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With the semester and summer ready to collide, the epic battle is waged between us students going to class or sitting in the shade. As I, too, fight the urge to loaf around – I am enthused to say to you that UHURU Magazine continues in its tradition of bringing unique stories tailored to the black experience.

I am proud of this issue, it being my first and hopefully not my last. I learned a lot through this process and I hope that by reading UHURU Magazine that you take something away from it as well. Now that class is in session – it is important that you pay strict attention to your literary teachers. There will be discussion about integration, technology and religion. We will dissect the history of the African Community Theatre and the Family Tree class. We also put the spotlight on some of the “popular” kids in school through photography, as we take a look at black life on Kent State University’s campus. Our resident fashion diva is also going to school everyone to the new trends for 2006. And as always, we will feature the Kuumba section, so everyone can get their Saul Williams on.

Everyone should be hungry now after waiting so patiently for this issue to be completed. So, here’s some brain candy for y’all. I want to thank everyone from faculty to the passers-by for helping and criticizing me when needed. I extend a major kudos to the staff and Student Media for being in my corner and allowing me to make the mistakes of a first time editor-in-chief. I want to spread love to my inner circle – God, my family, Dr. Dorsey and his wife, Three the Hard Way, S-Boogie and G-Money (anyone else, please don’t be offended... I have a word count). Finally, I must give respect to you, the reader – without you these words would never get to be digested and discussed.

I hope that you all enjoy this.

Ring the Bell, Suckas,

Kevin L. Clark
Editor-In-Chief
Communicate the Dream

Gathering, preparing and delivering information is one of the fastest-growing career fields around.

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Tara Pringle
junior magazine journalism major
Top: Ilyasa Shabez, daughter of Malcolm X, poses with Matthew Cox, (farthest left) president of Black United Students, and other fans after speaking in the Kent State Ballroom as part of Black History Month. Photo by Beth Rankin.

Bottom left: Ilyasah Shabez, daughter of Malcolm X, signs copies of her book "Growing Up X" after speaking. Shabez spoke about activism and black history education during her visit, which was one of many events held this month for Black History Month. Photo by Beth Rankin.

Bottom right: Duane Cox, former Kent State Black United Students president and father of current BUS president Matthew Cox, speaks to a crowd waiting for the arrival of Ilyasa Shabez, daughter of Malcolm X. Photo by Beth Rankin.
THE LESSON
she will never forget

OVERPROTECTED...

Her parents were always protective of her, even at the tender age of five. She could remember her father picking her up from her first day of school and him seeing one of her male classmates, Joshua, giving her a kiss on the cheek. Her father, who was better known in their city as Cut Throat, saw the innocent kiss and blew up. The situation, to say the least, was out of control. The view from her father’s tinted, signature sunglasses was as if Joshua was trying to get her to sleep with him. He threatened Joshua by saying, “You touch my precious thing again, and you won’t see your precious thing again.” From that point on, boys were scared to approach her, even if it was to borrow something as simple as a pencil. At first, she paid it no attention, because she knew that they were afraid of her father, but it started to bother her once she hit junior high school and her friends had boys chasing them left and right. She was, both literally and figuratively, always the “untouchable”. Her mother, who was also protective, made sure that she stayed fly, but would never allow her to wear anything she felt was too revealing. She insisted that her daughter tried on all of her clothes, prior to their final purchases to make sure that, in her words, “everything was just so”. Her interpretation of this grew to mean that everything was so loose, baggy and puffy that she thought she should be credited with the creation of what is commonly known as “The Droop”! She wouldn’t dare put on one thread of clothing that would trigger carnal thoughts to the male imagination. This was imbedded deep in her mind, as she knew had she faltered, that her mother would regain consciousness only to smack her into the next week. Her body matured quicker than the rest of the girls in the neighborhood, so while her friends were still attracting the attention of the young boys, she was magnetizing older men. She did not ask for this type of attention, but she guessed it came with the territory.

EARLY SIGNS...

She could remember running down the hallway trying to make the bell, and feeling the teachers staring so hard that she thought their eyes were going to fall out of their sockets. While she liked and grew comfortable with her body, she resented the associated vibes and glares that seemed to be an accompanying attribute. She was attracting the attention of men that her friends would often express their discontent over not obtaining. They would tell her only in their dreams could they get the type of attention her body commanded while her heart and soul would daily protest. She was not talking about men who were only teenagers prior to their last birthdays. These were men that were out of puberty, financially stable, and out of their mama’s house. Men who were willing to do and say many and any thing with equal ability to support their words and deeds. Her teachers were not too stupid though; they
(continued from page 8)

knew about Cut Throat’s reputation and did not want to cross that line. At age fifteen, her Art teacher raped her. She was always the class clown, finding it necessary to make the class laugh, often at the wrong times. Fed up with her antics, Mr. Thomas gave her after school detention. Mr. Thomas was one of those teachers that many of the girls had a crush on. He was one of the younger teachers who knew how to ‘reach’ his students. He seemed to care about everybody and made Shamar Moore look like Donald Duck! Sometimes the mothers of students would walk by his classroom and laughingly proclaim that they wanted to personally thank his mama and daddy for creating such a masterpiece! Her friends, Tiffany and Marie, were jealous and kept telling her how lucky she was to be able to be alone with Mr. Thomas even if it was only for thirty minutes. As the clock grew closer to 3:15 pm, the more nervous she became. When she walked into his classroom, he looked at her not with anger, but with thirst. He instructed her to close the door and have a seat in the front row, directly across from his desk. He whispered, “I want to keep a close eye on you.”

FIRST ENCOUNTER...

For the first couple minutes of her detention, there was no conversation between them, but he did keep his eyes on her during the entire detention. He then walked over to her, kneeling down to tell her he wanted to give her a lesson that she would “never forget”. He helped her out of her seat and directed her over to the map of America. He began by asking her to think about where she would want to be if she could live in any other state. She remembered telling him that, because she
enjoys different seasons and the beautiful colors of leaves, she would probably always pick Ohio or Michigan. He asked her what her thoughts were of the Southern states. She told him that she always thought Texas would be an interesting place to live because it’s known for being so large and having great weather. He told her that Texas was a great place to live and things were, indeed larger in Texas. Texas, he went on to explain, has big homes, big ranches, big buildings and big men. He said that he was interested in the answers she had given him, but that she had actually answered his question incorrectly. When he asked what ‘state’ she wanted to be in, he was talking about her emotional, mental and physical state. He said that he could take her to a place that she had never been before and she wouldn’t have to pack anything to get there. He said her state of mind was so intense, even as young as she was, that he had never been so intrigued by another woman like that before. His eyes passed over her young curves as he expressed his desire to take her anywhere she wanted to go. Since she had selected ‘Texas’, he said it meant that she was hot for him, that she was filled with passion and she would enjoy the great big package he had for her. He told her that Texas was a subconscious expression of her desire for someone who was older, different from what she was accustomed to, that reference being Ohio and that she was ready to explore new territory. Humbly, he would be her guide. He paused and looking into her eyes said, “You yearn for great change, just as I know change is great”. He then pulled her close to him and kissed her. She tried to pull away, but his strength overpower her. He threatened her by saying that if she made any sudden moves, he would tell her parents that she had made advances toward him and as a ploy to get back at him for her detention, and that she created the entire story to get out of trouble. Careful not to make him mad, she told him how she was uncomfortable with his behavior and reminded him that her detention was over. Not listening to her, he continued to kiss on her and began to undress her. She began to cry, first as a whimper, but as he forced himself unto her, it turned into an uncontrollable sob. She was crying because not only did it hurt her body, but also her heart as Mr. Thomas was her teacher, someone whom she’d respected and had also considered to be her friend. She never thought that he would be capable of committing such a heinous crime. He stole the little girl in her and it was at that point that she became a woman. She told him that he was hurting her and warned him that he would get in trouble with the school officials, police, and not to mention her father. But, instead of backing down, it seemed to thrill him. It was as if the thought of him getting caught added excitement and his excitement multiplied her pain. Sadly, she has never been the same and wonders what, if anything different, she could have done. Did she scream? As loud as she could! Did she struggle? With all of her might. Perhaps the fact that she weighed 86 lbs soaking wet is what didn’t make the difference to this former linebacker who on a bad day was a solid muscle mass of 235 lbs and stood six feet, five inches. The problem with her being heard was that her school was very large and separated into several levels with attached wings. There was also a dance going on the very same day and as he planned it, no one was around to come to her rescue. Not then and it feels as though that truth remains, not now!

OTHER STORIES...

>> January 2005: Rebecca Ann Boicelli, 33, pleaded guilty to charges that she had sex with a teenage student who is allegedly the father of her child.

>> May 2005: Mary Kay Letouneau, 43, was arrested in 1997 while she was pregnant with her 12-year-old student’s child. The couple married in May 2005 and now has two daughters.

>> December 2005: Robert M. Swalstad, 31, is facing charges for rape of a 15-year-old student, who is expecting and now his wife.

Information derived from:
http://www.infoplease.com

DID YOU KNOW...?

According to the San Francisco Chronicle, in Bangui, Central African Republic, it is common for teachers and students to have a sexual relationship. Nadine Igala, student at Miskine High School, said of her friend who was diagnosed as HIV positive, “She caught it from one of the teachers. Lots of girls sleep with their teachers. They do it to pass exams,” shrugged Nadine.

“Many parents want their daughters to marry teachers, so they encourage their children to have relationships with them, and the staff don’t refuse,” said Francoise Nomba, head of the English department.

The average age for a girl to lose her virginity is fifteen says Adjibad Karimou of UNICEF’s office in Bangui, “and their first partner is often their teacher. The very people upon whom we rely to teach pupils how to protect themselves against AIDS are often the ones passing on the virus.”

“In certain courses, if a female student is beautiful, she won’t stand a chance of graduating unless she sleeps with her professor,” said literature student Oliver Nyirabugara.

Source: http://www.sfgate.com
The Charleston Gazette reported in October of 2005 that Dr. Carol Shakeshaft, a professor at Hofstra University in Hampstead, N.Y., conducted a series of studies on sexual misconduct by teachers. According to the studies, a teacher will abuse almost one in 10 students.

