SPRING INTO FALL:
FALL FASHION TRENDS

NATURAL HAIR TYPES:
WHERE DO YOU FALL?

WHO WAS THE BLACK STUDENT CAPTURED IN MAY 4TH PHOTOS?

WE CAN DO IT!
OVERCOMING LIFE’S OBSTACLES

AN INTERVIEW WITH CLEVELAND NATIVE + ACTRESS, IMANI HAKIM!
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Words from the Editor

The struggle is real. It’s real for us all, no matter who we are, we all face obstacles that make our lives harder. For people of color, the obstacles we face can become overbearing and attempt to defeat us. The stories found on the pages of this issue of UHURU are a reflection of some of the struggles and obstacles faced by people of color. Our obstacles aren’t one dimensional; they range from something as seemingly simple as loving and accepting our natural Afro-textured hair to an internal conflict of whether or not we should love a country that hasn’t always loved us. Yet stories, such as the interview with actress Imani Hakim and Oscar Ramos story, reflect on our ability to achieve greatness.

The story of the Orangeburg Massacre, Kent State shooting and Jackson State shooting examines our ability as members of not only the Kent State community but as humans to overcome tragedy. To inspire and dazzle this issue, we recreated the iconic Rosie the Riveter image.

I hope, one if not all, the stories in this issue enlighten and encourage you. In the words of Rosie the Riveter, “we can do it!”

Sade Hale,

UHURU Magazine Print Editor
Wanna see our new logo? Check out our social media page at the end of the magazine!

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Seventy-Six Degrees + Foliage

by Jared Walters
Creative Director: J. Markell Cole
*Be bold, bright and loud this upcoming spring and summer.*

This season, you will see a lot of bright colors and bold prints in women’s wear. Different prints - varying from cartoon to bold, colorful prints. Solid neon colors will also be in the mix! Incorporate your favorite crop top with a dark maxi skirt, or even a neon taffeta skirt. A nice finish to this look will be a bold color or printed handbag!

Guys, I did not forget about you! In my opinion, this upcoming season for spring and summer is all about the 90’s look. Experiment with bright colors and bold prints. The 90’s were all about bright colors and being cool. This summer you should be effortless, bright, bold, and cool. Adventure with something you’ve never done!

Fashion = the freedom to express your self!
Summer isn’t the only time you can wear bright colors, shorts, and tanks. You can incorporate these items into your fall looks. Here are a few fashion tips and tricks to complete your look:

Tip #1: Incorporate shorts from your spring closet into your fall and winter looks. Try something new, and pair those shorts with some printed tights. By pairing these items together, you’ll be able to stand out within a crowd. Shorts and thigh highs? You bet! Men, you can also incorporate shorts in your wardrobes, too! Stretch boundaries and maybe pair your shorts with combat boots on a moderate autumn day.

Tip #2: Don’t waste your maxi skirt; wear it this fall! Pull out your favorite maxi skirt and be interchangeable! First, you can wear it as a dress. By adding a belt and leather jacket with the maxi dress, you can create the perfect daytime or date-night look. Get more of a bang for your buck by being versatile with items you already have! Loved the way the maxi skirt looked last week? Throw on a cute cropped sweater and some Chelsea boots and you’ve achieved a new look!

Tip #3: Grab those tank tops out of your closet and pair it with a light sweater or some distressed denim. This is also the perfect way to show off some chic neck accessories! This look is perfect for the casual and comfortable atmosphere.

ON KAYLA: BODY CHAIN by Collective Wears Top: ASOS Skirt: American Apparel ON DESMOND: Top: IZOD, Ralph Lauren Bottom: Cap
Hair

Her Hair, My Hair, Our

Story by Alyssa Flynn

After damaging their hair with chemical processing, many Black women decided that it was time for them to transition their hair back to its natural state. Through trial and error, they discovered who they are.

Black women have been following a widespread movement that literally takes them back to their natural roots—their hair. Locks, curls, Afros and braids are the hairstyles that black women are wearing as they have become increasingly fashion-forward. Celebrities like Erykah Badu, India.Arie and Tracee Ellis Ross were rocking natural hair before the trend picked up.

Alexandria Peebles, a senior who is double majoring in psychology and Pan-African Studies, said she remembers getting her hair relaxed between four and five years old by her mother. Audrianna Johnson is a junior psychology major, who said she had the same experience of getting her hair relaxed at a young age.

Black girls begin to conform to the image of White society—women with straight, long hair—at a young age by getting their hair relaxed.

The transition from chemically processed hair to natural hair has become a recent phenomenon among Black women, and both Audrianna and Alex decided to go along with trend. Peebles started her natural hair journey the spring semester of her freshman year at Kent State University in 2010. But she had faltered in staying committed in her journey because of her family. “Are you really going out looking like that?” sister convinced her to relax her hair on two different occasions.

“It’s not popular,” Peebles said in regard to the status of natural hair in her family. “Vanity is so important in our society, in American culture. Physical is everything. If it’s hard to accept who you are in your natural state, then just seeing it off the jump, it’s not attractive.”

Johnson says that going natural is a lifestyle change because of what has to be done to maintain healthy hair. “It is not the case. Some just want healthier hair,” Johnson said. “And some want to see what their curl pattern is like because they have never seen it. They have been getting perms since they were little.”

