C and KSU assist with the Teacher Leadership Project. They feel strongly about the need for people of color in the field of Education and are willing to do what they can to enable the project to be successful. The Teacher Leadership Projects goal of preparing students of color for careers in the teaching profession is urgent and relevant. Something must be done to conquer the minority teacher shortage. The TLC Scholars have committed themselves to Education. They are a small family preparing themselves to take on the large, worthwhile task of becoming a teacher.
"No, I’m not patriotic. Not if it means killing people for control of oil. This is wrong. Bush is full of Bushit!"
—Shelley

"I don’t really have an opinion about the war because it doesn’t matter what I think. Only the ‘big men’ in the United States get to really make all of the important decisions. So, I’m not patriot either. What’s the use? This country is going under."
—Steve

"I’m against the war. War is stupid. Lives come before oil and power and even money. Patriotism is and should be dead.
—Jennifer

"All I know is that if I get drafted I ain’t going. This country don’t care about me, yet they want to put me on the front line. They sound like a fool."
—Tony
Rappin' with the Queen

By Jindia Ojiewoh

The four of us were waiting in the airport lobby for Queen Latifah and her crew. Because of international happenings, i.e. the Persian Gulf War, no one was allowed to pass the metal detectors.

As we wandered around the airport impatiently awaiting the arrival of the Queen, we weren't worried about missing her. I knew she would stick out from the rest. She would probably come walking down the corridor wearing all black from that crown she wears down to those silk riding boots, looking like she did on her All Hail the Queen album cover.

But the queen didn't wear a crown or any silk black boots. She simply wore a pair of jeans and a fat goose coat with her hair pulled back in a ponytail. Basically she looked like an average sister on campus.

She's a cool, laid-back staFax. She's from the hood (actually she's from New Jersey), I thought to myself as she playfully sucker punched her D.J. in the chest.

"I'm a regular kid! I'm 20 years old. I'm just like everybody else," Queen Latifah would say later during an interview. "The only difference between me and other girls is I'm not stupid."

She even appeared disappointed that her performance was going to be a 'sit-down' affair.

"You mean it's not like a party?" she asked, with a bit of surprise and disappointment in her voice.

She prefers that kind of performing because "everybody's already into the groove and hyped up."

Before her performance, the Queen gave UHURU an interview in the lobby en route to the Student Center Ballroom.

UHURU: Your style seems to be Afro-centric mixed with regular dance music, but do you mean for your music to be message music?

LATIFAH: Slightly. If you listen to it, the regular rap is more prevalent than the messages, but occasionally I say things that happen to be the way I feel on certain topics such as: 'I'm not a sleeker' or 'I'm not impressed by gold chains' and things like that.

UHURU: In one of your raps you say something like 'they look up and see a Black queen, sloopy slouching is something I won't do'. You try to get the image out that you are a regal woman. You're a woman rap artists, but you don't buy into the maleness of rap. Do you believe it is important to retain your femininity as a female rap artists?

LATIFAH: To an extent you have to, but every female has what you call maleness in their raps, and it's not necessarily that you're trying to be like a male rapper. Very few females have been successful at being completely 'guy-guy' because once you get too feminine, it becomes dingly almost. The females who have been very effeminate in their rapping have been real stupid and silly, and materialistic.

UHURU: In some of your raps you call yourself an Asiatic Black woman. What is an Asiatic Black woman?

LATIFAH: To be honest with you, that line was written for me. Lukim Shakabazz is a member of our posse. He wrote that little piece and two lines before or after that line, I've consistently asked that question because he's a flow percenter—I thought we were Africans, not Asians.

LATIFAH: In that video ladies First, it seemed like you were gradually, for lack of better words, kickin' all the White folks out of Africa. Was that the image meant by the video?

LATIFAH: No, it wasn't kickin' the White folks out of Africa. If you would have looked, that was a map of parts of Africa that were colonized by Dutch and British, etc. and are still run by them and are treating the people of the land as fifth class citizens—I can't even say second-class citizens. That was also around the time when Namibia gained independence, so everything was like, 'yeah we are gonna get rid of these people.' It didn't mean kick all the White people out of Africa, but it meant give the land back to the people it belongs to.

UHURU: About the Images of African American women in video... From watching videos, some African American women may get the idea that in order to be in a music video, we have to get weaves put in our hair, bleach our skin and lose about 50 pounds! How do you feel about these images of African American women in video?

LATIFAH: I don't like that everyone has to be light-skinned and have long hair. I look at it like this. I feel bad for women who are light-skinned and have long hair and who are wanted just because that's how they look. I don't like the fact that they're (video producers) selective like that. That's real backwards, and it just goes to show you how brain washed we are. It's a consistent pattern and we've been molded into thinking that's the way.

UHURU: You did all of the vocals on your previous album. Do you plan on doing any more of the mixing singing with rappin' on your upcoming one?

LATIFAH: You can expect the same thing but on a higher level. The rap with the singing, the touches of reggae, the hardcore, house mixes—everything's on there that was on the last album.
Understanding Shaharazad Ali

By Debra Calhoun

Ch 8 “Money” If the Blackwoman is married it is an old adage among Blackwomen to advise each other to put something on the side or away for yourself, because you never know what’s going to happen. This is an old program recommending that the Blackwoman steal a little money, a little at a time, and put it up for a rainy day. The rainy day is considered to be the day when the Blackman runs out on her and leaves her broke and alone. These are a few of many comments Sister Ali makes in her media-hyped “Blackman’s Guide…” The purpose of this article is to understand the truth relative to the work of Sister Ali. The book is flawed on many levels, a few being: the lack of a historical and material analysis of the system of capitalism/imperialism, which has shaped Western society and miseducated us; a blame-the-victim attitude regarding African women, blaming them for the increase of drug abuse and paranoid schizophrenics among other things; offering her book as an authoritative guide to understanding African women; a failure to offer substantive data and resources to support her allegations; and finally, a lack of systematic plan to alleviate the net effects of living in this system, which affects both African men and women.

Particularly in Ohio, young African men from age 16 to 25 have a declining life expectancy, are 50 percent of the prison population and have a 40-70 percent dropout rate from high school. Also, our young women have a pregnancy rate two times that of the general population. This reality of our youth in Ohio is not an exclusive condition. The information is presented merely to present the case that as a people we suffer from the effects of a system that has both sexes disorganized, miseducated and exploited. Sister Ali offers no explanation for these and the myriad of problems faced by African people. According to her analysis, African women have had some role in the creation and maintenance of the oppression of African men and ultimately African people.

The earliest form of exploitation of labor began when private property relations were instituted and women subsequently lost their role as significant contributors to human development. Women, under a patriarchal form of social organization, became isolated to their individual homes when performing work that was initially not perceived as significant as men’s work. Along with the emergence of the patriarchy, private property relations meant that people’s labor now served an individual versus a collective whole. As capitalism became more refined as a process, so too did its methods of exploiting people’s labor.

African people currently suffer from the effects of capitalism and its international extension—imperialism. The primary motive of this system is to obtain profits at whatever cost. Usually this is done primarily through the exploitation of our labor, an appropriation of the profits gained from our labor, and a most systematic abuse of those things that are utilized to gain wealth—the land, its resources, buildings, machinery, technology etc. In order to obtain that end, people are perceived as a means to an end. In the early phases of this system African labor was the primary means through which the various European capitalist nations garnered their wealth.

For African women then we see a tri-level oppression. She is exploited because of her race, her sex, and her class. In most cases a sister can make as much money as any European man (or woman) and still be discriminated against because of her race and sex. None of these realities are presented in Sister Ali’s book so the reader could understand why the sexes act as they do. Rather, she indicts all sisters by her persistent use of the word “she” throughout her book.

I know of no sisters with the power to be the source of all the problems of their men.

I know of no sisters with the power to be the source of all the problems of their men.
I question any book from any author professing to be "the guide" to understanding the opposite sex. What this work does is inhibit discussion...
Latif, with short kinks standing at attention on his head, looks like a modern-day warrior. The colorful, hand-painted Neferiti necklace hangs from his neck like a symbol of self-affirmation. He is at war, yet he is not alone. His short dreads, once a rarity among African-Americans, now adorn the heads of Black youth like revolutionary ammunition. African people have once again reclaimed the look of their homeland, if only on the surface. From thick, African beads around their necks, to the untamed kinks atop their heads, Black youth have reclaimed Africa and discovered a new aesthetic that is undeniably African.
The African aesthetic among African-Americans is nothing new. We remember the ‘60s. Those red, black and green afro picks with the lists raised in utter defiance. The dishikis that our fathers once wore with pride, now hang in the closet like a forgotten memory. In the not so distant past Black people were asserting their Africanness through their style of dress, but what was the outcome of the Black Power Movement? The sons and daughters of Black revolutionaries are mirroring the ‘60s, and now we are once again looking African. Yet, what are the real implications of a movement that may be more superficial than substantive? What does it mean to “look African” in the ‘90s?