Shakeshaft went on to say that “there are about 4.5 million kids who, right now, would say they have been the target of physical sexual misconduct and only about 10 percent of the sexual exploitation going on ever gets reported.”

The table below, also part of the Shakeshaft studies, shows that although teachers and coaches receive the most attention for sexual misconduct, the wrong doings occur in all categories of education.

**KENT STATE UNIVERSITY... PART OF THE STATISTICS?**

In September of 1997, Mike Lebowitz reported for the Daily Kent Stater that Kent State is a “reflection of national statistics which indicate that most sexual assaults go unreported.” As reports “show”, sexual offenses are uncommon at Kent State, as Kent State police received only two reports of sexual assault for the 1996-1997 academic year. However, although years have passed since the article was written, the statistics seem to remain unchanged. In the academic years of 2001 through 2003, there were only a total of five reported sexual offenses for all three academic years. In 2004, the figures rose slightly as two forcible rapes and three sexual offenses were reported.

Information courtesy of Kent State Police Services and http://www.stater.kent.edu/stories

**SOMETHING NOT TO BE IGNORED...**

Sexual harassment is defined by the EEOC as any “unwelcome gender bias, sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.” If you or someone you know have experienced this persecution, do NOT keep silent. Tell someone immediately! Sexual harassment is WRONG and should not be taken lightly.

For more information, visit http://www.kent.edu/Administration/hr/AffirmativeAction/Policies.cfm

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*SOURCE: Shakeshaft 2004*
Top: The family members discuss their mama’s death with hostility in the play “Going Home.” “Going Home” was written by Beauguard O’Neal Jr. who passed away in December 2005. Photo by Michele Roehrig.

Bottom: Chris Raglin and Carla Smith share in an embrace during the play “Going Home.” Photo by Kevin L. Clark.
Once an individual’s definition of themself becomes the same as that of the oppressor, then the oppressor can destroy that individual without physical stress on his part, said Dr. Francis Dorsey, a professor in the Pan-African Studies department. “That’s the nature of definition. That’s some deep shit, isn’t it?”

But what is definition? Simply put, it is the act of defining.

To define, according to Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, is a means to set forth the meaning of or mark the limits of some thing.

With this interpretation, one can conclude that to define an individual is to establish omnipotence by marking their boundaries. In other words, definition is the building block of enslavement.

Activist Jerry Rubin once said, “The power to define the situation is the ultimate power.”

In a society where African Americans are constantly faced with the task of defining ourselves, it is imperative to our survival that we understand the long-term effects associated with the power of definition.

In traditional African society, our ancestors had a great understanding of community and family; however, these are virtues that have been lost as Blacks have assimilated into White Anglo-Saxon society.

“When we talk about society here, we think of so many men and so many women living on the same territory,” said Chief Pela Sowande in his article “The Way of Life of Peoples of African Descent.” However, this definition of society is not the same amongst traditional Africans.

The traditional society contains four levels that showcase the African mindset. In this society, culture, religion, life, and death were all greatly valued and respected. Total consciousness was only achieved when one understood the link between man, nature and god, seeing nothing as inanimate.
One can conclude that to define an individual is to establish omnipotence by marking their boundaries.
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This is a conflicting factor with African-Americans today as we have strayed from this universal cosmology and began to embrace a culture that is not our own. The problem is, this "culture" that exists within American society is actually a lack there of.

"This society has no culture," said former Talk Radio host Wes Parker. "Black people have to understand that we exist in a society that is based on survival by destroying others."

According to Parker, this destruction began long before Africans reached the American shores.

"In order to avoid getting caught up in this rival mentality that is so much a part of the European mindset, you have to have a strong sense of self-value and humanity," said Parker. "We began to lose sight of that when we began to sell ourselves into slavery."

Africans came to American as Africans. Through the institution of slavery, they were stripped of their culture, language and heritage. Four hundred years later, these same Africans became Negros.

During slavery, Black mothers used to pinch their children’s noses to make them less broad and press their lips to make them less full.

"If you take corn out of Asia and plant it in America, it is still corn. So how is it that when you take Africans out of Africa and bring them to America, they become Negros?" asked Dorsey. "The last time I checked, there was no place called Negroland."

This redefinition was one of the first steps in a series of events to break down the African psyche. Blacks began to embrace American language, religion, food, and style. At the same time, they began to let go of their African values.

These ideologies and realities African Americans are so quick to embrace have become the same things that destroy us.

"Everything in America is a tool, a means for White survival," said Parker. "Sex is a tool. Family is a tool. The concept of the religious institution is a tool and slavery was the biggest tool of all.

"We were not brought here to embrace ourselves or the culture," Parker said.

"African Americans are always on the outside looking in but there's no culture here."

So why are we trying to assimilate?
“Our need to assimilate into the mainstream culture stems from this self hatred implanted in us by slavery,” Parker said.

For centuries, African Americans have done things to their outward appearance trying to become closer to the White mainstream. During slavery, Black mothers used to pinch their children’s noses to make them less broad and press their lips to make them less full.

All of these actions are the end result the fact that Black has never been beautiful in the eyes of many African Americans. To this day, many of the things we consider to be attractive our heavily influenced by the mainstream society.

In 1971, psychologists studied what constituted beauty among 300 children of different backgrounds. These individuals were shown photographs and asked to rate the beauty of the individual's face.

The children surveyed were divided into three age groups: age 7, age 12 and age 17. They were instructed to evaluate the faces solely on his or her personal standards of beauty and not to consider popular norms.

The results of the “Age, Sex, Race, and the Perception of Facial Beauty” study revealed that Nordic Whites are universally recognized as the most attractive humans, even by Blacks.

“In many ways, it is as if we seek the White man’s approval and we try to imitate him as a means of flattery. We constantly disrespect one another in order to get ahead and it has become a vicious cycle,” Parker said.

Dorsey agrees: “Two people who don’t respect themselves only produce children who don’t respect themselves. It’s dummies producing dummies.”

This breakdown in self-respect amongst African-American youth has led to a generational gap causing many of us to lose touch with our history and heritage.

“We’ve strayed from our traditional value system,” said Dorsey. “Now, this younger generation is becoming more in tune with their White counterparts and buying into this whole notion of commercialism.”

Perhaps the most evident example of this is the entertainment industry.

In the early 20th century, when Black were not allowed to appear in mainstream Hollywood films, independent Black-owned film houses sprung up in abundance. This allowed Blacks to control the images their children saw on television and film; thus, producing a more positive image of Black people for Black people by Black people.

Once Hollywood saw how successful and marketable Black people had become, it welcomed us back with open arms and we abandoned our own institutions upon this acceptance.

Too often has this been the case in African-American history. Some of the greatest cultural institutions for Blacks, built by Blacks, have been abandoned once we were allowed to integrate into the mainstream society.

“Integration didn’t mean giving up our own cultural institutions, it meant giving us a choice,” Dorsey said.

So why did we choose to turn our backs on our culture?

Honesty, we have no idea what it means to truly have culture. Due to this, we redefine our culture in the negative and try to justify our existence and success based on someone else’s view of us.

As each generation becomes further integrated with this American society as a whole, we become a part of the entity that has been built to destroy us. “We don’t have a means of survival in a society designed to ensure their survival,” Parker said.

In order for this to change, we have to realize that all of our advances have happened because of the collective group. The only way things will continue to progress is if we all make that move forward.

“Oppressed people rise as a group and that’s the only way to succeed. We all have to make it. That’s why, in today’s society, it’s okay for a few athletes and Oprah to have money, they’re not a threat because they are just a few out of many,” Parker said.

What we have to figure out now is how do we beat oppression when we’ve become self-oppressors?

“It’s simple,” said Parker. “We just have to realize they remember their glory and forget their sins. They hate us because we remind them of their sins. Once we remember our glory and conclude that all our differences are artificial tools used for their survival, we’ll be in a better place.”

“That’s the great thing about European history. It doesn’t exist. It’s just someone’s story. HIS STORY, and whomever he is, he’s been redefining us for centuries trying to make us forget who we are,” Parker said. “So now we’re just imitating our imitators.”

In the end, it all comes back to the nature of definition. Once an individual’s definition of themself becomes the same as that of the oppressor, then the oppressor can destroy that individual without physical harm on his part.

“Black people today are exactly where we’re supposed to be,” said Parker. “We are the end result of 400 years of oppression that resulted in self-hatred and redefinition, but not redefinition on our terms.”

So, where do we go from here?
How technology affects us may be more than you think.

How have the latest innovations in technology affected how we communicate with each other? Has there been a change for the better or the worst? How do e-mail, AIM and text messaging affect our ability to communicate in-person? How dependent are we on this new technology?

Technology moves so fast that it gives new meaning to the phrase, "here today, gone tomorrow" — technology operates at "here today, gone today" speed. It seems as though a new "innovative" product comes to the consumer market every day. Everything is faster. Everything is smaller. Everything is better.

The numbers are astounding: On an average day, 30 billion emails are sent. According to an article in InformationWeek, there will be almost 1 billion camera phones by 2009. In 2005, 7.3 billion text messages were sent every month in the United States, up 2.9 billion from 2004, according to the CTIA, and the number is only projected to increase from there.

But one of the biggest ways technology has changed our society is through the Internet. Nielsen data shows that the average American will spend almost 30 hours per month on the web. According to information in the Digital Future Project, an annual report conducted by the Annenberg School at the University of Southern California, more Americans continue to use the Internet at home, increasingly with a high-speed connection. In 2005, the number of Americans with Internet access into their home was at 66 percent, an increase of 22 percent from 2000.
Technology is all about advancing old ideas, creating new ways to complete tasks in a more efficient manner. But what is this technology really doing to our society? Is it making our lives easier, or is it making it more difficult as we now have to manage and keep track of several devices, each of which manage a different facet of our life?

Engineers at one California company hope you can find everything you need at theirs.

GOOGLE ME

Google.com, the world's largest search engine, is also one of the largest web sites on the Net. In terms of overall web traffic, they are consistently in the top five. The name "Google" comes "googol," the mathematical term for a 1 followed by 100 zeros. The founders, Larry Page and Sergey Brin, wanted to find a way to organize the seemingly endless amounts of data floating around the Internet.