Peebles says that going natural is a lifestyle change because of what has to be done to maintain healthy hair. Women have to try different products in order to find what works for their hair. Most hairstyles require them to be done the night before, and women have to remember that water is the hair’s best friend. Johnson says she thinks it is a movement and that down the line the majority of black girls will have natural hair. “We need to embrace what we have,” Johnson said. “Natural hair represents me.”

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Why do you want to wear a fro?” Peebles said, recollecting the comments by her mother and sister. At the end of her freshman year, Peebles declared her second major in Pan-African Studies. She said her mother and sister disagreed with her additional major and told her “this African stuff is just not cute.”

The second time Peebles transitioned, she followed through with staying natural—but her sister convinced her to relax her hair on two different occasions. “It’s not popular,” Peebles said in regard to the status of natural hair in her family. “Vanity is so important in our society, in American culture. Physical is everything. If it’s hard to accept who you are in your natural state, then just seeing it off the jump, it’s not attractive.”

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Products Recommended—Sulfate-free shampoo

**Why:** Normal shampoo strips the hair of its natural oil and leaves hair dry.
Shea Butter
**Why:** Helps add moisture to hair and maintain hairstyles.
Olive Oil
**Why:** Helps add moisture and deep conditions hair.
Conditioner / Leave-in Conditioner
**Why:** Co-washing with conditioner will keep hair moisturized and clean without stripping the hair of the natural oils

Watch—
“**Good Hair**” — Chris Rock
**Why:** It focuses on the image, history and hair competitions in the African-American community.

Natural Hair YouTube Channels—
**Why:** It gives you a more personal, one-on-one tutorial on how to manage, style and maintain your natural hair.

My Natural Sistas
Ambrosia
Hey Fran Hey
Naptural85
ChescaLocs (locs ... not dreads because there is nothing dreadful about them!)
FusionofCultures
NikkiMae2003
Follow
Black Girl Long Hair
KisforKinky
Black Naps (caters to 4B and 4C hair)
Urban Bush Babes

Definitions—
**Natural:** Wearing the hair you were born with, free of chemicals.
**Relaxed / Perm:** A chemical processing cream used by African Americans to help make hair straight.
**Transition:** The period between two hair textures, one processed and the other natural.
**Curl Pattern:** The way hair grows from the roots to the ends of the hair; according to charts curl patterns range from 1 (straight) to 4C (tight, coiled curls).
My whole life, I have struggled greatly with the definition of one word that is the basis of trillion-dollar companies today: beauty. What is beauty? Is it the level of symmetrical perfection in my face? Is it the way my hair grows from root to ends? Is it my definition or society’s?

As a child, I couldn’t quite put my finger on it, but as a young woman, I’ve pretty much cracked the code. How could I forget that windy spring day in 6th grade at recess? My hair was floating in the wind like a sheet left out to dry on a clothesline. I felt invincible as I took flight with my strands as my wings. Then suddenly, my flight took a sudden turn.

I was being bombarded with empty compliments from children whose perspective on beauty was one-sided and force-fed to them by their families. They were white kids who didn’t understand the concept of an African American girl who could grow hair longer than their own. It wasn’t humanly possible, in their eyes. “What’s wrong with the roots of your hair? Why is it straight at the ends but wavy at the root?” said Alexa Williams, a little Italian girl who utterly despised me because it sickened her that as a black girl, my mane of glory surpassed her short, thick locks of fuzziness.

I looked in the mirror that night and compared the hair that was naturally growing out of my scalp to the hair that was damaged and treated with a relaxer, a creamy white chemical substance that permanently made my hair straight. If I knew then what I know today and how much I would despise that corrupting chemical, my life would be completely different. I was so confused as I meditated on Maybelline’s slogan, “Maybe she’s born with it. Maybe it’s Maybelline.” Was it these hair products that made us beautiful or was it literally our natural-born selves that made us gorgeous?

I will never forget, during my senior year in high school, the life-changing visit from my sister when she came home from college armed with new-found knowledge on hair, beauty, religion, medicine and all the aspects of my life. It was her new-found knowledge that truly kicked my revolutionary perspective of beauty into gear.

“Look at your baby doll, the black one! Now, look at yourself. Do you see yourself in that head of silky smooth hair and brown skin? No! We’ve been lied to our whole lives! We’re not Europeans, we’re Africans! And it is time to stop hiding from the truth,” Nyankor, my eldest sister, said.

As an HBCU graduate, she had taken several Pan-African Studies courses, read several books by Angela Davis, a revolutionary Black Panther, and was a true advocate for former militant rapper Tupac Shakur and his N.I.G.G.A, Never Ignorant Getting Goals Accomplished, movement. She delved into documentaries like “Hidden Colors 1 & 2.” These movies addressed how Europeans used Christianity to trick indigenous African people into being slaves. By painting the most powerful being on the planet as a white male, they brainwashed Africans into believing that white people were the supreme race who, therefore, must be revered and praised.

I have seen “Good Hair,” a movie produced by Chris Rock that shows how detrimental relaxers are to anyone’s scalp and the transformation and perception of hair in the African American community and beyond. After watching a pop can disintegrate in the chemicals that are actively used in relaxers, I vowed never to put a relaxer on my head ever again.