Latif Hughes, a sophomore communications major at KSU, says he has been wearing his hair in short braids for about a year because he wanted to be different from everyone else.

“I wanted to look more like how my people used to look back in the days when they didn’t have straightening combs and processes and weaves,” Latif said. “I always wanted to start making myself aware of my heritage and my ethnic background, doing my hair was just one small part of it. “A lot of people think that because you do your hair a certain way that you’re automatically down. That’s just a look that you can gain. But you also have to work hard to get the knowledge.”

Latif believes that for many people Afrocentric dress is a fad more than anything else, but he hopes that will change in time. He receives criticism to take criticism about his style of dress in stride. When people claim that out of style. “Your ethnic background, your heritage never gets played out,” he said.

During the short-lived Black Revolution of the ‘60s and ‘70s it was fashionable and acceptable to look African. For the first time in American history, African victims of European oppression were beginning to outwardly assert their native heritage in mass numbers. The African aesthetic proved to be accepted by the majority of Black people at that time, but seemed to disappear as quickly as it initially surfaced. Why?

Some attribute the impermanence of the African aesthetic to the commodification of culture that took place. Many even view the Black Power Movement as a quasi-trend, which failed to institute a global reeducation of African people. They say the movement was a trend. It was ephemeral. Many assert that by making culture a commodity, people wear it instead of living it. And when the trend is over, the garments are shed along with everything they symbolize.

Department of Pan-African Studies Director Edward Crosby is a product of the ‘60s Black Power Movement. He has seen the death of one revolution and the rebirth of another. Crosby, who still wears African clothing, believes the new African aesthetic is positive, although it will probably be short-lived.

“I think there’s a number of things happening currently among Black youth that are refreshing, but many students don’t know the real significance,” Crosby said. “Even though many people don’t know what they’re putting on, their minds are opening up to another way of looking at things.”

“All of the stuff we do to ourselves, from buying braids and putting them in our hair to growing dreads, is all a search for new definitions of beauty.”

Although many Black people have adopted an African aesthetic, many others are questioning this Black cultural Renaissance. They question its origin. They question its authenticity. They don’t understand why the African fire was refueled.

Part of the answer may lie in rap music. Rappers such as the Jungle Brothers, Queen Latifah and Public Enemy have done their part in promoting the new African aesthetic. Many of the groups that wear dreadlocks and traditional African garb have caused African-American music to take a turn toward the Black. African aesthetics and Afrocentric ideas are beginning to take over rap, leaving much of its alleged materialism and misogyny behind. This new Africanism among rappers, which is neither absolute or consistent, has caused even nihilistic rappers to begin addressing issues of Black culture in their music.

Black youth have a history of mirroring their media-directed image—an image that inevitably defines them. Now, with the advent of conscious rap music,
African American youth have positive, cultural images to relate to and mirror. They are shedding traditional American aesthetics, and the so-called values they symbolize. They have replaced American nationalism with Black nationalism, if only on the surface. But is their outward appearance truly indicative of their politics?

Jelani Kamau, a freshman at Cuyhoga Community College, said his Afrocentric style of dress started as a fad inspired by rap music. But what started out as a fad for Jelani became a way of life.

"I started wearing the African medallions because it was a fad and everybody was wearing them," Jelani said. "I then began to study African history and culture, and now its a real big part of my life. I study it everyday, practically every time I can."

Jelani, who says all his "real" friends dress Afrocentrically, believes that many people who now subscribe to the Afrocentric aesthetic lack a true understanding about African culture.

"Most people really don't understand," Jelani said. "They might not know the actual significance it plays for them being African descendants, but instinct would tell them it has something to do with them."

Rhea Young, a senior English major at Howard University, says that it is crucial for young African Americans to truly understand the meaning behind their cultural style of dress. She does not subscribe to the African aesthetic and believes that it is more important to internalize rather than externalize culture.

"You have people who dress Afrocentrically, but they're not Afrocentric in their everyday way of life," Rhea said. "I'm adopting more Afrocentric ways of thought than dress."

Latif says that he also believes outward expressions of culture is not necessary and that people often dress a certain way to convey a militant image—an image that may not be genuine.

"If you want to be down with the movement, be down with it. If you don't, you don't have to front just to get over and try to appeal,"
Stephanie doesn't believe that the present Afrocentric aesthetic trend is the same as the one that occurred in the 1960s and 1970s. To her, wearing an afro is no longer a fad. It is now a personal choice. Even though she is happy with her new haircut, the economics and government major is concerned about whether her hair will be marketable in a corporate setting. She has hopes of working as tk.

"I plan to keep it (my hair) like this, but I hope I'm able to," Stephanie said. "Older people tell you that it's being idealistic and it's understandable to be radical while you're in college, but as soon as you're out of school, I hope I will not have to chose between being able to support myself and being able to be myself."

Crosby asserts that many Blacks do not wear their hair naturally because Corporate America wouldn't allow it. He said in trying to conform to this society, African Americans have failed to establish their own standard of beauty.

"There has always been a critical situation among Blacks in terms of belonging. We have always wanted to belong and be accepted," Crosby said. "The whole business of trying to make a living in this (White) man's world is problematic because they are in control."

This commodification of African culture is appealing to both Black and White youth alike. Caucasian youth are now wearing African jewelry, T-shirts, and are even attempting to lock their hair. Joan Long, a White student at Kent, is attempting to find Africa in her hairstyle.

Long, who is now trying to lock her red hair for the second time, said she got a lot of compliments on her hair and doesn't know why her hairstyle would offend anyone. She also says she doesn't know anything about African culture, or Rastafarianism, but she has gone to reggae shows.

"I've never really explored the culture or the history of it (dreadlocks)," she said. "I'm not trying to be offensive to them [Rastafarians]. I don't think it should be really, I don't know why it would be."

Sharon Smith, a senior psychology major at KSU who usually wears her hair in braids, is offended by Whites who wear dreadlocks. To her, it is insulting for anyone to wear dreadlocks without understanding their meaning.

"First of all dreads to me should not be a fad, a phase or a fashion statement," Sharon said. "In the Rasta teachings, not cutting your hair and growing locks is in direct relation to the Bible. It also has to do with a person being in their most natural state. When I look at White people with dreads, that's obviously not in their natural state. I believe that they are adopting something that's not their culture, and that in itself is offensive."

Although Sharon says she is pleased that locks are becoming more acceptable, she does not approve of "trendy dreads.

"It's very disappointing for me to see how dreads are becoming very faddish right now because they're not seeing the seriousness in its origin, which is disrespectful to Rastas, Africans and African Americans."

Although some Whites do wear African clothing, the new African aesthetic continues to symbolize defiance. It symbolizes a defiance among Black youth against traditional American values—values that many young Blacks are equating with oppression. Still the future of this aesthetic revolution remains to be seen. This is not the first time that African culture was commodified, and it will probably not be the last. But the its permanence remains to be seen. No one admits that their outward expression of culture is a fad, but only time will tell. If the external becomes internalized, people of African descent may begin to live the culture they stylishly wear. Crosby does not believe that the new African aesthetic is just a trend. To him life is a cycle, and so-called trends come and go and inevitably come back again. And even trendy clothing can become something deeper—it can lead to mental revolution. "To some degree everything has its superficial quality, just as everything has its substantive qualities," Crosby explained. "Then there's something that happens to transform the superficial to the substantive."
The Psychology of Black Hair

By Pamela Duncan

Every woman of African descent knows that our hair is an issue. For some it's more of an issue than for others. Some of us are "blessed" with "good" hair, so our time spent fussing with it in front of the mirror, at the beauty shop, sitting in the kitchen next to the stove is not much. Then some of us had it rough from day one, born with "bad" hair, needing perms when we were 3 months old, and destined to spend the rest of our lives investing in super strength permanent creme relaxers, getting curls and body waves, continuing to make especially Black cosmetology a lucrative career, and just basically trying to convince Mother Africa to go away and leave us the hell alone.

We'll spend more money on beauty aids, $267 million on hair care products alone in 1989 to be exact, burn and fry our scalps, and over process our hair all for the sake of assimilating into White America and forsaking our own heritage. Psychologists have long attributed such acts to self-hatred and a manifestation of an inferiority complex. One such psychologist, Joseph Howard, noted that "...Blacks express their feelings of inferiority by over identification with the White society and the rejection of themselves ("Toward a Social Psychology of Colonialism," Black Psychology, p.36-5).

I know I'm going to get hate mail on this one. I expect it. I'm probing a sore spot in a lot of people. Why then am I penning what could very well be my own sentence to social ostracization? Because this is an issue that has affected me all of my life, and I feel compelled to share these thoughts.