Google understands the immediacy of today's society. One of Google's 10 philosophy points
It seems we’re focusing our attention on being technologically savvy instead of common sense and manners.

(continued from page 18)

“Fast is better than slow.”

According to its website, Google “believes in instant gratification. You want answers and you want them now. Who are we to argue? Google may be the only company in the world whose stated goal is to have users leave its website as quickly as possible.”

Google’s popularity is unquestionable. It has even made its way into the American vernacular, as in “Googling” someone, meaning searching for their name and checking all the results.

Google offers many features to its website, including a spell checker, a calculator, currency conversions, definitions, and Froogle, a product search service. Users can also search for documents, images, maps, news and weather.

In addition, it purchased Blogger in 2002, helping make web logs, or blogs as they are most often called, more popular and readily available to web users.

DON’T READ MY DIARY

A few years ago, diaries (or journals) were small little notebooks, sometimes protected by that small gold key that kept the contents locked away from the prying eyes of nosy parents desperate for a glimpse of the inner thoughts of their child. Now passwords have replaced keys, as more and more people have chosen to air their thoughts on their own personal web page. Blogger, Live Journal and a few others have captured this market segment, and even news sites have asked reporters to keep blogs documenting their lives and views.

Damon Young, a graduate of Canisius College in Buffalo, New York, has kept a blog for more than four years. His writings are a mix of insights on daily news and glimpses of his own personal relationships.

“I’ve always enjoyed writing, and since I don’t play basketball as much anymore, blogging has become my main cathartic activity,” Young said, a Pittsburgh native. “I also do enjoy getting my thoughts out there, and seeing how people are going to
respond to them. I’m not in it to procure a book deal or anything like that. I just love writing.”

Some bloggers remain anonymous, preferring to keep their personal tales private. Young balks at that idea.

“The idea of not using my real name never even came up,” Young said. “The way I figure, what’s the point of even doing it if you’re not going to put a little bit of yourself out there? Of course I hold back certain things to be cautious and occasionally edit, but I want people to have an accurate picture of me.”

Young realizes the power that bloggers hold in today’s society.

“We’re a nation filled with fad-based consumers, and that, combined with the technology age, has made blogging and other internet activities so popular,” Young said. “Also, more popular bloggers are actually becoming the primary news and opinion sources for many people. I guess people feel like they can trust bloggers a bit more than the traditional ‘media’.”

FACEBOOK ADDICTS

College students are well known for jumping on and starting up the latest trends, the most recent of which is Facebook.com, a website created by a Harvard student in the winter of 2004.

Mark Zuckerberg had the idea to create an online database for college students with social networking functionality, said Chris Hughes, spokesperson for Facebook.com. Within three weeks, more than 6,000 Harvard students signed up, and Zuckerberg decided to open it up to a few other schools.

“We’ve recently expanded to all schools in the nation and have now more than 9.4 million unique users who come to the site each month,” Hughes said in an email interview. “We come in ninth in terms of overall traffic on the entire web. Around 65% of our users log in each day and we get over 300 million page views in any given 24-hour period.”

These are astounding numbers for a website that was created less than two years ago. Hughes credits the popularity of the Facebook to the site’s versatility.

“People are logging on for a variety of reasons,” Hughes said. “For example, to screw around in those five minutes of downtime before a class, or to match a face with a name that comes up in conversation. In general, people are returning to the site to find information on their peers, to make connections with friends and acquaintances, and to communicate with one another.”

Numerous groups have formed online on the Facebook, where even the users have realized they have made logging on to Facebook a daily habit.

One student writes: “Damn this thing. I really am addicted to it. I feel like a computer dork... but when it is insane amounts of snow outside and nothing to do, then why the hell not?”

SHORTER ATTENTION SPANS?

With so many options for communication, it’s getting harder to focus on the issue at hand. From college students to business executives, technology is so accessible that everyone has the same problems keeping everything straight.

“It’s so easy to get distracted, especially in these times of two-ways, Sidekicks, text messaging, cell phones,” said Kevin Liles, president of Warner Music Group and former president of Def Jam, in his book Make It Happen. “I admit I struggle with it. People bitch at me all the time because my eyes are drawn to the ten urgent messages coming through on my Blackberry when I’m in the middle of a conversation with a live person. It’s just plain wrong not to focus on that person who is in the room with you, whether you’re having a meeting in your office or you’re out somewhere having dinner.”

People seem hypnotized by the power of technology. As a result, human interactions cease to be as important and are cut short or interrupted. A recent study conducted by BBDO Worldwide and Proximity Worldwide determined that 14 percent of cell phone users worldwide will answer their phones while having sex! The U.S. average was slightly higher at 15 percent. It’s not just sex, either. You might have noticed the signs in restaurants and other places of business asking patrons to finish their conversation before being serviced. It seems we’re focusing our attention on being technologically savvy instead of common sense and manners.

MORE TO COME

Whatever influence technology has on our society, the impact is only beginning. More innovations creep into the market every day – from cell phones that can swipe credit cards to “mobi-sodes,” mobile TV episodes that can play on an iPod – and it is no doubt that they will become a part of our every day life as well. Our society defines itself by its ability to outperform the last effort, to perfect every aspect of life until every second of our day is synchronized.
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Blitz, an upcoming Hip-Hop artist, and recent Kent State University graduate was obviously a strong voice on Kent State's campus with his rebellious lyrics about the black struggle both past and present. His music made some people happy, some people sad, and some people angry. But whatever the case, it was evident to see that Blitz's was a dominant force in the urban scene on Kent's campus.

Blitz presence on campus will surely be missed, but as the sound of double consciousness drifts out of our ears, many people wonder who will be next out of the small black community at Kent State University to shine in the spotlight. Kent's campus is filled with black students that have incredible talents and abilities waiting to be exploited. Students like, Tamara Landry, Derek Jones, Errald Jackson, and Lindsay Fields take their artistic abilities serious, and have long term goals to pursue careers that revolve those abilities they possess.
Using his creative imagination to influence the thoughts of others, Derek Jones aka Syxslim mixes strong words together against a beat; creating a Hip-Hop sound like none you’ve ever heard. As a freshman Media Production major, Syxslim “grinds” hard everyday to have his rap voice heard and respected by not only his peers, but his community as well. He recently won the fall freestyle battle held by BUS in Oscar Ritchie Hall late last November, and another AND1 freestyle battle last summer. Along with that, he has also done a variety of performances on campus for Harambee. Syxslim says that his words come to him naturally, because everything he raps about comes from real life experiences. He gives credit to his cousin, Luther, for introducing him to the world of Hip-Hop and claims him to be his biggest inspiration. Striving to gain the miraculous wit of Redman, the powerful stage presence of Busta Rhymes, and the large fan base of Jay-Z, Syxslim fears that his biggest obstacle will be finding funds to promote his dreams of becoming one of the best.
To some, dancing is a recreational past time designed to be done only in the club. But to sophomore, Dance-Education major, Tamara Landry, it’s her life. Tamara half steps none when it comes to moving her body to a beat. Tamara, who has been dancing professionally for the past 10 years is making constant strides to make sure that she is seen in the spotlight; mixing together her knowledge of modern-based dances such as ballet and jazz. The majority of Tamara’s dancing abilities were picked up at the prestigious Ballet Met in Columbus, Ohio. While there, Tamara was guided by April Berry, who introduced her to a type of dance known as the “Dun Technique.” With her strong ability to move her body rhythmically, Tamara has been able to gain lead roles in musicals such as The Nutcracker, Beauty and the Beast and Carmen. She has also used her abilities to help others by teaching at Youth Met and dancing for schools in her community. Tamara is currently a member of Kent State’s dance team, D.Y.N.A.S.T.Y Squad, and she also works for the National Dance Education Organization. Tamara hopes to eventually work with the Dance Theatre of Harlem or the Alvin Ailey Dance Theatre.
Fresh to "def" is how most people like to stay, and junior communications major, Errald Jackson is guaranteed to keep you that way. As head of Soul-Star clothing line, Errald uses his creative mind to develop unique clothing patterns that fit the constantly changing world of fashion. Following his dreams from high school, he was recently featured at the 6th Annual Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated fashion show. Developing a new style of clothing that will blow your mind. Always being original, Errald says that he likes being different when he creates a new design. Errald is pursuing a singing career so that he doesn’t limit himself career-wise and to also fund some of his living expenses.
Singer and songwriter, Lindsay Fields is already a star in the making. She has already started by getting her feet wet singing backup for artists such as Missy Eliot, Tyrese, R-Kelly, and Naughty-By-Nature. Having grown up listening to the sounds of Brandy, Mariah Carey, and Whitney Houston, Lindsay knew that she wanted to sing for a living. At the tender age of eight, she began her career with nothing but a toy recorder and the desire to be the best in her heart. As a sophomore Public Relations major, Lindsay hopes to eventually begin her own record label. She is currently looking to sign a major record deal with Virgin Records, Atlantic Records, or Capital Records who have all shown an interest in the vocalist. Until then, Lindsay is just focusing on school and promoting her music through her godmother’s management company, “All About Anna.” Lindsay says that her father who is also a singer is her greatest inspiration. Lindsay also uses her voice to bless the ears of others by singing at charity events for leukemia.
Hello, ladies and fashionable gents. Happy New Year! In the year of 2005 it was a great time for fashion. We saw the return of the gypsy and an emphasis on Boho chic. It was full of sequined ballet slippers, peep toe shoes, and plenty of accessories. Huge gold and silver belts jazzed up any fit and went well with the half jackets and smedium shrugs, seen everywhere. So the question is, “What’s new for the ’06?” Well that’s what I’m here for. In 2006, we will go back to classic minimalism. The accessories and the bling is definitely tuned down and the emphasis is now on the hourglass shape. High necklines and short shorts are seen plenty; worn very preppy and classic. Ladies, you know we have to look good to compete with our men who are looking to Kanye West and Common for fashion advice. The African American youth are getting GQ and clean with a past detail from the 1920’s. The colors we see will be brown, lime green, purple, yellow, and pink. Men will back away from the pink and wear more tans and chocolate browns. The shoes that the ladies will be wearing include tweed keds, shiny flats, and thick wedges. The silhouette is very straight forward with pencil skirts, thin pants, and miniskirts. Thick belts are here to stay and will not be as “shiny”. Some blazers and jackets go back to the natural waist while others stay extra short. This year, women look to music for advice as well. Taking a hard glance at Amerie, Gwen Stefani and Keisha Cole. Black people are taking more and more time to be individualistic. We are starting to appreciate all our fashion resources. But do not get me wrong; Hip-Hop style is far from over. We still have our men wearing the grillz, tall tees and Timbs (in the summer). We also still have our ladies wearing the jean outfits with ten million zippers and buttons; and I know I’ll see some Jordans.