In another scene, an African American man tried to sell coarse, thick and fluffy African American hair to an Asian beauty supply store that sold plenty of weaves. The Asian people shunned the natural hair. They knew that African American women wouldn’t bother buying such textured hair because the masses are ashamed to even wear their own hair that looked exactly like the hair he was selling. I was beyond baffled that they knew many African American women were so self-conscious about their own hair and had found a successful business niche in selling weaves to help black women hide the...
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WHAT’S YOUR NATURAL HAIR TYPE?
by Asia Parker

Over the years more and more people have decided to cut off their perm and take a healthier approach to caring for their hair called “going natural.” Not only has going natural become a big craze but the different types of hair textures have been a big topic of discussion as well.

2A-4C are number/letter combinations given to describe different hair types and explain the curl pattern in different hair textures. Caucasian people usually have 2A-2C hair because the curls tend to be on the wavy side. Usually their hair is very easy to manage but requires more attention than simply straight hair. 3A-3C hair can be found on many inter racial people. Their curls are more of a tighter “s” shape and usually not very hard to manage but require more attention than the 2A-2B hair types. African Americans take the gold for the 4A-4C hair types. These hair types are very kinky and course. The hair makes more of a “z” shape causing it to be the hardest to take care of, but with a lot of attention and care, it is just as manageable as the other hair types.

This system came about to help women understand how to take care of their hair and which products would work the best. When this first came out everyone seemed to be obsessed with all the products and conversations that it came with. Women with 2A-2C hair use products such as jessicurl, Devacurl, Top Mop, Curl Junkie, etc. If you have 3A-3C hair, you would use use products such as Deva Care, Jane Carter, Karens Body, Elucence, Darcy’s, etc. Then people with 4A-4C hair use products such as Blend Beauty, Myhoneychild, HairTherapy, Oyin homemade whipped pudding, Curlaccino, etc. After reading many reviews on different products, even though they are supposed to be used on certain types of hair, the reality is, it doesn’t matter. You have to use what works best for your hair and not limit yourself to what products the media say will work. Furthermore, the different textures seem to keep people in separate categories, making them feel that just because they don’t have 2A or 3B hair, they are less than or not as cute as the next girl.

Asia Blue, Natural Hair Advocate, shared her opinion on different natural hair textures. “Everyone feels that you have to have a certain type of hair to be natural, when anyone can go natural. Even a lot of Caucasian women have decided to stop getting perms in their hair and wear their natural hair instead,” Blue said. “Some people feel that one type of hair is better than the other, including myself, when it shouldn’t be like that.”

People want easier hair to manage. It has been documented that the lower the number/letter combination given for your hair texture, the fewer curls you have, which is usually interpreted as easier to manage. Nowadays this concept is not as relevant as it used to be.

We are now starting to understand that it doesn’t matter what hair type you have. Different products just work for different hair. Hair can’t be put in categories. Just like our fingerprints, no two people have the same type of hair. If you do the research and experiment with different products, you will find what works best for you and your hair. You really can learn to love your hair the way it is!
EXPOSED: “NAKED TRUTHS” LP - LORINE CHIA

MUSIC WRITER REVIEW: 4/5

REVIEW BY J. MARKELL COLE

Born in Cameroon, Chia and her family traveled all over the east coast before settling in Northeast OH. She was named after her father’s favorite African singer Lorine Okofie and has said she wanted to continue to represent her culture through her music. Chia released her first album on Thanksgiving in 2011.

Between maintaining constant tour dates, promoting her music and interacting with her fellow music heads via Twitter and Instagram, Lorine Chia managed to release her sophomore album, “Naked Truths” in October, 2013. Naked Truths - the follow-up to her self-titled debut Lorine Chia, is a 14-track record with a bonus cut “Good Enough”. While her initial EP introduced Lorine to the masses, Chia really reeled in her audience through Naked Truths by giving them more insight to who she is.

The smooth, eclectic album opens with “Fly High,” an upbeat, bass-heavy and slightly pop-like record that properly exerts and introduces positive vibes that are present throughout the entire project.

Unlike other rising artists, When listening to Chia, it’s very hard to attribute her sound to any one particular genre. With the reggae-influenced “Da Fire,” and soulful tracks like “Wondering Where,” or my personal favorite, “Lost in My Mind,” Chia’s album has listeners to delve into a journey their own.

For those hoping to hear the sound of the first album in Naked Truths, prepare an open ear. Tracks like “Bout It” and “Feel The Music” prove that Chia can dominate the urban music charts as well crossover to Pop radio. Chia also includes a beautiful rendition of “Strange Fruit,” a powerful remake to the song famously performed by Blues-singer Billie Holliday, which describes the lynching of African-Americans.

With a voice like nobody of our time, Lorine Chia effectively proves to us that she will in fact, be around for quite some time.

FAVORITE TRACKS: “Dance In The Rain”, “Lost In My Mind”

FAVORITE LYRIC: FROM “HOUSE ON THE HILL”

“Spending all your fortune on a house with no foundation, now it’s blowing all away. But what can you say? Now you’re hopeless looking for a way to take your pain away.”