Even as I write, I am wearing the same Pratt City, Alabama, plaits that my mother and her sisters wore when they were growing up. My mop, as it has occasionally been called, has no chemicals in it, and in shrinking up when hit by water reflects every drop of African ancestry. My hair is an issue. I've been wearing cornrowed braids with extensions for the better part of ten months now. At first, my rationale for braids was mostly for the sake of giving my hair a break from the rituals of chemical relaxers, blow drying, hot curling, combing, and brushing--essentially punishment. I now thoroughly enjoy the convenience of maintaining my hair--tying it up at night, getting up twenty minutes later in the morning than I did before due to having to do my hair, and taking the scarf off--I'm good to go. No worry about sweating that style out when I'm in a romantic moment with my man. No worry about "what am I going to do with my hair tonight." Let my sister have that problem and my curling iron. Yeah this is straight.

Eventually, though, wearing the braids took on a more significant meaning. It became the outward reflection of my Afrocentric philosophy. People noticed. I frequently have people (male and female Black and White) comment on how good the braids look on me. People began calling me "sister" and "Queen Latifah." I didn't mind these comments, which were sometimes directed at me rather derisively, rather, I
began to take pride in being able to wear and express something that had originated with us, for us, and not by or for White folks.

My earliest recollection of having cognitive dissonance about my hair was during my undergraduate years of college. I used to hang out with a very Afrocentric guy who was light years ahead of his time. He used to chide me about always having to get my hair relaxed--trying to be "like White people," as he put it. Now, I enjoyed hanging out with this guy, talking revolutionary stuff with him, the whole nine yards, but I wasn't about to go au naturel with the mop. I couldn't imagine not straightening my hair. Shoot! And look like Angela Davis? Get real. I had worn my hair straightened as long as I could remember. I didn't even know of any other way to wear it.

But that was the start of internal turmoil about my hair. It was almost as if I was afraid to face my natural self. Every time that new growth started to come in, I was off to the beauty shop. I couldn't deal with having two types of hair on my head: Black and White. I could only deal with the White. Just like some Black people I know.

I think the turnaround came when I began studying ancient Egyptian history and seeing our ancient sisters wearing some of the same braids with extensions that I'm wearing in 1991. I was also recognizing how White people subtly influenced our thought processes over time. We have to get as close to white as possible. We weren't like that before we were brought to this country. It's been

I couldn't deal with having two types of hair on my head: Black and White. I could only deal with the White.

since our culture and traditions were snatched, lost and prohibited by the dominant culture during slavery that we turned to the masters' culture, doing what is recognized as "identifying with the aggressor." (Morton Shane, "Some Subcultural Considerations in the Psychotherapy of a Negro Patient," The Psychiatric Quarterly, January 1960).

I propose that we've been so indoctrinated with Eurocentric attitudes, inured with Eurocentric ideas of beauty from the time that we were born and at the same time subconsciously influenced by the lack of Black women being touted as beautiful in our naturalness, that we've become like brainless dummies, succumbing to the influence. So now it's the lighter the better; the straighter the better. But in accepting these types of standards, we commit ourselves to a mental psychosis. Identifying with those who have historically oppressed you cannot be an ego-enhancer, as doctors Kardiner and Ovesy have noted. Rather, it becomes a source of self-degradation (Kardiner & Ovesy, The Mark of Oppression, a Psychosocial Study of the American Negro). I've fallen
into that category; now I'm fighting my way out of that box.

Ever since I started contemplating the braids, it's been occurring to me that there is something wrong with straightening my hair or doing anything that is symbolic of self-hatred. When I wear the braids, I look at myself and see Pamela Duncan as she would have been 4,000 to 6,000 years ago—proud and un-tainted by Eurocentric ideas of beauty. I'm sure there are people reading this saying, "Look, this is the 1990s, not 3,000 B.C., get with the program girl. It's do whatcha like. It's no thing, no crime to relax your hair to get it to look good. Everyone does it. You're still Black." And to those people I say, "You're right. It is 1991. It is do whatcha like. You are still Black."

In structurally changing our hair we are denying what is naturally ours, forsaking it for that of the oppressors'. We are teaching our young ones by example that there is something wrong with claiming our heritage—embracing our Afrocentricity. Why are we doing this? Could it be that its not enough that Whites have done it to us; that we have to do it to ourselves? Why do we feel that we have to wear our hair like White people? To be accepted? To appease the masses? The more Afrocentric I've become, the more comfortable I've become with even the thought of doing anything that I view as assimilating into mainstream (White) American. And so, again to those critics, I say "Now there is a new program. Get with that!"

My good friends and I have had some long, serious discussions about this hair thing. They know I view everything through red, black and green glasses and that the concern about hair is not just based on matters of convenience. Every time I take my braids out, my hair is fuller and much more healthy than it was before. And it has occurred to me to take this wonderful mass of hair right back to the hairdresser for a relaxer. It would be so long and pretty, just what the fellas like, and I'd be accepted. But accepted by whose standards? If I got it relaxed and went on a job interview tomorrow, I'd have a better chance of getting that job. I'd "fit in." Sometimes several days go by between the time I take my braids down and when I get my hair rebraided (like right now). And this is actually a high time of cognitive dissonance.

... its been occurring to me that there is something wrong with straightening my hair...

Still ascribing to the thought that "I can only look good when I tell those little boys fighting up there to relax their fists." Especially when I reflect on what Dr. Howard says about straightening our hair. "When a sister or brother fries their hair...this has traditionally been called 'self-hatred' behavior." In the current resurgence of Black Nationalism, this is referred to as the "oro" phenomenon. It is likely that such a person will be referred to as "Negro" rather than "Black." But when the wife of General Nguyen Cao Ky has plastic surgery done on her eyes to make them less slanted, it is scarcely noted in the Black community. Both of these attempts to become more "beautiful" are of the same order of phenomena, for they are both attempts to become more European looking. Both are manifestations of the "colonized mentality."

We've come a long way, but then, we haven't. We must constantly educate ourselves about our history and heritage to understand our potential for repeated greatness and acceptance in our own right. Let's welcome Mother Africa within us with open arms, instead of arming ourselves with "super strength" and "Care Free" to fight back. That shouldn't have to be a battle for us. Sister Angela Davis, you have my uttermost respect for realizing then what I've just recently come to recognize and accept. Our hair is beautiful, just the way it is, because we are beautiful, just the way we are.

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Beyond the Call
-Nick Young

By Tanya Person

Whoever said that all graduate students do is study is quite wrong. Especially in the case of Nick Young, a graduate student in higher education administration.

At 24, Young is accomplishing things that make a difference in the African-American community at Kent. He is the founder and co-editor of The New Majority, the first professional magazine of its kind at Kent State targeted to African American graduate students.

"This is different from the traditional, and it lets graduate students show that we can do research," Young said. "I would like to see The New Majority continue as a professional journal and eventually develop a consortium with universities nationwide."

In addition to The New Majority, which will be out this spring, Young is also a coordinator for the Urban Teacher's Project (UPT), a program supported by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education to help underprivileged urban youth prepare for careers in teaching.

"In all I do, I always remember As coordinator, Young oversees this saying from Dr. Martin Luther King: 'If a soul is left in serve as mentors for the program. darkness, sins will be committed. He said this is a good opportunity. The guilty one is not he who for him because it gives him a commits the sin, but he who chance to apply research to real causes the darkness.'
One day while watching "Yo MTV Raps," I was suddenly overcome by the televised image of my idol, Chuck D, from the prolific rap group Public Enemy. With his baseball cap pulled characteristically low over his forehead, Chuck D said one of the most profound things I've ever heard him say. It was a comment made on the power of rap music and why it has suddenly come under the scrutinizing eye of the "powers that be." In all his Black wisdom, Chuck said that rap wielded such power, and those in power have become so fearful of it because never before in history have so many Black men's voices been heard at one time. I didn't realize just how profound that comment was until I began to observe all that was happening around me.
Anyone who has been keeping up with the media and talk shows in the past couple of years has seen an increasing interest in rap, by not only the media and people in control but also by the masses who are controlled by the media. Last year it was Ice T with his album *Freedom of Speech (Just Watch What You Say).* Everyone was concerned about the profanity and the often sexually explicit content of the music. Ice T was on Oprah, Phil, Geraldo, and every other talk show in existence. He was adamant about addressing the issue of freedom of speech and the right that he, and everyone else in this country, has to freely express himself, whether it be about sex or the contradictions and crimes of the government. In 1990 it was Luther Campbell, the leader of the rap group 2 Live Crew, and once again I watched another Black man be persecuted, for what was supposedly seen as obscenity. It was taken one step further when Luther Campbell was taken to court, where his case was heard by an all-white jury. Campbell argued the charges using the First Amendment as his weapon against the racist justice system that attempted to fine and incarcerate him.