Just remember that fashion and individualism is not going anywhere. This is our time and let’s make it as loud, bright and crazy as possible. You know there’s admirers who can not quite get it like we can, so let’s show them up and have fun doing it. Happy shopping and I’ll be talking to you soon about what’s next in the world of fashion.

Stay Black.
The dynamic reverberation of an electric guitar, the perpetual pulsation of drums pounding in conjunction with your heartbeat, blaring vocals, and high energy rhythms all collectively unified, tight fitted jeans, leather jackets, electrifying hair, The Sex Pistols, The Clash, The Ramones, The Damned, Patti Smith, the Dictators, 1975, Punk Rock is born. Audaciously acknowledged by eminent magazines such as Rolling Stone and Spin for setting itself apart from other genres of music by being the most fierce and lively phenomenon of its time, disregarding in addition, observably one of the most ‘white’ as well. Though African Americans performed and composed rock and roll from the time it surfaced in the 1950’s, their manifestation in the punk rock scene gave the public eye the impression to be non existent. This is fairly odd taking into account the history of rock music and punk rock having been founded with a nonconformist and rebellious ‘label’. With the civil rights movement not too far-gone and solely the reality of being born a Black individual in the United States, contributing to a nonconformist association would seem almost obligatory for black adolescence. To some, luminaries such as Chuck Berry, Sly & The Family Stone, Jimi Hendrix, Bo Diddley, James Brown and even Bob Marley were notable musicians who inspired selected Black individuals to follow towards a similar direction. To an additional few, who seemed to be unnoticed, it motivated a route comparable but not quite parallel. A road toward rebellion, rebellion in regards to the implicit segregation of punk rock music and rebellion against ‘established’ black music. ‘Afro-punk’, just what punk rock was waiting for. After all, was punk rock not established by nonconforming rebellious individuals?

The expression “Black Rock” — currently recognized as “Afro-punk” from James Spooner’s documentary — according to The Columbia College (Chicago Campus) Center for Black Music Research, was identified around the year 1985, approximately the same period the Black Rock Coalition was established by journalist
With the civil rights movement not too far-gone and solely the reality of being born a Black individual in the United States, contributing to a nonconformist association would seem almost obligatory for black adolescence.
Afro-Punk...Paradox? | Azza Gallab

(continued from page 30)

Greg Tate and guitarist Vernon Reid. The Black Rock Coalition along with Reid’s entirely Black heavy rock band Living Colour was a great advancement and breakthrough for Blacks who had been struggling to assimilate themselves in the punk rock scene. Given that the music industry held a commercial segregation — and still does — by inserting Black entertainers in fundamental groups intended to target their ‘own kind’ of listeners, the majority of Black musicians were not even given endorsement to perform in correspondence with white rock. Thus BRC sought after encouraging and promoting the extensive array of nontraditional approaches to music utilized by Blacks in hopes for imminence where Black musicians would be liberated from inflexible musical limitations.

The year is now 2006 and the Black transition into rock music, I would say is analogous to the Civil Rights Act. One is “free” to relish in their personal musical civil liberties, however, tacit racism in spite of everything still subsists. Fortunately, for this generation of aspiring Black punk rockers there is someone who experienced the struggles, but subsequently did something unprecedented to the Black rock scene, he produced a documentary. James Spooner, as mentioned above, desired to get in contact with other Black individuals who grew up in the punk scene and observe how comparable the experience was between him and them. Spooner went on to establish this documentary “as a support system for every Black kid, for every outsider, for every Afro-Punk who has been made to feel the rock n roll nigger experience.”

One is “free” to relish in their personal musical civil liberties, however, tacit racism in spite of everything still subsists.

Afro-Punk is approximately a 66 minute documentary which investigates black racial identity within the punk rock scene. This film undertakes numerous issues and concerns that arise while being considered a Black punk, for instance: isolation, expulsion, inter-racial dating and recognizing black power. Spooner tracks down the days of four Black individuals who have decided to devote their everyday life to a punk rock setting. Their main consequence being their combat in acknowledging their Blackness while residing in a primarily white constituency. Additionally, The film also features performances by the bands: Bad Brains, Tamar Kali, Cipher, and Ten Grand, as well as interviews of members of the bands: Fishbone, 247-spyz, Dead Kennedys, Candiria, Orange 9mm and TV on the Radio.

Afro punks have come a long way, yet have thus far not attained absolute recognition from the media, Blacks or whites. Spooner has alleviated the anxiety for those who feel deserted with the presentation of his documentary. However, at present to the preponderance of oblivious individuals, Afro-Punk shall unfortunately remain a paradoxical phrase. For more information on James Spooner’s documentary Afro-Punk visit www.afropunk.com

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Creativity – imagination, power of imagination, vivid imagination, highly colored imagination, fantabulousness, bold imagination, wild imagination, fervid imagination, lively imagination, imaginative, creativeness, inventiveness, creativity, ORIGINALITY, ingenuity, resourcefulness, SKILL, fancifulness, fantasy, fantasticalness, stretch of the imagination, understanding, insight, empathy, sympathy, MORAL SENSIBILITY, poetic imagination, poetic frenzy, ecstasy, inspiration, afflatus, divine afflatus, fancy, the mind’s eye, recollection, recollection in tranquility, visualization, image-building, imagery, word-painting, artistry, creative work
“race matters?”

Jennifer Cline

Race pitter patters
Like rain
On my forehead
The rooftop
And my eyes the
Window sills
Of pain
I do not seek to close the blinds
But break the bruisers
Barricading blacks with binds

Bring me beauty!
I bellow boldly
Bring me black and blue nights
From fights for future rights
Proportionate to previous plights
We must ignite
The fading light
If they succeed in stealing our site
Then it is possible that with
Our opiates, we just might
Cease to remember
Wrong from right
From real to modified
Models of masquerades
How can we emulate
What was never
Really real?

To focus one’s future on a fabrication
Is the doomed direction
Without acknowledging the death that
we’re facing
Why, I live in this nation
Without the props or salutation
Of our arrival, out of aggravation
Messes mixed on slave plantations
Choice is church
Join the congregation of application
Apply one’s eye
On the sinister sound of sighs from
The ones who are secretly tireless of the
oppressed people’s cries,
They practice relentlessly to demonize
through evil lies.
For his aim is to keep breathing until
after the last African dies.

“untitled”

M. Key

I’m never ignorant, I’m getting goals
accomplished miss/tough to maintain
the duality in this/still racist heinous so
called home of the brave/where racist
conditions pervade and they ask us to
turn the page/as if schizophrenic condi-
tions never existed/as if in an instant
we were lifted from sharecropping to
corporate conditions/as if our schools
don’t fail/and blacks and lats don’t in-
filtrate jail cells/but I refuse to close the
chapter/til we achieve the dreams that
Martin and Malcolm were after.
I have no tolerance for the ifs, ands, and buts about it. Situations that leave people to talk about it.

I have no tolerance for the misconception of information That lead to false confessions

Old time, old ways. You ways lead to hype. Your mommy and daddy's past left you with a fucked up Stereotype

Now who's stuck with the blame? Whose lame game left you with the shame of having nothing But an unnourished mind to maintain.

Their claim is you're insane.

I have no tolerance for the life ending temptations that leave People contemplating. Contemplating weather life is worth living or is your life Worth taking.

Shit talkers make the situation even worse. History is repeating itself, It must be a curse. You probably aint the last, and you sho'nuff aint the first.

Different tries at your many lies leave you in messed up ties. With you hated, but your family humiliated. Left with nothing but the question: why?

Flowers grow, but not for you. Your self-esteem low and you are too.

"I can't grow" is a hard phrase to explain When you're complaining about life, but you ways ain't changed

And now you're lost in the world. You're caught between time It's like you're stuck in the dark with your eyes wide open, But your mind still blind.

And you can smoke all day, and still not get high, Because your soul is too weak to even touch the high.

Find yourself, and you will see. How much easier, life can be
“lighter nights and darker days”
Alex K. Cullen

Day passes to night & night passes today
As my mind takes flight back through the yesterdays and yesteryears
with the first seeming just as clear and lucid as the last...
as well as those in between...in between feelings of joy and those of pain.
Ain’t it a shame the more things change, the more they stay the same?

Same afflictions, same addictions, same strifes of life
Same cries for freedom, same wrongs that don’t make things right

As day passes today and night passes today
the voices of today say we have choices to make.
If not for us, then for our children’s sake or they shall bear the price to pay
of opportunities lost...see these opportunities cost, just how much are we willing to pay

Government officials unofficially serving the wrong patrons
Private and corporate entities actually running our nations...& all the while running a muck
sliding into office on account of mere luck, trying to pass the buck under the guise of some bogus as tax cut
Then we have the thugs in fancy suits who readily suit themselves and sell their souls
and their brothers and sisters in the process...all the while impeding the peoples progress.
Leaving once mighty kingdoms in states of distress
Some cry out for a new world order when we should really order a new world.