NAKED TRUTHS IS NOW AVAILABLE THROUGH ITUNES OR STREAMED VIA SOUNDCLOUD.COM.
IMANI HAKIM:
FROM CHILD STAR TO CHAMPION

In 2005, at the tender age of 11, child actress Imani Hakim landed one of her biggest roles playing Tonya Rock, kid sister to Chris Rock (played by Tyler James Williams) on the UPN/CW comedy, “Everybody Hates Chris.” After the show ended, Hakim made appearances on television shows including “ER,” “CSI: Crime Scene Investigation” and “Wizards of Waverly Place.” She was also cast in the feature film “Reign Over Me” and starred in the Lifetime television movie “One Angry Juror.”

It was her recent performance in a new Lifetime film, “The Gabby Douglas Story,” that truly took us all by surprise. “The Gabby Douglas Story” is a biographical film on USA Women’s Artistic Gymnast, Gabby Douglas. The movie revisits Gabby’s childhood up until her world record-breaking moment to become the first African-American gymnast in Olympic history to win the Individual All-Around Championship.

In addition, Douglas is the first American gymnast to win gold in both the gymnastic individual all-around and team competitions at the same Olympic Games. The film gives the world an honest glimpse of Gabby’s upbringing, her adversities and triumphs. From her siblings’ sacrificing their own personal passions in order to have enough money for her gymnastic lessons, to her moving all the way to West Des Moines, Iowa to have the opportunity to train under elite coach Liang Chow, the movie shows heart-wrenching moments in Gabby’s life and the hardships she overcame.
Interview by Garmai-Korto Matthew

Actress Imani Hakim was born on August 12, 1993 in Cleveland, Ohio. By the age of seven Hakim had already developed a strong passion for acting. She even studied acting at Cleveland’s historic Karamu House and appeared in many of its stage productions.

Where are you from?

I am a Buckeye state girl. I am from Cleveland, Ohio. Growing up there was pretty normal. I would cling to and hang around my older brothers a lot even when they didn’t want me to. If I wasn’t doing that, I would be locked in my room living in my imaginary world, writing scripts, pretending to have a cooking show, playing with my Barbies.

Growing up, what were some of your creative and scholastic interests?

I was really into the school choir, and I also played the violin in elementary. I did very little acting, because my school didn’t provide that option until I was in the 5th grade. I remember when I was in elementary school and we were putting on a play for Black History Month. I was playing the role of Madame C. J. Walker and each person in the play only had one line for her character. I went all out with that one line—I created a character with an accent and everything. But everyone loved it. I got a really big applause.

At what moment did you know acting was your thing?

At around 7 years old is when I realized and decided this is what I wanted to do. I started to tune into my creative weirdness. While all the other kids were outside playing, I was in my room writing a script, and improving a scene completely by myself and playing multiple characters.

Did you experience any adversities entering the entertainment industry? What struggles do you face now as an actor?

Being a minority can sometimes be a struggle. There isn’t a lot out there for us, and if there is, a lot of the time the industry tends to go with a bigger name. One of the main struggles about being an actor is sometimes it doesn’t matter if you are talented; sometimes it’s about the look or who is going to bring in the money. But the great thing is, you get so many opportunities to show these people what you are capable of and eventually all the hard work will pay off. Someone will notice.

What was it like playing Tonya on “Everybody Hates Chris?”

An amazing experience that I will forever be grateful for. Tonya is someone people will remember forever, and I am happy I was able to play this character and bring her to life.

Was it physically draining to play Gabby Douglas? What struggles did you experience while playing her?

At times the choreography got a bit confusing to me since, you know, it was foreign to my body. I’ve never had to move in that way before. So my brain and my body weren’t working together as a team at times when I was trying to get the choreography down. I eventually got it together; it was a very fun challenge that I truly enjoyed.
What moves you the most about Gabby Douglas’ story?

The strong foundation she had. Her family’s support was unbelievable. Everyone sacrificed so much for her. The faith they all had in her ability as a gymnast.

At this point in time, what do you think this generation needs to work on as a whole?

We need to learn to build each other up and not focus so much on tearing one another down. I feel like we always search for flaws in people, to make ourselves feel better. We need to start rooting for each other more, even if we are competing. Let’s be happy if someone achieves something before we do. Just know, ours is coming. What is meant for you is meant for you, what is meant for them is meant for them.

Are you relaxed or natural and, what are your views on the natural vs. relaxed hair treatments and the movement behind natural hair?

I am natural! I’ve made the mistake of being relaxed a few times, and it always ended poorly for my hair. So now I keep my hair weaved up to keep it healthy. For my real hair that is left out, I try not to put too much heat on it. I tie it up every night. As far as my views on Relaxed vs Natural: I think if you get your hair relaxed, you have to be able to take care of your hair or it will become damaged! If you aren’t, I will recommend finding a beautician that is able to help you take care of your hair and make sure it’s nice and healthy. If you are going to rock the natural, I also recommend rocking nice protective styles so you don’t do too much damage to the natural hair as well. That’s why I keep my hair weaved; too much pressing will also cause damage just like relaxing your hair.

What keeps you inspired?