On the weekend of October 19, 1990, Luther Campbell, and 2 other members of 2 Live Crew, faced a group of jurors who decided that the group was not guilty of the crime of obscenity. So once again, justice has prevailed over those who attempt to hinder it. Or has it?

This year it will be someone else. Probably another Black man who will be writing the same things that Ice T or 2 Live Crew wrote in the not-so-distant past. But maybe next time it won't be the court system he'll have to go before. Maybe next time the punishment will be more severe, something not so "fair."

Censorship is definitely an issue that needs to be dealt with, and crushed, however, we must also begin to look at the trend that's occurring right before our eyes. I'm not attempting to belittle or minimize the White groups or individuals who have had to deal with their First Amendment rights being threatened, however, in the past couple of years there have primarily been African-American groups, rap groups--rap groups of Black men who have been accused of being obscene. Obscenity is just what they used to bring a Black man to court. There are many other things that Black men in the rap music industry have been accused of in the past couple of years. Public Enemy has been labeled anti-Semitic and racist (which I believe is an impossibility since in my opinion African Americans, in general, cannot be racist), and Ice Cube has been labeled misogynist, just to name a few.

Without a doubt, the problem is that our First Amendment rights are being threatened and that we all collectively, African American, Caucasian, Latino, Asian, and Native American, must fight those who attempt to take that right away from us. As writers, artists, performers, or even moving, breathing, thinking individuals, we must realize the danger of even one person being censored, no matter how offensive or vulgar we may think they are. We all must realize that when one person is censored it will become easier for you to be censored when it comes time for you to express yourself. 2 Live Crew is one of many rap groups whose lyrical content is not suitable for all listeners. They are extremely sexually explicit and sometimes offensive. But it is for the individual listener to decide what is suitable or unsuitable for him/her to listen to, not the government.

However, as a nation--a nation of Africans in a continent that has continued to keep us uneducated, brainwashed and silenced, we must see this attack on rap music as an attack on our community, primarily on our Black men. Chuck D was right. Never before in history have so many Black men's voices been heard at one time. Also, never before have these Black men's voices been listened to by not only numerous African Americans but also by masses of Caucasians. This is where the true threat and concern lies. It lies in the fact that the masses of Caucasian youth today are consuming (in mass quantities) and emulating the people that their parents and grandparents have attempted to silence. This is the real problem.

The government's use of 2 Live Crew in their plot to discredit and eradicate the power of rap was a cheap shot. 2 Live Crew is just one rap group in the midst of several other articulate, powerful, and prophetic rappers. Groups like Public Enemy, Boogie Down Productions and X-Clan are just a few groups who really pose a threat to the White supremacist structures that are attempting to annihilate the Black race and its influence on the White race. Any intelligent, observant and Afrocentric human being can see that the government's exploitation of the 2 Live Crew case was a deliberate and deceptive political move. 2 Live Crew was used as the rap group guinea pig. Next time it will be someone who's saying something, and it won't be an experiment. I am sure that it is extremely discouraging to find that after they killed one Malcolm, one Huey, one Nkrumah, three more popped up in their place using the universal medium of a beat, a lyric and wax to educate not only our children, but theirs. I understand their frustration and I send my deepest sympathies. But to my Black brothers and sisters out there that have the gift of a beat and a lyric and who can use these gifts to relay their knowledge of truth to the masses, I not only support and admire you, but I encourage us all to support you as well.

As a nation of Africans in a country that wants to keep us ignorant and silent, we must take note that in the midst of what they label obscene, anti-Semitic and racist, there exists truth, education, and what they fear most--the whisper of revolution. Do not allow censorship to continue to rear its ugly head. Crush it.
Where are Blacks in Math and Science?
An Issue of Exclusion.

By Jinida Ojiwawh

Imhotep mastered the concept of physical healing in ancient Egypt; Benjamin Banneker made engineering and mathematical advances with the clock and architecture in Colonial America; and in the 20th century, Ronald McNair was the only African American crew member aboard the 1986 Space Shuttle Challenger. African Americans have these and many other heroes in the scientific and technical arena to be proud of, but now the scientific inspiration has diminished and the number of Blacks in mathematics and science has begun to dwindle.

Today, descendants of the very founders, teachers, and students of the sciences and mathematics are slowly destroying the legacy of their forefathers and mothers.

The June 7, 1990 issue of Blacks in Higher Education shows alarming statistics on African Americans in the graduate and professional levels of math and science-related fields. In 1989, for example, 821 African Americans graduated from medical school—compared to the 12,606 White medical school graduates. In that same year, there were only five Ph.D.s awarded to African Americans in physics and astronomy, compared to 596 awarded to Whites. Also, there were only six African Americans who received doctorates in mathematics, while in that same field, Whites received 351.

Even in engineering fields, the statistics show low numbers of African Americans receiving doctorates. For example, five African Americans received doctorates in mechanical engineering, and only one in chemical engineering for the entire year of 1989.

Elgie Isi Okoh is a native Nigerian living in Kent. He studied physics and chemistry at the University of Akron, and finished his undergraduate degree at New Mexico State University. It is only natural that he would pursue an education in the applied sciences; he does, after all, come from a family of chemists and engineers. Okoh soon discovered that in the United States, it didn’t matter what his background knowledge of science was, because as long as he was black skinned, he would face overt and covert discrimination and discouragement from his academic colleagues. But initially Okoh could only laugh at the audacity of “academics” in the United States who told him he wasn’t “cultured enough to study science.” In Nigeria he grew up with science. “It was a slap in the face because I have a background in science,” Okoh said. “When they told me I could not do it, I knew I could because my father is an engineer.” Okoh says practically all the children in his community even knew how to make and shoot missiles, even though they were never used to harm others. Now as a father to American-born children, Okoh sees a cyclic pattern of discouragement and discrimination forming again with his children in the American school system. His son who attends Hoban, a private Catholic high school in Akron, said the teachers would not allow him to take a chemistry class. Okoh says when he heard this from his son, he went to the school and sat in on a chemistry class. He ended up correcting the teacher’s mistakes. Okoh says that African Americans are at a disadvantage because science is not as emphasized here as it is in his country. Okoh had the privilege of studying science from an African perspective in his homeland—something African Americans most likely don’t have an opportunity to do. In Nigeria students studied original African sciences, such as the production of cotton, rubber and glue. Outside of Nigeria’s academic atmosphere, everyday citizens were exposed to science even in the home. Okoh says that most tools and devices used in physics and chemistry laboratories are basic home and kitchen instruments in the average African home. “The African woman is the greatest chemist you can find,” Okoh said, referring to the many instruments and devices simply found in the African woman’s kitchen. He says such tools as the chemist’s mortar is the African woman’s spice grinder and the laboratory tripod is the African woman’s cooking stand. “It’s all basic chemistry,” he said. Even the origin of the word “chemistry” is said to be African. Some Afrocentric historians assert that “chem” is derivative of “Kem,” the root of the word Kemet (ancient Egypt). The word ‘chem’ is also derivative of the ancient Egyptian word “kim,” which is said to mean black or burnt-faced people. And “mistery” basically means the study of. Put the two together and “chemistry” literally translates into “the mystery or study of black people.” At Kent State University alone, out of over 1,100 African-American students, 106 of them (undergraduate and graduate) are pursuing majors in science and math-related fields at the start of the 1990-91 academic year, according to the office of Academic Assessment and Evaluation.

Deborah Hill is an aspiring electrical and computer engineer at Kent State University. A 19-year-old sophomore from Twinsburg, Ohio, she has already visualized her dream of future success.

“My goal is to master math and electronics... I want to know everything about them,” Hill said. But she is also aware of the many obstacles she has faced in the past, those she faces now, and anticipates those she will eventually face as she progresses in her field.

Reflecting on past experiences, Hill has come to believe that a major factor that contributes to the small numbers of African Americans in the fields of science and mathematics is education from elementary school on.

Hill recalls her junior and senior high school days when counselors actually discouraged her from taking challenging courses in higher math. Fortunately Hill ignored her counselors’ advice and took honors algebra upon entering high school. But in spite of her determination to succeed and prove herself in the classroom, Hill said her algebra teacher still made her feel as if she “didn’t belong.”
“School systems are very discriminatory. The teachers still live in the days they came up in. The systems have changed, but the teachers haven’t,” Hill said.

Hill also blames the educational system for keeping students, mainly African-American students, ignorant of the past achievements, which people of African descent have made in the sciences and mathematics. Hill said she was never taught about Imhotep, the true father of medicine, or other early Egyptians who performed what modern scholars would consider “miracles” in the scientific fields. She said she never heard of the mathematical genius of Tom Fuller, a slave in Virginia during the mid 1800s who was also known as “Negro Tom.” According to a February 1980 issue of the Christian Science Monitor, Fuller, along with many other feats, could calculate the amount of seconds in a year in his head.