As day passes tonight and night passes today till there are no more days to pass to...
In the mist of a massive universe of chaos lies as small world of truth...whose atomosphere is hope
whose waters are flowing with peace...whose core is understanding...that revolves around
a brilliantly bright flaming hot mass of love that lights it and keeps it warm.
Black, brown, mocha
Mountains and earth
I will give birth to many with your magnificence
I will give nectar from breast
And give tenderness from fingertips
King sperm
King travels
Queen egg
Royal fertilization
We have royal in our blood
Our blood
Red like cuts leaving blood on chains
Being dragged from villages of my origin
To unfamiliar places
My native tongue knows nothing of a place called James-town...and what is a slave?
But that's where we were and that's what we were
They know nothing of our royalty there
They CARE nothing of our royalty there
Royal blood
Red like
like
Lacerations from bushes and jagged rocks
Under feet as we followed the big dipper...to freedom...
Stars gave hope and in that darkness there was light
In your darkness there is light
We are black and beautiful
Like midnight
Black and beautiful like black sands and
Brown soil and
Red clay
Black and beautiful like negro spirituals
And alto melodies from the lips
Of Paul Robeson
Black and beautiful like the blues
Like the sorrow
Like the Holidays that aren't celebrated even
If it was Billie
Like the Rainey's raindrops
Ma sung to me and made me feel pain and hope at the same time
Like my black skin
Pain and hope at the same time
Like my kinky hair
Pain and hope at the same time
Like my full lips and wide hips
Pain and hope at the same time

Pain as I bring time
Pain as I bring yours and mine forth
Giving birth to Malcolm, Martin, Elijah, Eldridge, Maya,
Bessie, Etta, Marley, Newton, Coltrane, Thelonious, Miles,
Gillespie, Garvey, Bethune
Pain and hope at the same time
I am saving this nation
Royally
Bringing salvation to stillborn expectations
There is greatness in my blackness
Beautiful blackness
Powerful blackness
Like fists raising in unison
Forming darkness
In daylight
With the spirit of pride
Hell yes I am proud
Proud of you and me
And the capacity to break free from chains that have bound us for 400 plus years
And we persevere
We push on
We keep walking
Through rugged pathways, climbing daunting cliffs,
Why should I be afraid of what the earth gives me?
Why should I be afraid of what the earth gives me?
I am the earth
Rebirthed
I am the reflections in oceans of a pitch black sky
And even when I die I will be alive
Having passed on royal genes
From Kings and Queens
I bring to you
A reason to recognize your greatness
Do not waste this
Acknowledge and take your freedom
It is there!
But a slave is still a slave even if he runs away
Unless he makes the choice to throw the mentality away
Shake loose the chains that bind you
Submerge yourself in the legacy your ancestors have left for you
Make use of the existence that has been blessed upon you
BE
BLACK AND BEAUTIFUL!!!!!
“Villanelle: Nostalgia”
Aziz Shaw

Tie me to a pond
With the silk of a spider’s web
While angels tug on my sleeve
Like a child ready to leave a store
And a parent mesmerized by a reminiscent perfume
Tie me to a pond

Let me dive in it head first
Let me explore the floor under the ripples
While angels tug on my sleeve
Let nostalgia be my breath
Allow me to inhale deep
Tie me to a pond

Let me exhale the memories
Greeting an absent time as my only indulgence
While angels tug on my sleeve
As I sit on the brink
My mind diving in through my eyes
Tie me to a pond
While angels tug on my sleeve

To the wind with ourselves,
we are dashing currents
in the now;
we’ll blow
rain drops
from our lids,
and feel the sun
in every part of us,
destiny is on the horizon.
the me in us laughs
and winks
loving the feeling of being
in-held by you.
“the six year senior”

Fatal Prose
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You’ve seen them
The Professional dreamers
Those bright ideas forming halos around their sacred skulls
Always talking about the difference a day makes
Screaming Carpe diem until their tongues get carpal tunnel
From the constant stereotyping of other people’s problems
The “You can make it” cheerleaders
Sworn enemy of emotion’s cave dwellers
Who crush entire countries with their bare hands
From over the Rhine to down under
Nothing but broken glass and twisted aluminum cans
You’ve heard them howl in the morning hours
And can scarcely understand
What could make such an intelligent man
Swallow burning water until he’s blue in the face
The constant crowd of denial
Who remain irresponsible to the very last drop
until a river of red and white lights wash away the school days
a great flood of sobriety and all of a sudden
wise words begin spilling out of dumb stricken mouths
on what should have happen_
or who should have done what_
a pair of eyes for each person
and nobody saw it coming
like those reactionary poets
who hurry to write down the obvious
recite it to you like its prophecy
and you don’t believe in God yet
America’s on a stretcher passed out
And the paramedics aren’t doing CPR
They’re smoking cigarettes
And passing the same blunts that you are
The pimps and hustlers of higher education
Who supply substance without warning label
Or money back guarantee
The cracked heads pretending to be thugs
Pretending to be college students
You see them in the club
But never in the classroom
Gone in less than a year
With no sight of the replacement killers
Just another freshman that doesn’t look like you
Got you feeling like an endangered species
Got you looking for that milk carton with your face on it
the cold hearted land lords of the future are out to get you
their socal witch hunts blazing a trail through your cerebellum
burning books never looked so patriotic
look how the flames resemble old glory
stop looking for rain to fall from a sky full of stone intentions
use rocks for what they were made for
sharpening swords and breaking through glass knowledge
a house made of mirrors so watch your reflection
study like what you learn might save somebody’s life
become the doctor that doesn’t have to sell drugs to heal the body
and all those dreams
just might be worth their weight in tuition
Top: Students from East High School in Akron do push-ups at the Air Force JROTC field day at the Gym Annex. Local area high school JROTC units visited Kent State to learn about ROTC on the college level. Photo by Ariane R. Cavin.

Bottom: Daniel Gray-Kontar, poet and writer from Cleveland, spoke in the Mbari Mbayo Lecture Hall in Oscar Ritchie Hall. Gray-Kontar's speech was "A Hip-Hop Perspective on Malcolm X." Photo by Ariane R. Cavin.
before we go on

look back over the poetry section one more time...

...and notice that you weren’t in it. Why them and not you? The mind boggles, and reparations are owed. The progressively-minded staff of uhuru, however, would like to give you a chance to make up for this injustice of publication. Simply speak your mind, submit and experience the fortune and glory that comes with publication in uhuru, one of Kent State University’s most prominent student magazines.

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Top left: The Brothers of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Incorporated showcase an impromptu step show routine in front of the Student Center. Photo by Kevin Clark.

Top right: Halim El-Dabh, professor emeritus at Kent State, drums along with music while his wife Debra El-Dabh enjoys the performance. El-Dabh celebrated his 85th birthday at the Standing Rock Gallery Saturday evening. Photo by Samantha Rainwater.
Top left: Obie Shelton plays at the Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration in the ballroom. The event, which went on all day, featured choirs, dancers and speakers. Photo by Amanda Sowards.

Top right: Balaira Sekou looks at "Untitled" by Qu Lei-Lei at the Humanist Art, Symbolic Sites exhibit in the Kent State University Museum. Sekou, who is from Burkina Faso, went with his English as a Second Language class. Photo by Amanda Sowards.

Bottom right: Daniel Calloway, sophomore business management major, lights a candle for Shamere Ashley, senior biochemistry major, at Oscar Richie Hall during a candle vigil for Coretta Scott King. Photo by Stephanie J. Smith.
Top left: Sam Fulwood, Cleveland Plain Dealer columnist, speaks to students and faculty about the media's role in racial issues last night in Oscar Ritchie Hall to commemorate Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Photo by Michele Roehrig.

Top right: Dance performance majors, Kelly Sammon, Janice Gillis and Mary Vaccani dance at the Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration in the ballroom. The performance was choreographed by Melanie George, assistant professor for the School of Theatre and Dance. Photo by Amanda Sowards.

Bottom left: From right, Effua Ampadu, Karol Jackson-Bostick and Kent Lucas perform at the 26th Annual Africa Unite. The event, which took place in the Ballroom was put on by Kent African Students and featured speakers, dancers, musicians and fashion shows. Photo by Amanda Sowards.
The African Community Theater and the Family Tree class are two overachieving and under-represented treasures of the Pan-African Studies department. Dr. Francis Dorsey, director of the Theater, describes the Pan-African Studies department as a 'community' – a place where the university reaches out and engages with the local community while the community in turn, reciprocates that embrace and is an active part of the department and its endeavors.

Both the class and the Theater trace their roots to the student civil rights movement of the 1960s and Black United Students (BUS) – one of the oldest, continually active, African-American student groups in the United States. As many already know, BUS built the Pan-African Studies department, and I will give a synopsis of how the students created these present treasures.

In 1964, the U.S. Congress passed the Civil Rights Act. Part of the Act required publicly funded universities to operate in a non-discriminatory fashion – otherwise, they would lose federal subsidies. Many African-American students, faculty and staff did not feel that Kent State was acting in the non-discriminatory ideal. Black United Students (BUS) formed in early 1968 to act as "responsible members of a liberation force concerned with the innovation, creation, and activation of black solutions to problems encountered by black persons at Kent State University". In May of 1968, BUS members walked out of a speech held on campus by then-presidential candidate Hubert Humphrey and later gave the University a list of grievances against them and demands for change. In early November, BUS and the Youth Socialist Alliance held a sit-in demonstration against the Oakland (CA) Police Department coming onto campus and recruiting for employees (after numerous reports of repressive tactics being used by the OPD against members of the African-American community in California). Disciplinary charges were brought against many of the students present at the sit-in. This event gave BUS national media coverage while highlighting the students' demands for amnesty and institutional change. November 18th is the day 200 black students walked-off campus, joining 150 others who left the previous day (out of approx. 600 total), stunning the University. By not having black students on the campus, KSU could not satisfy the requirements of the Civil Rights Act, and would subsequently lose federal funds. With the University in a weakened position, along with the massive negative publicity they received, the administration gave in to the sit-in students' demand for amnesty and the students in exile returned after four days. In response to the crisis that was generated, the administration intensified their actions on the grievances and demands presented to them six months earlier. Here are three major ones:

- Create an administrative office concerned with Black Student Affairs, with a black dean accountable to the black students.
- The creation of an entity dealing with student development (tutoring, advising, etc.)
- A Black Studies program to be created to offer culturally-aware alternatives for African-American students.