Other actors inspire me, well, just creative people in general. It’s such an awesome outlet to bounce back feelings, thoughts and ideas with other artists. My goal this year is to continue to grow in my career and to continue to learn as an artist. Perfecting my craft and moving up the ladder. Building up the resume and working and learning from those around me. I would eventually like to get into producing and directing my own projects. Perhaps writing!
MODELS:
LAKIA KENT-ALLEN
DIONNA STOKES
DANIELLE STOKES
BANA TESFAI
ANDREA DELPH

WE CAN

DO IT
AALANA: AFRICAN AMERICAN LATINA NATIVE-AMERICAN
WE CAN DO IT
“Two Sides Of The Same Coin”  
- CREE PIP PEN, Junior

“Why make peace, when we can make war”  
“Why make war when we can make peace”  
Two sides of the same coin  
That could never meet  
Endless disagreement  
Yet they play on the same team  
Flipping against one another  
Odds over the same dream.

“We Pretend To,” (A parallel to Gwendolyn Brooks’ We Real Cool)  
- BRYAN MILLER-FOSTER, Junior

We hesitate. We  
Anticipate. We  
Orchestrate. We  
Annihilate. We  
W  
Pro-mote. We  
De-mote. We

Laugh loud. We  
Cry soft. We  
Weave through crowds. We  
Want more. We  
Say we’re true. But  
We’re quite false.

“Wrath of a Writer”  
- CREE PIP PEN, Junior

Normally I hold in anger  
but today  
this paper will just have to feel my wrath  
with every strike from from my pen  
I bleed less within  
and Lord forgive me  
because I wont repent  
and I know I have sinned  
but today  
this paper is my victim  
that I must mistreat  
so that I can be free  
from all my confictions  
and I know it is abuse  
to leave scratch marks and holes  
ever to be mended  
and to anyone who loves paper  
I hope you’re not offended  
but today  
this paper will get the best beating of its life  
and I refuse to hold back  
therefore I aim my weapon carefully  
between the lines of this paper  
click the trigger  
and begin to disfigure  
but don’t worry  
the story of this papers death  
will live on forever  
sold and retold  
as the greatest poem ever.

“Native Warren G”  
- JENNIFER CLINE

Our Totem Poles have teddy bears  
stapled to the trunk  
stuffed animals tied ’round  
its bottom half with ribbons  
one a beaming bright yellow  
not dingy, weathered, faded by the heat of the sun.

Our sons faded in your memory  
remember John? In first grade we called him JJ  
by the time he reached age 12 he could smell  
the rotten promises of your prison cell  
saw no way out, we fought like hell  
but our baby got in and we couldn’t make bail.


"Coils" — GARMAI-KORTO MATTHEW, Senior

Spiraling from my scalp.
Jet black coils.
When I strip my crown from all false identities
and lies I see the bountiful bundles twisting and
turning, dangling close by my ear.

As I stroke my mane of glory, taming my sense of
truth, I feel liberated.
At times frustrated with the glorious gems my
ancestors bestowed onto.
Not perceiving her as a curse, but a privilege.
I take pride in my permanent accessory of cells.
Dead or alive, she gives me life.
My pride and glory that gives sweet kisses to my
pillow at night.
She hugs my hats for protecting it against winds
that don’t quite mesh with my melanin.
Fluffier than the feeling of diving my hand in
a bag of cotton balls stashed away in my
bathroom cabinet.
Soft to the touch, but not always.

When she’s angry, only thing that appeases her
is Shea butter and water.
Oh how pretty she is as she curtsys’ across my
scalp.
She tip toes to the beat as I bounce to the
rhythms.
She is the real me set free.
She reflects my ultimate sense of beauty

"My Fear of Her Love" — ALFONZO "A-ZO" LENZLY, Sophomore

in depth, she embraces me…

My masculinity wants to reject her gentle approach, only
because it has yet to see the true strength that lies within her
sacred walls of comfort.

The wonders of God’s nurturing nature embedded in her
every fingertip, lip and curve while the allure of her vibrancy
enticesme.

My guard however, allows no chance of seduction for the art
to seduce is a lustful portrayal of love, and to mislead out of
want is to sentence my trust to death, for it is fragile and well
concealed.

This is my pride’s defense to deter me from her offering.
Yet, what is it she offers…?

She offers her companionship, sacrifice of independence, she
lets lay her pride and ego at my heels that it may spare that
of my own; she offers to me only the ultimate…

Nothing less of herself, and in return that I provide, protect
and to maintain the validity of my word to remain true in all of
our days as one item…she asks nothing of me.

If our borders shall remain intact, then any meaningful
attempt of contact is futile, but to destroy & to reconstruct
them cohesively shall have the appraisal of that of flawless
diamond, it’s beauty unmatched and strength most formidable.
The celebration of our union being my addition to her division
through rhythmic motions sounds of satisfying song, and
climatic release of sensual frustrations. I am strong in her and
she is me.

Together we Release. The climax, affective, I am no longer
afraid and to confirm…a simple forehead kiss.

“Made for ONE, but relative to all my lovely “sistahs”
"Peeling My Skin" - CHEYENNE PERRY, Junior

When I was 17, I shed my skin for a skinny boy
Who loved me.
He forgot he loved me.
No matter how my fingertips buoyed his bird-chest
I couldn’t anchor him to see that our love could be one.
My body could be his body, could be my flesh, could be his life,
could be my love, Could be one.