As far as recent contributions go, Hill says it is even harder to find material that displays achievements of African Americans in the sciences and mathematics today. Besides renowned African Americans, such as the late Ronald McNair, Hill says it is difficult to find people who have made recent breakthroughs in these fields.

“You can’t just pick up a magazine and see it. You have to do deep research,” Hill said. And quite frankly, Hill admits, being in school she doesn’t have much time to devote to such research.

Dexter White says he always liked math. He also loves cars. So he plans to put those two interests to use one day become an automobile design specialist.

Like Hill, this junior industrial technology major at Kent was familiar with very few Blacks in the scientific field other than Charles Drew and Garret Morgan. “To look back and say ‘wow, look what they did’ would give students an extra incentive to stay in (science and math fields) and not give up,” White said.

Fortunately though, White was encouraged by parents and teachers to pursue his love.

At Akron’s Buchtel High School, where the student body is predominantly African American, the teaching staff is predominantly White, White says he was greatly encouraged by his physics and chemistry instructors as well as counselors.

As far as encouragement from school mates goes, White and Hill encountered more problems than they would have expected from educators.

Both noticed how friends and associates seemed surprised or shocked after finding out that either of them is majoring in engineering fields.

“My friends say, ‘man, you must be smart,’ but it’s not about being ‘Mr. Smarty.’” White said. “I made a decision and a commitment that this is what I want to do.”

“It bothers me!” Hill said about her peers’ reactions. “My major is a major just like any other major. They act like one major is higher than another. Every major is at the same level. Just choose which one you wouldn’t mind doing for the rest of your life.”

Jackie Spann happens to be a math instructor at Kent. The only African American woman doctoral student, Spann, and two other African American teaching assistants, currently teach college algebra. Spann grew up in Tougaloo, Mississippi, where she encountered no discouragement in her pursuit of a mathematics career. She credits her parents and teachers for the encouragement she received to continue her study of math.

“If you don’t have good teachers, you may not like the subject,” Spann said.

However, as far as teacher responsibility goes, Spann admits unfortunately that some instructors don’t have as much extra time as they would like to devote to spending with individual students.

“Even though we would like to (spend extra time with students), there’s a certain amount of time we have,” Spann said. But she says that while in the classroom, she tries as much as possible to make sure that the students learn. “We do anything we can to get the point across.”

Spann is aware of the fact that there are not many African Americans in front of science or mathematics classrooms, and she says that would be an extra plus in learning.

“It would be nice to see a Black teacher in a science or math class,” said Spann. “Seeing a lot of Black teachers makes you want to accomplish their goals.”

Spann says the low statistics of African Americans in science and mathematics are alarming to her, but the blame should not be placed on teachers alone.

“Maybe Black students should try to help each other out,” Spann suggests. She also recommends that African-American students be confident enough to go to their professors for help.

Looking on the positive side of the stats, Spann figures that if African Americans are not pursuing such degrees at a higher or equal rate to their counterparts, then they obviously must be concentrating more in other fields.

Spann finished undergraduate work at Tougaloo College, a small African-American private college in Tougaloo, Mississippi, and received her master’s at Tennessee State. Once she completes her doctorate, she plans on returning to her first alma mater, Tougaloo College, to stand where one of her math professors once stood— in front of the classroom as a teacher.
By Jinida Ojiiwah

The late Cheikh Anto Diop was a master scientist and philosopher from Senegal, West Africa. Diop, along with many other accomplishments, dedicated his studies to the African origins of civilization.

So dedicated was he that he actually risked facing scorn by his European academic colleagues when he invented the Melanin Dosage test to prove that early Egyptians were indeed black skinned.

In his book, Black Africa, the Economic and Cultural Basis for a Federated State, Diop emphasizes that a scientific approach is desperately needed to liberate the African continent.

Diop points out nine major energy areas, particularly in the areas of energy conservation and resources, which, with a little talent and creativity, could possibly lead to Africa’s being totally self-sufficient. Those areas are:

**Hydraulic Energy**

Diop said that Africa leads the world in hydraulic energy supply, with the highest concentration being in the Zaire River Basin. He has come to the discovery that “once the problem of moving electrical energy in the form of direct tension has been solved, harnessing the hydroelectric power of the Zaire River Basin alone...could supply all of the Black Continent with electricity.”

**Solar Energy**

One of the many ways which solar energy could be utilized, according to Diop, is by employing solar cells made of semiconductors. By doing this, he concluded that home electrical energy could be supplied directly by the sun.

**Atomic Energy**

Diop explained that “controlled fission of uranium and thorium is at the basis of atomic energy.” Diop said it is pertinent that these atomic energy sources be utilized. Diop said uranium sources can be found in Ethiopia, Cameroon, Nigeria, the Sahara, Ghana, Zambia, Mozambique, and Uganda. A thorium mine has also been found in South Africa.

**Thermonuclear Energy**

At present, the only way to attain thermonuclear energy is by way of atomic energy, according to Diop. He said that British scientists have attempted and failed to produce thermonuclear energy on the continent without atomic energy. With new talent and new minds, Diop believed thermonuclear energy could make the African continent a highly industrialized one.

**Wind Energy**

Windmills would be ideal for irrigating soil and supplying water to cattle in impoverished regions of Senegal.

Thermal energy of the seas, tidal energy, global heat, volcanic thermal and geothermal energy are some other sources of energy which could, with dedicated and talented scientific minds, very well provide energy sources for the entire continent—making it totally self-sufficient.

I honestly know very little about these energy sources which Diop named because I have had very little science during my schooling. I too was a victim of the discouragement from sciences and mathematics which many African American children face in American school systems.

Although I regret that I didn’t persevere in the sciences and mathematics earlier, I cannot emphasize enough how I beg those brothers and sisters who have considered these fields to maintain that interest and don’t give up.

You have just learned of all the wonderful things you could achieve with your talent in the efforts to liberate Africa. Africa does not need another Black tourist. It is the duty of people of African descent to contribute whatever talents we have to uplift the mother continent. If we don’t, who will?
Rap's Holy Intellectuals?
Within minutes of meeting Poor Righteous Teachers, one realizes that these brothers are more than just a new jack rap group. Sidestepping the mediocre rap of the kings and queens of mainstream, Wise Intelligent, Father Shaheed and Culture Freedom successfully attempt to step into a realm of righteouseness, truth and undiluted Blackness.

The debut album, Holy Intellect, contains tracks of funky bass beats accompanied by enlightened lyrics that attempt to educate and uplift. Portraying the Black woman as queen as opposed to bitch, and attacking the ever-present problem of Black unification are just a couple of the issues that the music of Poor Righteous Teachers addresses. Wise, Culture, Shaheed and dancers; Footloose and G-Rock, are Black men who follow the path of their African ancestors by showing their peers that although we were snatched from our continent, we should not allow our love for that continent to be snatched from our hearts.

"People look at us and say we consist of teaching".

**UHURU: How did you all get the record deal that you have now?**

W.I.: It was hard getting into the rap business. Me and Culture used to just slam out tapes in our area all the time, but we never thought to just go out and start making records. My brother told us we were good one day, but we didn’t know anybody; we didn’t have any connections. So we started on an independent label in Trenton; then we got airplay on WRKS-FM in New York by Red Alert. Then Profile Records heard it and were like, ‘That’s what time it is. Let’s get them.’

**UHURU: How did you all come up with the names you have?**

W.I.: My name... I didn’t choose it for myself, it was given to me by my older brother. He gave me the name because of my actions and the way that I desired a role when I wrote. I didn’t desire to run off at the mouth before I meditated on what I was running off at the mouth about. So I have to think before I put my words and actions into manifestation, and he saw this, so he said, ‘Yo, that’s a wise, intelligent way of existing.’

Culture Freedom: My name came from wanting to know my own true self. Culture Freedom means, one who desires to know himself. You’re free from those things that make you other than yourself...he who seeks knowledge of himself.

Father Shaheed: Shaheed means witness.

Wise Intelligent: The reason we changed our names is because your name links you to your origin. I think that you should gain a powerful name before you try to gain a powerful position here on the planet Earth. Just make sure that it’s a powerful name and that you know the science of it.

**UHURU: Is there one message that you want your listeners to get from your music?**

W.I.: We want our listeners to know that unity is the key to the differences behind closed doors. Let’s deal with our common problems.

What are our common problems? We all have the same oppressor, regardless of where you go. You go to South Africa, the oppressor has blonde hair, blue eyes and pale skin. You come to America, the oppressor has blonde hair, blue eyes and pale skin. That’s a common problem. That’s what we have to deal with.

The unity is where our power is. Once we come together, we are the mightiest race ever to exist on the planet Earth.

**UHURU: I agree. Wise, you write all the lyrics of the music. Where do you get your inspiration?**

W.I.: The inspiration from our music comes from living in the ghetto; living in the ghetto is definitely a Black experience.