The Human Relations Center was created, with its first dean as Dr. Milton E. Wilson, who was also responsible for the creating the Developmental Service Program and the Office of Minority Affairs. He also chose candidates to direct the recently formed Institute for African American Affairs (IAAA). Dr. Wilson chose three people to fill the position. Due to the extra-ordinary circumstances the students of BUS created for the University, representative students were in the room and a fully functioning part of the interview process alongside the administration; something that is rarely – if ever – done. After the interviews were over, the members of the administration felt that one of the candidates did not fit their 'educational model' and therefore did not want that person to head the program. However, the students chose only one out of the three – which happened to be the one the University did not approve of. That person was Dr. Edward Crosby; he was subsequently hired for the position, regardless of the university’s assessment, because of the students' influence during the extraordinary situation. The students appreciated how he listened to
THE AFRICAN COMMUNITY THEATER

The African Community Theater has been in existence since 1973 when it began as the Black Theater of BUS. During its early years, the students rehearsed and performed in the basement of Rockwell Hall. After being well-received and performing booked schedules, students approached Dr. Crosby asking for a more official theater program through the IAAA after disappointments in dealing with the College of Fine and Professional Arts and their theater program. Dr. Crosby helped to create that program, the Black Drama Workshop (BDW). After (present-day) Oscar Ritchie Hall was finished with remodeling (the building was formerly the student center), the BDW gave their first performance in a lecture hall there in 1973. It was a set of three one-act plays; The King of Soul, directed by Ben Caldwell, Blackbird, directed by Russel Parker, and Sister Songi, directed by Saundra Sheffield. For the dedication of Oscar Ritchie Hall in 1977, the theater performed the late Ossie Davis’ play Purlie, with then-student Arsenio Hall.

Dr. Francis Dorsey became the Theater’s Director in 1979, and personally directed two productions for the BDW the same year; Stagolee, written by Ed Smith, and Shirley Basfield-Dunlap’s Ebony Woman. Both of these productions were performed with hand-built sets while being praised by audiences and receiving an ‘excellent’ review by The Reporter, a black newspaper. Both were successful enough to become repeat performances of the Theater.

When 1980 rolled around, the BDW presented the University’s first theater production to perform outside of KSU - Prayer Meeting for the First Militant Minister. The one-act/two-person play featured graduate student Walter White and IAAA head, Dr. Crosby. Later that year, the Black Drama Workshop was revised and renamed the African Community Theater Arts Program (ACTAP).

In 1981, the ACTAP moved to Franklin Hall; the result of an idea presented to Drs. Crosby and Dorsey by a student. The move did not come without difficulties though. After the initial viewing of the new theater during the fall of 1980 and before preparing to move in, the theater was ravaged by bigots. Lights and seats were removed and strewn about; the walls were partially knocked in, with racist slurs spray-painted on the intact areas of the walls. Estimates of the damages totaled nearly $25,000. After being refused the funding for professional repairs by the administration, the group returned a month later and asked for $3,000 to $5,000 in order to repair the theater themselves – which they were granted.

Clean-up work began early January of 1981; while an encore production of Ebony Woman was due to open February 26th. Nearly two months of working on the theater seven days a week, in addition to rehearsing for the play, called for regular nights of working until the early hours of the morning. The week before the opening of the play, Dr. Dorsey recalls telling Beaugard O’Neal, “We’re not going to make it” in an interview given in 1998. Mr. O’Neal then got on the phone and had 6 or 8 of his friends from the community come in and help out. They stayed until 6 a.m. and helped finish the repairs just in time for opening night.

The Akron Beacon-Journal gave its first ever review of the ACTAP with that performance of Ebony Woman. Despite numerous technical difficulties during the play due to the rushed repairs, the headline read: “Ebony Woman shows raw talent and energy.” A quote from theater critic Bill O’Conner read, “Mbabi Mbayo, KSU’s black theater, the orphans of the KSU campus. [It was a] real trip for an Irish honkey. The old Baptist revival spirit. If they like it, they talk. But it’s not a negative thing... They are letting out the joy they feel... I like this audience”.

Due to the success of Ebony Woman, as performed by the ACTAP, in 1982 it became the first theater performance in the University’s history to be produced for television. WNEO 45/WEAO 49 of Kent aired the play through the efforts of Dr. Tom Olson.
FAMILY TREE

The African-American Affairs Practicum (PAS 41192) course offers students “guided involvement in urban areas with large African-American populations to provide experience with community service, government agencies, public and private schools, self-help organizations, etc” to include work in the arts. The nickname of ‘Family Tree’ was started by the students in the early years of the course, and has stuck up until the present day. As the current course professor, Mrs. Traci Williams, described to me, “Throughout the project, you build close bonds with your fellow students and everyone involved becomes a big extended family”.

The class began from a suggestion from John Hall, a staff employee of the Telecommunications Center of the Student Center. IAAA director Dr. Crosby met Mr. Hall when he used the Telecommunications Center extensively in the early years of the IAAA. The extensive use came from efforts to save on operating costs by utilizing tele- and video-conferencing technology, closed-circuit TVs and recording lectures by guest professors in the classes offered by the IAAA. Through that experience, Dr. Crosby became sufficiently comfortable in the technology to offer the class as an alternative to the College of Communication and Information’s classes.

The class was first offered in 1972 by Dr. Crosby as a television production course. The first year of the class, over 50 students signed up and over-crowded the small room in the Music and Speech building. At the time, most black students were unfamiliar with the building. On the first day of the class, the University placed red and yellow shoe prints on the floor (like the ones you would see in a dance class) leading from the front door of the building to the classroom where the class was to be held. There is speculation as to whether these were meant to help the unfamiliar students find the class room, or if they were an attempt to restrict the black students from going throughout the building.

Classes were held five days a week, two days of lectures and three days of discussion/practical workshops. Due to the small budget of the IAAA, Dr. Crosby asked friends of his from other Universities to come and lecture at Kent, but could only pay them $100 per lecture. The other three days were facilitated by volunteers who were current graduate and former students of his from the area who were working in the TV industry.

They produced ‘urban TV’ segments for TV-2 on a semi-regular, weekly basis. The class offered practical experience in television production and offered African-American students the opportunity to present culturally-based shows to a larger audience. Later, the course also started producing a radio program for the University’s AM radio station called Ebony Waves. The radio program ended shortly after Dr. Crosby retired in 1993, but the TV show continued on. Family Tree’s television production is one of only a few non-Journalism & Mass Communication classes to maintain any substantial longevity.

When KSU alum Traci Williams took over the class in 2004 while a graduate student, she expanded the course into include film making and breathed new life into the class. Mrs. Williams decided to change the focus of the class due to her love for film, and to expose students who may be interested in entering the film industry to the amount of work involved, in addition to filling a void here at KSU (a film making class had been discontinued by the University a few years prior to Mrs. Williams’ return to Kent). Initially, the switch came at a large expense to Mrs. Williams. Because it was a new direction for the class, the PAS department was cautious about allocating a significant portion of its small budget toward it. For her first semester, Mrs. Williams was so confident in the students and what they were capable of that she personally funded nearly the entire budget of the class in order...
to show the department that it will be a successful venture. Currently, the class’ budget is still scant; Mrs. Williams estimates the department contributes about half of the funds to cover the expenses. The remainder is provided by a combination of ticket, DVD, video and t-shirt sales, individual and corporate donations and still, her own money.

Contributing significantly to the success of the course is the experience that Mrs. Williams brings with her to the class, and sharing that experience with her students. She has been in TV and film since her junior high school days, when she acted on the Saturday afternoon show, 2010 – Taking You into the Future on the local FOX affiliate station. When in high school, she produced a film that was entered into the Sundance Film Festival – Nappy Head, Saggy Jeans. She also worked on various TV commercials in high school. It was during her time as an undergrad here at KSU when her interest in film really developed.

While an undergrad majoring in Electronic Media Production with a minor in Pan-African Studies, Mrs. Williams volunteered to work on her first major motion picture – Renegade Force starring Robert Patrick (the morphing bad guy from Terminator 2). She also worked on Proximity with the likes of T.C. Carson and Rob Lowe, and on more television commercials.

After graduating in 2000, she moved to Los Angeles – the center of the movie world – and worked to find any available job she could in film. She was able to land a job with one of the major casting companies for black actresses and actors – Ruben Cannon and Associates, through taking any and all film related jobs, networking and name dropping. This was an excellent opportunity for her because every major African American in the industry has worked with Mr. Cannon, and she had the opportunity to do the same. During this time, Mrs. Williams worked on more major films, including; Antwone Fisher, Welcome to Collinwood, Against the Ropes Eve’s Bayou, Diary of a Mad Black Woman and on TV shows The Parkers and Half and Half.

She decided to bring that experience back to Ohio, and attend KSU for her Master’s degree, completing it last year. Since taking over the course, the amount of projects and the quality of them has continued to grow. The first semester under her guidance, the class produced a movie, Legacy (which the African Community Theater brought to the stage during the spring semester of 2005) and a television show. Her third semester, the class produced four short movies; Family Under Fire, Tattered Beauty, Who’s on Duty and Mirage. Noting the extraordinary efforts of her students during her time here, she started a production company specifically for the class – Raising the Bar Productions. The name comes from her observations that with each ensuing semester, the class continues to ‘raise the bar’ on the quality and professionalism of their productions. With this, participants of her class can build a professional
portfolio of their work while still in school and receiving academic credits.

She feels the most important thing students can gain from her class is a better appreciation for films through sharing her real-life experiences and making the class as similar to the ‘real world’ as possible. By participating in this class, students will gain a step above others who are seeking to enter the film and production industry by learning from Mrs. Williams’ own experience. She also hopes the class will help students decide for themselves if working in the film industry is the right decision for them. “It’s not easy work,” says Mrs. Williams, “You don’t just go into the film industry and make it big overnight. There are many long, tiresome days involved, and even some weekends”.

Last semester, the students produced the class’ first feature-length production. The hard work paid the week of December 5, 2005 with the premiere of For Her at Oscar Ritchie. For Her is a thriller/suspense movie created entirely by students, to include the writing and acting. Showing to packed houses each night of the premiere – despite finals week looming – audiences gasped, laughed and applauded the film, and the efforts of the students involved. For the spring 2006 semester, Mrs. Williams plans on doing another feature film, a music video, and continuing the TV show.