For him
I peeled my skin off.
Starting at the top of my head,
Pulling my scalp down over my skull.
Exposing my brain through the holes at my ears.
I kept peeling,
Letting rolls of flesh hang from my waist
So he could see my heart beat through my chest.
I yanked the strips so they split over my knees.
Peeled the skin down to my ankles!
Stepped right out of my feet.

He rubbed his index on the outlying curve of my hip bone...
Tapped it with his knuckle
It was a hollow sound, honest.
There were holes left empty by my father,
Places I tried to stuff close with college ruled paper
Filling feelings with filler paper plastered in ink
My naked interior was a shamble
of hollow bones, soft guts, and paper mache muscles.
Weak.
Except for the glue I used to cling.
A paste made of loneliness and destitution to hold myself together.

To hold myself to him
To make him love me or share me
At the very least,
Stick to me.

Without skin, he entered me easy.
He left the same way.
I hadn’t exposed my weaknesses, they were apparent.
And who’d want a girl with no skin
with weak bones
with her heart beating out of her chest.

I was “too clingy.”
He was a skinny hypocrite.
Just a bag of bones who walked away.
Disjunct joints jangle off beat
But at least he did so on his own two feet.
I stepped out of mine.
Set them down next to my suit of skin
by the door.

"Still... after Hundreds of Years" - EBONY DAVIS

I was born in the year of the rooster:
Plucked of charcoal like hands, imprinted with the searing smell of flesh:
Tucked far behind her ancestors whipped backs and broke necks.
I wished for new parents.
I wished not to be black.
To be rid of the corruptible crimson corroding my blood lines.
Ooho! Enough of the down turned lips ready to pour out tunnel s of sorrowful pitties.
I beg of you to hush that.
I promise you I’ve gotten over that.
Although, I cannot say the same for those patrons, teachers and rich folk.
Who when they gape at me clutch their pearls and pocketbooks
Causing my soul to fill with rage,
My fingertips breathe with fire.
They still see slave written in my frown lines.
I smile giving birth to a dimple, placed left.
And in my imperfection, there is found comfort enough to smile back.
Tears swell and I begin to choke.
I choke on the docile nature beholden my peers
Yes, my peers.
I have no respect for persons; I see them all the same.
Still, after a hundred years, they regard me as a slave.
OUR STORY

STORY AND ILLUSTRATIONS BY KOFI KHEMET

Dr. McClain, a graduate of the University of Akron, began her career as an educator in the Akron public schools. After her days as a public school teacher, she taught in the College of Education at Kent State and Walsh University. Her dissertation, “The Contributions of Black in Akron, 1825-1975,” played an instrumental role in establishing the University of Akron’s Black History Gallery, which was later named after her.

SHIRLA McCLAIN
BORN: FEBRUARY 4, 1935
DIED: MAY 31, 1997

Akron native Rita Dove is best known as the first African American U.S. Poet Laureate. What most people don’t know is that her success was foreseen by her teachers in grade school. Not only was she voted “Most Likely to Succeed” in high school, but she was also known as the “brainiac” of her class. She won all the top honors in high school and was head majorette, as well.

Her string of successes continued through college into adulthood. Over the years she’s met more than one U.S. President and was recently honored with the National Medal of Arts by President Obama. Rita’s interests are multifaceted, as are her areas of expertise. She’s a poet with a sense of history and a lover of ballroom dancing, who plays an obscure stringed instrument, which was popular in the Renaissance, called the viola da gamba. Her prose and poetry bring these disparate elements together creating something very unique based on her interests in music, dance and African American history.

During her days at Akron’s Buchtel High School, we saw her pull off this same feat of prestidigitation on the gridiron, with a baton, pom poms and gymnastic movements as Buchtel’s first African American Head Majorette in 1969. Then the whole world saw her do it again as the youngest U.S. Poet Laureate.

RITA DOVE
BORN: AUGUST 28, 1952
African Community Theatre presents:

For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow Is Enuf
A Choreopoem by Ntozake Shange
Directed by Terrence Spivey

April 11-13 & 24-27, 2014
Room 230
Oscar Ritchie Hall

Showtimes
April 11 & 12; 24-26
7:30 PM
April 12, 13 & 27
Matinee 2 PM
TICKETS $10

For more information email: dpas@kent.edu.

April 10 & 11, 2014
Department of Pan-African Studies
www.kent.edu/cas/pas

Africa & the Global Atlantic World Conference
Keynote Address: Horace Campbell
As the Assistant Director of the Student Multicultural Center at Kent State University, Oscar Ramos strives to help minority groups at Kent State pursue and reach personal and educational goals. Ramos works on programs to help the African American, Latino American and Native American community succeed while at the university. Many students who have reached out to Ramos have built a life-long friendship with him.

Outside of the workplace, Ramos is quite the family man. He and his wife, Buffy Ramos, are raising two children, their daughter Carly and son Caleb. Much like the work he does for Kent State, Ramos encourages his kids to explore their interests and grow a love for knowledge. He constantly reminds them that learning is fun and can be transformative. Ramos has lifted the spirits of many students at Kent and lives a very fulfilling life, but as an adolescent he never pictured his future as successful.