**UHURU: In your music you talk a lot about the ‘Third Eye’. Can you break that concept down for me?**

W.I.: In our music we talk about the Third Eye. The Third Eye is the mind; it’s the most important eye that a living being possesses. It controls all five senses of your Black people’s success here in the wilderness of North America, because power lies within unity. For instance, we have gangs in L.A. that outnumber the police over 7 to 1 in every neighborhood. They are fighting and killing each other, but little do they know that if they came together, they would own L.A. That’s what we’re trying to stress in our music, because that’s what time it is.

As soon as Black people start coming together and start taking over their own destiny and start controlling their way of thinking, then Black people will be back into power. We’ve go to come together. Regardless of if you are Christian, regardless of if you are Black Jew or whatever, we’ve got to come together today. Let’s settle our
body. If you were to focus on something, like grass, for instance, you conceive the thought that grass is green. It wasn't your eyes that conceived that perception, it was your mind. The mind is that which elaborates on what is what, and who is who, in the world to be. In other words, you cannot see without understanding. I can say he's a White man, but what makes him White? That's when the mind takes part in the situation. So the mind is the best part, which is the Third Eye.

The Bible and Religion: "And the Wise won't cease/ the gods don't stop until its time to say peace"

UHURU: IN one of your songs you said something about being "lost" at one time. Can you pinpoint exactly when you reached the conscious state you are in now?

W.I.: It happened when I looked out the window one day and I said, 'Damn, this is hell.' So I thought maybe they're trying to cause us to die, to bear witness to heaven, so that they can live their heaven here on the planet Earth. They know if we value nothing here on the planet Earth, that would make their heaven all the more greater. So, if they teach us you have to die before you go to heaven, then we won't value anything we have here on the planet Earth. That's what happened to our land, our names, our culture, our way of life.

UHURU: Are you all Muslims?

W.I.: I am not a Muslim. We're of the Nation of Gods and Earths. Man is not given religion, he's only given law.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven—so, if there is a God in Heaven, then there is a god on earth— the statement made it very clear. And if God made man in his image here on planet Earth, and the first man ever to exist on the planet was a Black man, then he had to be talking about a brother. I believe in the things that are very logical (in the Bible), the things that make sense. Most of the statements are exact, but then you must use the Third Eye and have the ability to see things for what they really are, not for what they may present themselves to be. This is what makes man greater than anything here on earth, because he has the ability to see mentally as well as physically.

Knowledge plus knowledge equals two

UHURU: Could you name some other rappers you admire? Is your rap style based on any other rapper's style?

W.I.: X-Clan, Chuck D, KRS-1, we admire these rappers the most. But, basically, we admire all the rappers, but these are the ones that keep reality right in your face and let you know what time it is.

X-Clan uses very strong words, but you always hear him (Brother J) state over and over again, "I am the strength example in our people as a whole." What he's saying, is that he represents the power that our people would have if we came together as a whole. That's what he's trying to get across.

They don't understand rap music... they hate rap music. Why? Because they can't comprehend rap music. They can't live in what they created. They created the ghettos, and I don't know a White man that can live in the ghetto. The Black man has proven to be the most high, and he has the ability to build from the highest to the lowest. This is one of the abilities of God. He built from the Heavens to the Earth, from the highest to the lowest. The Black man has been taken from the highest to the lowest, and he's on his way back up to the highest.

Our style of rap is our own individual thing. That's why we titled the album, Holy Intellect, because holy means anything that has not been tampered, mixed with, or diluted. In other words, it's an original concept.

UHURU: What's y'all opinion on the Two-Live Crew controversy? W.I.: The Two-Live Crew controversy is this: use-to-be-poor Black children making more money than the prosecutors that are prosecuting them, and they just can't see that.

UHURU: There's a lot of controversy in the Black communi-
ty about rappers like N.W.A. and Ice Cube and the negative impact of the lyrics on the minds of the young Black males. Many young Black men today idolize Ice Cube and take his word as bond. Same thing with N.W.A.

W.I.: Not everybody should listen to rappers like Ice Cube. If you don't have any knowledge of what he's saying, you might take it the wrong way. Ice Cube knowledge is knowledge, too... street knowledge. If you're always hearing what good is all the time, and you don't know what bad is, you can easily be led onto the wrong path. You can take an Ice Cube or NWA tape and use it for a scared straight program. It makes youths not want to be a part of the streets. But, kids may idolize Ice Cube because he reveals situations that they've been in. I know exactly where he's coming from because I've been in many of those situations. Ice Cube is trying to pull his friends out of the gangs. You have to have the ability to see things for what they really are.

We must come together as a people/teach each as an equal

UHURU: Today you see a lot of African-American kids wearing Africas around their necks and (dread) locking their hair. Do you think all of this American awareness is a fad?

W.I.: The new Black Consciousness is not a fad. That's where the Third Eye comes in again. We see everyone wearing the Black medallions, and they try so hard to fit in the ghetto, to be accepted. So they start wearing these medallions, and when someone approaches them and says, 'Yo, do you know what that medallion means?' He tells them what it means, then they go home and figure it out and get more and more into it. They tell the next person, and the next person once they realize that the colors represent power.

History repeats itself. Black people repeat their history almost every year. The same thing that happens then, happens now, but in a more conscious state. Elijah Muhammad stated it: "The Black
"The GODS don't STOP until it's time to say PEACE."
race will give birth to a race of people whose wisdom, power, and beauty will be infinite." And here you have it. It's coming at amazing speed.

UHURU: I hear the words "Black Revolution" a lot. Do you think the Black revolution is a mental thang or a physical thang?

G-Rock: We've already tried to handle the Black Revolution mentally, and nothing has happened. Now the physical part is coming in. It's coming... by any means necessary.

W.I.: Like the march on Washington in 1963. Before there was a march, there was a riot. The riot didn't start by brothers saying, 'Yo, we better tear down Washington.' It started by word of mouth, on the streets of Harlem, Michigan, Milwaukee, and so on and so forth. Black people started realizing that they weren't doing anything for us, and it's time for us to start taking ours.

Then White people started putting their milk in the coffee. At first it started off as this hot pot of black boiling coffee, and then the White people started throwing their milk in there by picking heroes for the riot. They took the 'Big Six' and posed them as the leaders and the founders of the riot and that instantly gave them power because the people in the streets were like, "Who's controlling the riot?" Because they (Whites) exploited themselves as being the leaders of the riot, they had control over the masses. So then, whatever M.L.K. (Martin Luther King, Jr.) and the rest of the Big Six said, went. When M.L.K. came to the podium and said, 'Calm Down,' they did because they figured that they were the ones that started it. They (whites) turned the riot into a picnic overnight. A hot pot of coffee, and when you add milk to it, it starts turning white and it starts to lose its power and its dominance. That's what happened.

UHURU: I've heard that very example used in a Malcolm X speech once before. Speaking of putting milk in the coffee, what's y'all's opinion about inter-racial dating?

W.I.: You can keep your White girls in your race and let us keep our Black queens in our race, because we're not with that. We know that our woman is much greater than a White woman; if not, White men would never been lying to their women and going and raping Black women. They know what Mother Africa consists of. They know that Africa is responsible for every form of civilization that exists on the planet Earth. They know that if this Black woman comes from there that is the woman that has the ability to give birth to every form of civilization that walks on the planet Earth.

Queen Nefertiti, queen of Egypt, is said to be the most beautiful woman to ever exist on the planet Earth. White people know this. The Queen of Sheba, queen of Ethiopia, is portrayed as White. Why do they want to be these queens of Africa? Because they were beautiful, and they were that which was and always will be. Cleopatra, King Tut, Moses...they want to be all of them.

Wise be not racist or rebel

W.I.: Either you commit with the positive or you be condemned with the negative.

I see the white man as being just the opposite (of the Black man). His nature and way of life and contributions to the planet Earth prove him to be devilish. Slavery...that was devilish. They were hanging, lynching and murdering Black people for no reason whatsoever. They were taking pregnant women and hanging them upside down and cutting their babies out of their stomachs, then crushing the baby while letting youths watch this so they would fear them when they were older. This is why the Black man fears them now that he's a grown man.

UHURU: I've had several arguments with White people and some African-Americans about Blacks being racist. Black people cannot be racist.

W.I.: Black people are not racist, we're just fed up. We want what they took from us and we want it back now! We're learning to value the things that we have here and the things that belong to us, especially our land. They stripped us of our way of thinking, and when a person stops valuing his land, and someone comes and snatches his land from him, he's homeless and you know what gets done to the homeless.