In addition to hands-on video production, Mrs. Williams also brings professionals from the industry to Kent to speak to her classes. Last semester, she brought Christina Grozik, the Vice President of the Cleveland Film Commission, to give a presentation about her experiences in the film industry and give advice to students who are serious about pursuing a career in film. Francine Johnson, another professional who has worked with PBS, also spoke about her experiences and helped the class significantly throughout the fall 2005 semester, while co-producing For Her. Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Johnson also co-produced a TV series pilot – Such is Life – which the FOX television network has agreed to pick up and will be airing in the near future.

Throughout all these accomplishments, the ACT and the Family Tree class has received little to no play from KSU’s own Daily Kent Stater – the newspaper supposedly by and for the KSU community. As Mrs. Williams told me, “it isn’t controversial, the press usually doesn’t cover it.” Dr. Dorsey adds, “the local press doesn’t show up when the black community does something positive and constructive.” In comparing the coverage with the predominantly white Theater department, there is a vast divide. Using the online archives of the Daily Kent Stater, I found only 16 stories concerning the ACT’s productions. In contrast, using the same archives, the Theater department received 49 articles. Meanwhile, I found two pieces concerning the Family Tree class’ endeavors. Exacerbating this disparity, the Kent/Raven-na Record Courier regularly lists the Theater department’s performances in their Entertainment section, yet rarely notes the productions of the African Community Theater.

As Dr. Dorsey notes, “black men and women are still invisible in America, until there is a problem; that is part of today’s racism”.

In 1920, W.E.B. DuBois stated, “the Negro Arts Movement should be by the Negro People, for the Negro People, about the Negro People, and near the Negro People”4. Both of these programs were created through this sentiment, and are living manifestations of the same. Yet, both of these programs are not solely inclusive of the African American community on- or off-campus; everyone is invited to participate in the productions and the class.

Dr. Dan Murphy-Ajayi, director of the ACT from 1999-2002, told me, “Don’t merely walk through the University during your time here. Let the University pass through you. There are many diverse and enriching experiences available here at Kent, you just need to make a little effort to find and experience these things” – such as the African Community Theater, the Family Tree class and other programs put on by the Pan-African Studies department.

END NOTES

3. KSU course catalog 2005-06
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Top: Gerald Mickie models men’s fashion at the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated fashion show. Photo by Beth Rankin.

Bottom: Darius Peterson and Shaunté Jackson perform a routine during the fashion show. Photo by Beth Rankin.
The Seed that Fell on Stoney Ground

“(Jesus Walks)

God show me the way because the Devil trying to break me down

(Jesus Walks with me)

The only thing that I pray is that my feet don’t fail me now

(Jesus Walks)

And I don’t think there is nothing I can do now to right my wrongs

(Jesus Walks with me)

I want to talk to God but I’m afraid because we ain’t spoke in so long...”

Kanyé West- “Jesus Walks”

Kanyé West... By far, one of the best rappers and one of the most prolific producers of our time was just another underground hustler that finally made a come up. He received a Grammy award in 2005 for his hit single "Jesus walks" off of his debut album, “The College Dropout.” A lot of the reason for this song being so popular is not only because of its pure musical genius, but also because of all of controversy associated with it. Kanyé even commented about it in song;
"They said you can rap about anything except for Jesus
That means guns, sex, lies, video tape
But if I talk about God my record won’t get played, huh.”
Kanye West- “Jesus Walks”

“Church” is not a subject that the media believes that the youth of our nation wants to hear about. But why is this so? Why is it that so many of our youth are so touchy about the subject of religion? Why is it that if you were to take a poll of all of the people in the room with you right now, a 100 percent would say that they have been to Church in their life but only about 15 percent would say that they still attend faithfully? Why do we have to be dragged, kicking and screaming into Church twice a year (New Years Eve and Easter) now that we are grown? When we were kids that is all that we looked forward to on Sunday mornings. What has happened to make us feel this way? Today only 8 percent of teens and young adults attend Church regularly... why?

“I did dirt and went to church to get my hands scrubbed
Swear I’ve been baptized at least 3 or 4 times
But in the land where &$%@! praise
Yukons and getting paid
It gon’ take a lot more than coupons to get us saved…”
Kanye West- “Never Let Me Down”

“Churches these days are more of an emotional high... Oh, come and I will preach to you... make you happy, jump, and shout, then tell you its going to be alright, but I won’t actually take the time out to really help you, is the attitude of preachers now-a-days,” says Stephanie Childers (age 20), a local Minister of Music in Akron, OH. Many Churches seem to look at membership as their way of measuring their success as spiritual leaders more than looking at the quality of life they are bringing to the community. People of this day have needs. They have needs that they can’t get by themselves and when they come to Church looking for the answers that their parents always told them they could get from God, they are put in a mile long payer line to be prayed for by a preacher that is M.I.A. the next day when the light bill comes.

What is the main reason why young people come to church? “They are looking for answers!” Replied Assoc. Pastor Richard Young (20). Youth are looking for answers to their everyday whys and how’s. We are the Microwave generation. We want what we ask for right now and with as little work as possible. A single mother wants to know can you help me buy some diapers for my baby... today?

Not what scripture did God say read when you are down and out some 2000 odd years ago? The Church has to keep up!

“We’re just ordinary people
We don’t know which way to go…”
John Legend- “Ordinary People”

Many of our parents told us that there was a God in heaven looking over us, but they never really explained to us why and how He does the things that He does. So we are left to seek out His mysteries on our own, but some of us need a bit more help that we may not be getting from our local Church. When buildings start falling and children are starving, it is hard to serve God when you don’t understand who He is, and even harder when everyone else is too busy judging what you have on, or the way that you talk to help you find out more about Him.

It is clear in the bible and in common day that man tends to look at the outside appearance (what you wear, what you do, and how you talk), but God looks at our hearts. Isn’t God the only person that can put you in heaven or hell? I would rather focus on pleasing Him than pleasing these people here on Earth with me.

“Older members are judgmental! They talk about people! They are too busy worried about what you have on or why you have kids, to actually take time to get to know you before they judge you,” said Latara Rice (age 20). “They are concerned about things that are none of their business,” says Richard Young (age 20). The Church wants to help, but sometimes they just don’t know how. We must understand that older people, were raised different than us and they are wiser than we are... but sometimes they are clearly concerned about the wrong things at the
It’s not all the Church’s fault. Local musician, Tuwan Burton (age 25) believes that, “If you want to live for God... you will. It’s kind of a give and take relationship.” To an extent, we as youth have to have some sort of desire to seek God, and in turn the Church has to help us to do that.

In conclusion, I would personally like to say don’t let anyone else make your decisions for you. If you want to go to Church and all you have to wear is a nice pair of jeans and a nice shirt, then wear it! You seek God for yourself. It’s a personal thing between God and His people. A lot of people fail to remember that. If people talk about you or you don’t feel comfortable in Church, don’t take offense at the Church body as a whole. Maybe, that place just wasn’t for you. Give another Church a chance. If all else fails, you just keep your relationship real with God as best as you know how.

(continued from page 52)

wrong time. It is time to save souls! This religion disguised as spirituality is turning the youth of our nation away from their roots.

"Mess... The church is full of mess! Youth get tired of the mess that they see in church... They figure if all of this is going on in the church they might as well go to hell having fun in the street, than go to hell praising God in church!", said Stephanie Childers (20). It is time out for being judgmental and is now time to focus on saving souls instead of changing them. So what is supposed to be done about these problems?

“I gotta get myself together, cuz I got someplace to go
And I’m praying when I get there, I see everyone I know”

Mary Mary - “Heaven”

“Allow [youth] to be themselves... don’t try to change them. Help them get to a place in God where they, themselves want to change for the better,” stated Sheila Frazier, a welcomer at mountain of the Lord, a Church in Akron, Ohio. It is not the purpose of ministry to change people but to offer them service for their needs. Webster’s definition of minister is “to attend to the wants and needs of others.” The Churches accountability to the youth is to help us obtain our spiritual needs.

In all of the 8 interviews that I have done for this piece, every person has said that there needs to be more activities and ministries geared toward the youth. “Sorry, but I must admit that there aren’t any programs geared directly toward my age group at my church” said Min. Richard Young (age 20). And sad to say but he was not the only interviewer to say that.

“The message can’t change, but the method [of delivery] has to change,” said Pastor Eugene Norris, when asked about how to minister to his younger congregation. Things have to change. We are not the same church that existed ten years ago or even ten days ago in that fact. You can’t just preach to us over a pulpit, give us a free bible, play some nice shouting music, and then expect us to change our life when we don’t have any encouragement to do so.

Cierra Bell (age 21) says, “Give us a reason to want to be there.” We like rap music, we wear our hair in braids, love sports, we even hang out late, and anything else that some older or more traditional church members may deem “unholy.” So, if we like these things, the Church is supposed to attend to our spiritual needs and wants. They want us to stay and grow in Church, right? Then why don’t they just provide us with an outlet to do and enjoy these things that if we don’t do in Church we will do in the street anyways?

“So I guess we just pray like the minister say”

Kanyé West - “Heard ‘Em Say”
Dear Kent State Students,

As you know, I have decided to retire as president. Although it will be a while before Kent State’s 11th president arrives, and although there will be many occasions for reflections and farewells in the coming months, I want to take this opportunity to share some thoughts with you. This is because getting to know, work with, and serve Kent State students – from student-athletes to student senators; from associate-degree students to doctoral candidates; from lifelong locals to visitors from around the globe; and from freshmen who are members of the “Millennial” generation to senior guests who are part of the “Greatest Generation” – will always stand among the greatest privileges of my presidency.

During the course of nearly 15 years, I have seen compelling proof that Kent State students are second to none! I have been bowled over by your academic, athletic and artistic talents. I have been buoyed by your enthusiasm for learning. I have been inspired by your perseverance in juggling demanding coursework with on- and off-campus jobs. And I have had my faith in the future renewed countless times by your willingness to support meaningful causes and reach out to those in need within our campus community and throughout the world community.

I will leave this once-in-a-lifetime job with the highest regard for Kent State’s student body and for the dedicated faculty and staff members who have made a Kent State diploma a passport to unlimited opportunities. I have personal evidence of that fact, as my youngest daughter found that her Kent State education was a springboard to success in a field she loves. Whatever field you have chosen to pursue, I am confident that each of you has an equally fulfilling future ahead of you. That is because despite the change in who occupies the office overlooking Risman Plaza, Kent State’s commitment to student success will not change.