Attending college was not always one of Ramos’ priorities. Instead, he invested more of his time working at a local ice cream parlor, “Tiny’s Dairy Barn,” in his hometown of Wauseon, Ohio. More interested in the business of the parlor, Ramos neglected his schoolwork and attendance. While working there, he met the owner’s son, Louie Weber, who quickly became his mentor. Ramos attended Weber’s services to hear him preach. Through the guidance of Weber, Ramos decided to follow in his footsteps and attend Kentucky Christian University.

He was the first in his family to attend a university and received much support from both his parents and Louie Weber. As a first-generation college student, he struggled at first and almost didn’t make it past his freshman year of college. But he stuck with it, graduated, and went on to graduate school at Abilene Christian University. Today, he plans to get his doctorate at Kent State University, while continuing his job with the Student Multicultural Center.

Working in KSU’s Student Multicultural Center, Oscar Ramos has been seen as a mentor for many students here. Mamadou Ndiaye, a sophomore at Kent State, sees Ramos as an expert in his work. He believes Ramos fits his job description and more.
Having the opportunity to work with Ramos as his mentor for Kupita/Transiciones, an AALANA-based orientation program, Ndiaye has witnessed him go above and beyond for Kent's minority community.

Ndiaye believes he himself has a responsibility to help other students out. “I would like to help students build an optimistic mind frame,” Ndiaye said. Just like his mentor, Ndiaye takes pleasure in helping Kent's minority community reach its full potential.

After working with Ramos, Ndiaye feels that he has formed a life-long friendship with his mentor. As a mentor in Kupita/Transiciones, he has had the opportunity leave a positive impact on the future of Kent State University's minority community. At the beginning of every academic year, the Student Multicultural Center puts together an orientation program designed to help AALANA students make a successful transition into Kent State’s community. For the students who attend Kupita/Transiciones, the program shines some light on what the university has to offer.

Students get the chance to explore the campus early, be surrounded by people of similar cultures, and discover the resources available on campus. The program consists of sessions that provide a positive look at the university and their future at Kent State. While in the sessions students are able to meet with people in the same majors, participate in group activities, and listen to speakers from the university.

As a speaker at Kupita/Transiciones, Ramos emphasizes the reality of coming to a university and facing the challenges that students will need to overcome. He encourages students to take advantage of their resources, such as the orientation program, and to “Seize the day,” a line Ramos quotes from the movie “Dead Poet’s Society.” By acknowledging that college is a big change, students are able to learn the responsibility they will need for their future and generations to come.

To Ramos, college is a time for students to gain independence and a time for reflection. During their stay here at Kent State University, students are able to reflect on how they would like their lives to end up. Having gone through hardships himself, Ramos tries to relate his story with the younger generation. Advocating personal success is a goal he would like students to strive for. Ramos would like to see students “go from being good enough to great.”
It is no secret that black people are in demand in the entertainment industry right now. Television shows and movies like “Scandal,” “Being Mary Jane” and “Person of Interest,” “The Butler,” “Best Man Holiday” and “12 Years a Slave” have put more and more black actors in leading roles. With all our Hollywood success, aspiring black actors seem to have many opportunities to showcase their talent.

However, if you look at current African-American theatre students, particularly those in colleges where they are the minority, they are given few, if any, opportunities to show what they can do. So what are black theatre students at Kent State doing to make sure that their work is noticed before they graduate?

Senior musical theatre major Shauna Davis is the president of Kent State’s chapter of “The Black Theatre Association” (BTA). Davis said she transferred to Kent in hopes of getting a better theatre education. “My old school didn’t have much of a theatre program, and if I stayed, I would’ve had to triple major in order to get some experience in musical theatre,” Davis said. “It was smarter just to go to a specialized program, and Kent has that.”

Davis said she reinstated BTA this year after the group wasn’t active for more than three years. “The last president was awesome and had a whole bunch of stuff going on, but it kind of fizzled after he graduated,” Davis said. “So right now we’re figuring out what we can do.”

Davis said she has performed in approximately five productions since coming to Kent, none of which were starring roles. “In the classic shows, none of us minority theatre students have been leads,” Davis said. “If we were doing ‘Oklahoma,’ I wouldn’t be Laurie, but I would get cast.” Davis said while the roles for black actors in the shows hosted by the School of Theatre are scarce, there isn’t any competition among black theatre students. “We really do support each other,” Davis said. “We look at each other’s audition scripts and call each other about roles.”

This unity will most likely be in effect during the African Community Theatre’s production of “For Colored Girls who have considered suicide when the Rainbow is Enuf.” Terrence Spivey is the director of the show. Spivey is the African Community Theatre’s newest Director in Residence. “I took over for Dr. Dorsey in September,” Spivey said. “We had one show in September, but because of scheduling, there weren’t many Kent State students a part of it.”
Spivey isn’t a stranger to black theatre, as he has worked at the Karamu House in Cleveland for more than 10 years.

“The Karamu House does a lot to help our community,” Spivey said. “We have outreach programs and a day-care center in addition to our small and main stage productions. Spivey said that during his time at the Karamu House, he has worked with many actors and actresses from Kent State. “A lot of black theatre students from Kent audition for plays at Karamu,” Spivey said. “They sometimes can’t find anything on campus, but they still want to work on their crafts.”