Basically, the Black man has been stripped of everything that he owns by Caucasian people. We're just fed up now, we're not going for it. We can't be racist. Racism is a power system designed to make one race look superior to another. In the schools, we're stripped of Black history. We were stripped of everything that we own; our state of mind and our ability to produce. Black history comes once a year and that's the shortest month of the year. So why are they stripping us of our Black history? We don't have the power to go in a White school and strip them of George Washington, Abraham Lincoln...Then they make it a must that we pass this White history (class). We don't want to know about that. That's probably why you have so many Black children dropping out of school, because the schools are not teaching anything that interests them. If they were teaching them that Black people are the founders of mathematics, astronomy, and so on, Black people would be like, 'Wow! I'm a powerful person. I'm more than they are presenting me to be.' And this is what they fear. When you ask them (Whites) to teach you about some of your Black heroes before slavery, they're lost. How can a person that does not know your history teach you your history? You existed on Earth before him, you watched him grow into the oppressor that he is today. So, how can he tell you anything about yourself if he wasn't here to bear witness to that which you had before he came into existence?

When you idolize somebody or envy them because they have so much power, you find a way to strip them of that power and keep your heel on their neck. Because you know if they have their power back, that's going to lead you back where you were before... on all fours.
Looking for a Place to Make Sacred—the journey of an African American Artist

Frederick Douglass once stated that his responsibility was to save Black men's bodies and the souls of White men. Although one might feel that this is still true today, given the perils young Black men face, I think it is time the discourse on Black survival included the soul as well as the intellect.

We constantly speak of the need for jobs, housing and educational opportunities but when will we rebuild our broken spirits? Our existential selves? Our broken "essential" selves?

As an African American artist born of America's racial crucible—and forged by the cultural crucible of being the "other" in American society, I know intimately the full measure of psychic abuse. African Americans are the "other" in the sense that the rhetoric of the American dream has formed a shame based existence for those born of color in America, not unlike a caste system formalized and color coded.

The deliriums that create this public and private fracturing of self must be healed and repaired. This is what my work is about. My images are metaphors for the destruction of a false self authorized by others and the reconstitution and discovery of a "self-authored" reality.

This is the crisis that the Jamaican writer Jamaica Kincaid speaks of in her book No Small Place. Her thesis is that the colonized and dispersed have no mother land, no father land, no sacred earth to build mounds to worship, no tongue and no voice. We are fractured in spirit and as a result we have a shattered existential self.

The British based African philosopher and theorist, Homi Bhabha describes the solution to this crisis of identity as the need to create a third self, thereby rejecting the dominant culture's reality and the results imposed on the African American by that definition; non-white, negro, nigger, colored etc. this self, proposed by Bhabha and Kincaid's theorems centered reality, a new existential being born out of our own essential self.

I have begun that journey. I am the oarsman. My creativity is my ship. Join me and build your own ship with your talents, your intellect, your own awareness—Let us sail to the center of our essential selves.
THE AFROCENTRIC REALITY

Why there's a need for global reeducation

By Linus Hoskins

In 1930, Dr. Carter G. Woodson wrote a seminal book entitled The Miseducation of the Negro. He argued that the main problem facing people of African descent was that we were victims of miseducation. He observed that when people are educated to respect the knowledge, scholarship, history, and background of everybody else except themselves, then those people are miseducated. He said when people went to school and became scholars in Greek, Latin, and European civilization, and graduated with total ignorance of their own history and dynastic civilizations—those people were miseducated.

Indeed, the late Pan-African Nationalist Dr. Walter Rodney once suggested that colonial education was designed to produce people who would participate in the process of colonial rule, people who would participate in the process of their own oppression and in the oppression of their colonized brothers: (neo)colonialism and that colonized schooling and education for subordination, exploitation, caused the creation of mental confusion and the development of underdevelopment.

Euro-colonial education also reinforced the “notion of privilege” and the “notion of alienation”—divide and conquer. In other words, colonial education and neocolonial education ossified the psychological dependency complex of the African colonized/oppressed to the extent that even in the era of putative political independence, they not only “take for granted the validity, truth, and superiority of the culture of the colonizer, but they also assume that the behaviors, cultures, values, lifestyles, moral preferences and definitions of morality of the colonized are invalid, wrong, false or inferior.”

In the spirit of Eurocentrism, the African could not and cannot be, integrated as a social equal. Eurocentric pursuit of dominance through global miseducation left no place for the African except servitude and second-class citizenship.

Eurocentric ideology has refused to accept the African on the basis of his humanism because of the color of his skin, and in order to reinforce his superiority, the European skillfully devised his global system of miseducation.

As a result, Eurocentric global miseducation/history has promulgated the myth that Africa was a "Dark Continent" replete with cannibals, savages, inferior, uncivilized, backward peoples and institutions. Indeed, the way some European and Eurocentric African scholars present African history, we get the impression that the Europeans sent a Western Union cable to the African Chiefs to inform them that a European electric company was coming to turn on their lights—only when the Europeans turned on its electricity did Africa suddenly enter the New “real” World.

Of course, nothing could be further from the truth, but the Europeans had to present and teach us these blatant lies in order to conceal from us the salient fact that African people created the Europeans. We are the first and original people. In order to dispel this truism, European history portrays the world as if everything prior to the 15th century were, ipso facto, non-historical, non-existent and invalid. A priori, the world is made up in the image and likeness of Europe.

This then is used to support the thesis that the European Christopher Columbus ‘discovered’ us after 1492. The question is, were we lost? However, the Afrocentric version of world history validates the fact that Columbus did not ‘discover’ an African class of people need now is to go through a process of Afrocentric global reeducation in order to completely destroy the European string of White superiority and global miseducation.

The goal of Afro-centrification is to emanate ourselves from mental slavery, induced collective historical-cultural amnesia, collective lobotomy, mentacide and psychological genocide that Eurocentric global miseducation has inflicted upon us. We must do this for ourselves because “none but ourselves can free our minds.”

Afro-centrification must not only change or redirect the African consciousness of oppressed African people but also the situation that oppresses them. This is purposely meant to destroy the belief of the European oppressor who operated, and still does, on the assumption that the more the oppressed can be led to adapt to and accept their oppression, the more easily they can be dominated. Afro-centrification is presumed within the ideology context of an Afrocentric weapon of Appropriate Technology (AT) in
the “practice of freedom” as opposed to the ideological context of Eurocentric global miseducation, which is being used as a weapon of Inappropriate Technology (IAT) in the “practice of domination.” Afrocentrification must be used to eradicate the European-imposed conditions of dependent underdevelopment, powerlessness and underclassness. Afrocentrification teaches that a people cannot analyze the present and plan for their future if they do not know their past, or worse yet, if their past has been distorted and presented to them as reality. History is absolutely vital in creating a positive sense of self and in this Euro-centric world in which African people exist, the restoration of Africa to its rightful place in world history is of utmost importance. This is precisely what Afrocentrification seeks to do. Instead of fighting against each other, our African American youths, for example, would be cooperating with each other after they have passed through the process of Afrocentrification.

Euro-American class materialism/mis-education/mis-directed machismo will be replaced by Afrocentric communal/positively-directed educated values and self-esteem. Our African American youths would know who they are and what their real interests are. They would strive to defend these interests. They would begin to internalize their Africanicity. They would know that they are somebody because they will know the historical firsts of their ancestors. Now they would have a strong undisputable base on which to stand and face the Eurocentric world. The myths of their nothingness, inferiority, primitiveness, and uncivilized nature would have been totally dispelled and they would know that global life did not begin circa the 15th century. They would know that their African ancestors were the original global superpowers prior to the 15th century; they would know that the history of their African race is more than just a history of slavery. They would know what advanced, civilized, dynastica life their African ancestors led before landing in Jamestown, U.S.A. in 1619. In this way, they would have a positive, Afrocentric subconscious mentality and as such, their modus vivendi and actions must be positive and fully committed to the liberation struggle.