I will miss that bustling office and its birds-eye view of a richly diverse and wonderfully dynamic student body. I will miss regular interactions with students on every Kent State campus. But as I explore my own new path, I will continue to cheer you on as you pursue the dreams closest to your hearts, and I will look forward to hearing about your accomplishments with great Kent State pride.

With best wishes,

Carol A. Cartwright

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WATCH OUT FOR THE COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE OF THE ONE YEAR ANNIVERSARY HURRICANE KATRINA.
Okay, let's set the record straight. Bill Gates is not going to give you a dime. Ciara does not or did not have a penis (the same is true for Olivia). And finally, no matter how many people you forward that e-mail to, no restaurant chain is going to send you a coupon.

It seems like my friends, family and classmates, often well-intentioned, are all too eager to forward me the latest rumors, scams, phony photos or urban legends that someone has sent to them. Now I don't take offense, but I often find myself replying something like this, "Seriously... you believe this? How come nobody has actually SEEN this supposed episode of Oprah?"

Has the advent of the communication age transformed us into a nation of gullible information consumers who'll believe anything a friend or family member sends us in an e-mail? I figure that the people who start these rumors and hoaxes know most of us won't take the time to figure out if something is true before we go about spreading them. It could also be that they know that we are more likely to accept information if it comes from people we know and trust.

I'm not entirely innocent myself. Anybody get the one about Sophia Stewart? Well if you knew me last summer, you probably got it. Stewart is the woman who had supposedly won the largest civil judgment in Hollywood history against the producers of the Matrix and Terminator films. The e-mail that circulated contained an article that was published in the Salt Lake Community College Globe, a student newspaper, which reported how Ms. Stewart had won billions of dollars, making her one of the richest black women in America, and how the story of her victory was being suppressed by a vast media conspiracy. As evidence of this conspiracy, the article, to which a much-needed correction has since been printed, was the only news source in... well, the world that had reported on Stewart's supposed legal victory. The truth of the matter is that Ms. Stewart hasn't won a dime. In fact, her case was dismissed from court in June 2005. It never even went to trial. Still, the overwhelming attention surrounding the story, fueled mostly by the forwarding of e-mails, prompted publications like Essence Magazine and the Los Angeles Times to print stories that refuted the claims made in the e-mails.

Fortunately there are places on the web where I can find out the veracity of e-mail claims before they filter to the mainstream press. Urban-legends.about.com, snopes.com and truthorfiction.com are three websites I find myself visiting shortly after I open my daily e-mails. Updated almost daily, these sites have to keep pace with the ever-growing amount of junk that's filling up inboxes. Nowadays, I actually find myself anticipating the newest rumors, doctored photos and assorted foolishness, because after visiting these websites I know what to be expecting.

So now I find myself having to play the role of spoiler whenever I get together with friends, who typically during the course of conversation bring up something they had received via e-mail. "My aunt e-mailed me a picture of a big-ass alligator they found swimming around in New Orleans," a friend would say. Now I have a choice to make. Do I interject, "Actually, that is a picture taken two years ago in central Africa not in New Orleans," or do I let it ride? Nobody likes a smart-ass, right? I'm sayin', seriously, what difference does it make? Because in the end, its usually small things that we're dealing with right?

Well there are plenty of e-mail rumors that circulate that do the work of spreading misinformation and perpetuating damaging stereotypes about black America. The ones that don't make it to my inbox, but do find their way into "the heartland."

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, inboxes across the country were filled with stories of New Orleans evacuees run amok, served to a public all too willing to accept tales of criminal behavior and the general unappreciation of the hurricane's African-American victims. Tales of interstate rest-areas trashed and vandalized by, "all these fat blacks laying around on cots sleeping while white people are lining up by the thousands to SERVE THEM MEALS??" A supposed exponential increase in crime in the whitest of states, Utah and unappreciative, rude and shiftless evacuees who are housed at
(continued from page 56)

the Astrodome. None of these, of course, were substantiated by any factual support. But they still manage to find their way across the web and would surely be fodder for small talk in offices and poker games across the nation. I don’t recall this sort of interest in finding ways to smear coal-mining communities when their citizens get trapped in a mine or country folk sorting through the rubble of a tornado ravaged trailer home.

Now if a disgruntled screenwriter, less-than-accurate journalist and a e-mail can dupe a reasonably intelligent, news-junkie like myself into thinking that I missed the largest copyright infringement judgment in HISTORY, don’t you think some human resources manager from Dallas or Salt Lake City might have second thoughts about hiring a New Orleans evacuee after getting one of these e-mails?

While it’s easy for me to get angry or offended when I see what’s funneled into the inboxes of white-America directed at black folks. We, as a people, often use our own e-mail accounts to spread stories, pictures and rumors that perpetuate the same types of stereotypes. Here’s an example of just one such e-mail that I received from no-less-than 4 different people.

Did any of you by chance receive this gem with the headline, “Proof that Education is Important.”

“Lost Churches of Louisiana- One of the local television stations in South Louisiana actually aired an interview with a black woman from New Orleans. The interviewer was a woman from a Boston affiliate. She asked the black woman how such total and complete devastation of the churches in the area had affected their lives. Without hesitation, the woman replied, ‘I don’t know about all those other people, but we haven’t gone to Church’s [Chicken] in years. We get our chicken from Popeye’s.’ The look on the interviewer’s face was priceless!!”

While it may be worth a chuckle, there is no record of an interview like that never taking place on any Louisiana television station. Even as a joke however, the fact that it manages to pass through our inboxes does paint a somewhat disturbing picture about how we view ourselves. Now, after hearing me rant about the foolishness she sends me via e-mail over the past few years, my momma adds in the subject line, “Is this true?” to everything she sends me.

I don’t even have to open it to know that its probably not.
The Department of
Pan-African Studies

Our department offers an undergraduate major leading to a Bachelor of Arts degree and a minor in the College of Arts and Sciences. Pan-African Studies includes the study of Africa and the African Diaspora. Our major and minor course sequences are structured to provide an in-depth study of history, language, philosophy, education, literature, art, music, science, sociology, and other subjects as they relate to people of African descent throughout the world. These courses also expose students to theoretical, practical, and domestic and national issues facing African Americans. Majors and minors can choose from five areas of concentration, including a generalist Pan-African Studies emphasis; African Diaspora Studies; Literature, Arts, and Culture; Pedagogy; or Theoretical and Applied Research. Students are encouraged to use their intellectual skills to bring about better organization and development within the African American, African, and African Diaspora communities.

Students majoring in any field--from Business or Education to the Humanities and Fine and Professional Arts--are encouraged to consider Pan-African Studies as a minor.

The PAS curriculum includes courses which cover a broad spectrum of the Pan-African experience. Its purpose is to provide students with basic information and questions which will lead to further research, study, and analysis. The curriculum also seeks to investigate the African connection and/or influences among other ethnic groups, particularly Native Americans and Latin Americans, and the extent to which these may be reciprocal.

Please find below a list of general courses offered in the Department of Pan-African Studies. (For available courses each semester, see General University Catalog and Schedule of Classes for each semester.)

PAN-AFRICAN STUDIES (PAS) for placement and credit in foreign language courses see Arts and Sciences--Foreign Language requirement--placement and credit.

10101 Elementary Kiswahili I (3)
10102 Elementary Kiswahili II (3)
13001 Foundations of Pan-African Studies I (03-03)
13002 Foundations of Pan-African Studies II (03-03)
20101 Kiswahili III (3)
20102 Kiswahili IV (3)
22000 African World Creative Writing (03-06)
22101 African-American Visual Artists (3)
22200 Introduction to African Arts (3)
22201 Expressivity in African Arts (3)
23001 Black Experience I (3)
23002 Black Experience II (3)
23171 The African American Community (3)
24093 Black Writers Workshop (3)
24407 Caribbean Studies (3)
30010 African and African American Philosophies (3)
30015 Environmental Justice in African-American Education (3)
31006 Historical Perspective (3)
31009 Cultural Perspectives (3)
32114 Contemporary Society (3)
33508 Caribbean Social and Political Directions (3)
34000 Introduction to African World View (3)
35100 African-American Social, Political, and Economic Systems (3)
35200 African Social, Political, and Economic Systems (3)
35210 African Traditional Architectural Settings (3)
37000 Oral and Written Discourses in Pan-African Studies (3)
37010 Research Methods in Pan-African Studies (3)
37020 Pan-Africanism and the Model African Unity Organization (OAU-AU) (3)
37143 The African Brazilian Experience in Culture and Literature (3)
40080 Pedagogy for Pan-African Studies
41192 African-American Affairs Practicum (1-12)
42005 Special Topics in the Literature of Pan-Africa (3)
42500 Black Education in America (3)
43095 Special Topics in Pan-African Literature, Arts, and Culture (3)
43395 Special Topics in African Diaspora Studies (3)
45055 Special Topics in Pedagogy in Pan-African Studies (3-12)
47010 Theoretical Approaches to Pan-African Studies (3)
47091 Senior Seminar in Pan-African Studies (3)
47095 Special Topics in Theoretical and Applied Research (3)
47150 The Underground Railroad (3)
49093 Variable Workshops in Pan-African Studies (2-6)
49096 Individual Investigation (1-3)
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24407 Caribbean Studies (3)  
30010 African and African American Philosophies (3)  
30120 Contemporary Issues in African-American Education (3)  
30126 Curriculum in African Theatre Arts (3-9)  
Pan-African Essay (3)  
African-American Family in Historical Perspective (3)  
Black Woman: Historical Perspectives (3)  
African-American Man in Contemporary Society (3)  
West-African Cultures (3)  
Kiswahili Conversation (3)  

33508 Caribbean Social and Political Directions (3)  
34000 Introduction to African World View (3)  
35100 African-American Social, Political, and Economic Systems (3)  
35300 African Social, Political, and Economic Systems (3)  
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49098 Selected Topics (2-3)  
49096 Individual Investigation (1-3)