In the final analysis, Eurocentric global miseducation gives us a fish so that we can feed ourselves for one day, whereas Afrocentrification teaches African people how to fish so that we can feed ourselves for the rest of our lives. I am convinced that when African people and people of African descent have gone through this process of Afrocentrification, they would be empowered with the necessary Afrocentric, geopolitical ammunition to challenge European Nationalism in the 21st century. Their minds would be decolonized, de-Europeanized, detoxified and they would then be safely on the road to the attainment of that particular liberative, Afrocentric mindset--Afrocentricity.
White Day Dreams

I don't understand what is wrong with those people
Those Black people
I try to be nice to them
I watch the Cosby Show
And I love Michael Jackson
Every morning I say "Hi" to the cleaning woman who works
in my building
And at the grocery store
there's this cute little colored boy
who I always let carry my bags to the car
And last Tuesday I gave a total of three dollars to some bum
down on Lincoln Street
I totally put myself out for those people
At least once a week I try to watch the Arsenio Hall Show
to try to find out what's going on in the Black community
And yesterday I even let some Black girl borrow my notes
for American History class
And I've never told anybody before, but when I was young
I actually wanted to be Black
So I'm not prejudice or anything like that
We're all equal
We're all free
This is America
I just don't understand why
so many Blacks are giving up
Giving up on Martin Luther
King's dream
Just what do Blacks want
We're all the same
We're all integrated
This is the melting pot
I just don't understand why
Blacks are hostile
I just don't understand why
Blacks are so separatist
I just don't understand why
Blacks are so racist
I just don't understand

LONG LOST BROTHER- A POEM TO JUNIOR

I loved you
More than white milk and oreo cookies
And yet the beauty of your bitter broken English
Bit my ass like you would a chocolate bunny
On Easter morning
How dare you fear your own resurrection
Your own birth
Your self inflicted pestilence
Sway back and forth in small incomplete circles
Like corduroy brown high water bell bottoms
YOU'RE LATE
I extended my brotherhood
Grasping at any familiar rhythm
Any sign of home
Only to draw back bloody palms of ignorance
YOU'RE DEAD
I never thought your distance could be so sweet
Like the salty addictive juices of pig fat
Hickory smoked
I never want that craving again

EMPYREAL WHITE

Pure
Pallid
Pale
Being of the color of snow
Unsullied
The white of an egg
The white of an eye
The sight of an iris
Piercing the purpose of protestant gentle conservatives
Saving the foreigners of the North American continent
The North American world
The North American universe
And even Alaska
Even the native pilgrims
Imperial
Invisible
Progressing faintly
From the flesh
Of Ireland
Of Poland
Of Scandinavia
And even Azania
And even Marilyn
And even
Elvis
Empty
Emanulate
Lightly from the mind
Expurgate
Fading melanin
Flaking
From the imagination
Until only the shell is left
With nothing to share
But a cracked
Shattered
Skin

Mark Jones' Poetry Page
Un Vent Nouveau

A new wind blew in Johannesburg
and shook the walls of hate.
It swept aside the spider’s art
that had so long clouded minds.
It cleaned and cleared the desolate heart
and gave sight to the blind.

A new wind swept through Durban town
whispering words of hope.
It cooled the dusty plain of woe
still soaked with martyr’s blood.
It showed the lost ones where to go
a t r o u b l e d p e o p l e understood.

A new wind raged through South Africa
then swelled with tempest’s force
and gathered in it’s pulsing eye
the scattered refuse from apartheid’s hand.
It wailed with a terrible, shattering cry
for freedom in the land.

Now all of those touched by this wind
still have so far to go...but they travel with a new wind
at their backs
and chant...BIKO. BIKO.

By Keita Saad

Trendy Dreads Ain’t no Ammo for the Revolution

Kinks
Evolve from
Virgin scalps
Like random bullets
Aimed at the world
Not quite ammunition
Can’t fight a revolution
W/kinks
Alone

By Kecia Cole
Young Black and Vegetarian

Illustration by Lance Paladin

Spring 1991 40
I used to think I was alone. Not superior. Just alone. I couldn't understand why more of my peers didn't choose a vegetarian lifestyle. Now they had a choice, even though there was a time in history when African Americans had no choice about their diet. We ate poorly. Not because we wanted to, but because historically we were forced to eat the slave master's leftovers—the parts of the pig he didn't want. This type of food continues to cause the most preventable deaths in our people. We continue to die from hypertension and obesity-related diseases more so than our Caucasian counterparts. The leading cause of death for Black women is diseases related to obesity and one of the leading causes of death for Black men is hypertension-related illnesses such as heart attacks. We are committing literal suicide as we continue to eat like slaves long after our emancipation from massa's plantation.

For some, the cost of vegetarianism seems too high. The costly price of many healthy and organic foods has caused vegetarianism to become an extravagance of the privileged and the elite, while a majority of African Americans are undoubtedly excluded. So as we continue to commit dietary suicide, many of our Caucasian counterparts are eating well. We continue to get more leftover crumbs from the "American Pie."

Still, many African people are now recognizing the need for a more healthy diet to ensure physical, ecological, mental and spiritual survival. They are becoming vegetarian. It's a new trend.

In the song "Beef," KRS-1 raps about the evils of red meat and all of the chemicals pumped into the cows that people eat. Mike G., of the Jungle Brothers, takes a more ethical stance against eating flesh when he says "I don't eat meat, cause I'm not that mean." There is a quiet revolution going on. A revolution of the African American diet.

It's not easy to change the way we are--to go down the path less traveled. And college meal plans are unfortunately another obstacle for many would-be vegetarians. They obviously did not plan their menus with vegetarians in mind. So it may be difficult to maintain a vegetarian lifestyle at an institution like Kent, which requires freshmen and sophomores living in residence halls to remain on their meal plan. This meal plan is no alternative for a vegetarian.

According to Maurice Drake, a 1980 KSU graduate and vegetarian, the food at Kent, like many other campuses across the country, is laden with chemicals and generally not healthy for students. Drake, who became vegetarian 18 years ago, has held natural food demonstrations on Kent's campus and has helped students to get off the Kent meal plan, which he claims is not an easy task.

Other schools, such as Oberlin College, have food co-ops that offer an alternative to the mainstream meal plan. Yet, cultural ostracization and a stigma associated with vegetarianism has caused a definite underrepresentation of Black students in these co-ops. Still, Oberlin is definitely ahead of neighboring schools such as Kent and Cleveland State.

Patrice Mallard, a junior anthropology major at Cleveland State University, has been a

Sisters and brothers
vegetarian for the past six years. She is a naturalist. From her naturally kinked hair, to her smooth countenance untouched by makeup, Patrice sports a look of healthful radiance. Vegetarianism, which for Patrice began as an ethical practice, has now taken on ecological and political dimensions.

"I don't agree with the fact that we feed most of the world's grain to cows when there are Third World countries with massive starvation," Patrice said.

Patrice, who is African American, says she believes that there is a rise in vegetarianism among People of Color. To her, the exploitation of animals is similar to the exploitation and oppression of women and People of Color.

"We as People of Color and women have been oppressed and exploited and since we are, we can't do that to other creatures," she said. "I think the rise in vegetarianism amongst People of Color correlated toward the general mood of political activism."

Corey Olds is one of the activists to whom Patrice was referring. He is on a quest to change the world--a world that he believes is far from perfect. He is a rebel. Somehow on another plane, far removed from many of his college peers. Corey, who stopped eating meat nine years ago, has done serious study about the vegetarian philosophy and now subscribes to a vegan diet, which excludes meat, eggs and dairy products. This Oberlin College senior does more than read about vegetarianism--he lives it.

Corey's father, who is also a vegan, helped to serve as a guide for his vegetarian diet and philosophy. Another inspiration for Corey was world renowned nutritionist and political activist Dick Gregory.

"Dick Gregory's arguments in favor of a vegetarian lifestyle readily convinced me that I, too, would like to be a vegetarian," Corey said. "I wanted to actually feel and experience the vigor and rejuvenation that he said one enjoyed as a vegetarian."

Corey, a French major and anthropology minor at Oberlin, is a member of the vegetarian co-op there. He boasts Oberlin as having one of the best vegetarian alternatives in the country.

"I think Oberlin is one of the best colleges in the country to be vegetarian because of its vegetarian food co-ops, which afford students the opportunity to be in the environment with other vegetarians," Corey said. "Moreover, the students in these co-ops make all the decisions concerning the purchase of food, its preparation, as well as other decisions which concern the overall maintenance and governing of the co-op itself."

When co-ops may not be an alternative for students, many of them choose to eat at vegetarian restaurants near their schools. The Soul Vegetarian Restaurant in Atlanta is one such alternative.

Located minutes from the Atlanta University Center for the past six years, the Soul Vegetarian has served many of the college students in the Atlanta area and claim to have a students clientele of about 20 percent. According to restaurant nutritionist Adneh Baht Israel, students are beginning to wake-up as far as their health is concerned.

"We do have a large influx of college students at the restaurant," she said. "I think today's youth are being more conscious of their diet and what they eat because your diet effects your health in every way...If you eat healthy, you will be healthy."

Ooziel Ben Israel, also of the Soul Vegetarian, said that many Atlanta students come to his restaurant because the students want an alternative to the campus food.

"I believe they are looking for a better quality of food--an alternative, because from what I hear..."
ested in vegetarianism should join local food co-ops, read vegetarian literature and find vegetarian roommates. Patrice, who said that vegetarianism has made her more introspective, believes that student vegetarians need to have access to a kitchen and cook as much of their own food as possible. She also explained that the most simple vegetarian diets are also the least expensive.

As Patrice sees many of her peers continuing to consume meat she cannot help but feel discouraged. To her, eating meat is both unnecessary and cruel. Vegetarianism for Patrice is more than a diet, it is a social, environmental and political expression—it is a lifestyle. She believes that a vegetarian lifestyle should be maintained in order to ensure survival of the planet.

"We have to live simply, so that all people can simply live," she said.
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