In order to showcase more African American student actors, Spivey said the African Community Theatre is teaming up with Kent State’s School of Theatre and Dance to put on more shows for actors and dancers of color. “It’s a beautiful marriage we’re forming,” Spivey said. “We’re hoping to get as many artists exposure as possible.”

But what does this mean for the way the School of Theatre has put on shows in the past? Why is the school suddenly adding more African American actors and dancers? These questions should be directed to the directors and faculty of the School of Theatre and Dance, but no one was available for a comment.

Davis said that even though she hasn’t seen any predominately “black” shows during her time at Kent, she doesn’t think it’s intentional. “We do have a color blindness policy in place,” Davis said. “The school just puts on shows and casts people that fit the roles the best.”

As the School of Theatre continues to diversify and is more exposed to platforms like the Karamu House, black theatre students will have the roles they are searching for; they just have to find them. “You have to work for the opportunities while you’re still in school,” Spivey said. “Network, get a chance to know people, stay connected with the arts and keep the adrenaline going.”
Patriotism is a major trait in American culture. It differs from person to person, or groups of people, or race. What gives Black people their sense of patriotism? Patriotism is the love for or devotion to one's country. I think I'd call myself a patriot. As someone who loves the freedom that this country provides, I couldn't imagine living anywhere else. However, with a world full of judgmental people and discriminatory experiences, people are sure to disagree.

Patriotism is something that can be brought on by an encounter or an experience. Shoujuanu Perry, junior Psychology major, gave me insight on her perspective of patriotism. "Knowing what our ancestors went through and seeing how far we've come as a race is such a prideful feeling. I think my love for this country is based off of the courage that it took for my family members to help society get to where we are now. It's hard to hate America, when you know people related to you have suffered to make the country be the way it is," Perry said.

As eye opening and heartwarming as Perry's reason for being patriotic is, it changed my perspective on what patriotism can also be. I had never looked at patriotism in a way “It's hard to hate America, when you know people related to you have suffered to make the country be the way it is,” similar to Perry's; the depths of her views were a learning experience, so I was so excited to see what inspired others.

When I think of being patriotic, I picture freedom—mostly freedom of speech and expression. I think that minorities have no problem embracing our individual cultures, discovering our personal roots and reasons as to who we are, and why we're that way. We struggle with acceptance from other races but feel free enough to continue to be our own persons.

Zac Thomas is a sophomore Pan-African Studies major who recalled a certain memory that contributed to his sense of patriotism. Viewing Obama as an icon and having him as the leader of our country helped Thomas gain a sense of patriotism.

“Barack Obama winning the election was probably the most excited that I've ever been to be an American,” Thomas said. “I was too excited! I could've gone outside and yelled ‘My president is black!’ to the whole neighborhood.”

Pan-African Studies Professor Mwatabu Okantah, was a child in the 1950s, so he had a chance to see what America was like at a time when segregation and racial issues were high.

“As a child, I was profoundly traumatized seeing images of police dogs being turned on Black people during the Civil Rights Movement,” Okantah said. “I will always remember my father's silence on the day Malcolm X was assassinated—my father regularly followed his TV appearances. I remember feeling my consciousness and my sense of myself change when
King was assassinated—I was 15 years old."

Growing up in 1950s and 1960s can affect views on patriotism.

"I am not a flag waver. I do not salute the flag, nor do I repeat the Pledge of Allegiance. I suppose this will shock and/or offend some people. But if I am truly free, it means I should be allowed to make "I am not a flag waver. I do not salute the flag, nor do I repeat the Pledge of Allegiance."

my own choices based on my own conscience. I am a US citizen by birth, yet I remain an alien in the country of my birth. I live in this country as a virtual outsider; this country only sees me in terms of the false stereotypes of black men (and of all black people) it has created and continues to project as a distorted reality," Okantah said.

He views America as a nation caught up in its own illusions, a nation that is spiritually sick and in need of healing.

"I do not hate the land of my birth, but I am wary of it. At the same time, I am not without hope. I think Obama’s election is a sign that change is possible; however, the price of that change in human lives continues to be extremely high. We still live in a time when unarmed young black men can be shot down and their murderers claim self-defense, a time when young black men shooting each other down is a part of our reality as well," Okantah said.

He also realizes African Americans are resilient people who have given the world new concepts of cultural style and beauty.

“When I travel into the former Confederate south, I always feel a deep sense of awe and wonder walking the lands where my ancestors fashioned a new way of life for themselves in a strange New World,” Okantah said. “I hear their voices whispering in the trees. In those moments, I feel my Americaness and love it in the sense that it shapes my perception of myself as an American-born African.”

Okantah’s views made me realize where I gained my sense of patriotism.

I had my first glimpse of patriotism while I was a cadet in my high school’s ROTC program. I learned so much about the country and the different military branches, and I developed leadership attributes that have not gone to waste in my many roles on campus. I come from a family of veterans and have had ancestors die in wars that have protected our rights. Presently, I deal with the fear of disappointing others. I have gone through life trying hard not to disappoint my family, even knowing that some have died for me to live the life that I am now. In a patriotic sense, I try to be a man that they would be proud of, as I am so proud of them.

Patriotism can be found in almost all of us. It can take a tragedy such as 9-11, or an overwhelming sense of pride, or your love for your family. Finding out what sparks love for the country is the key to finding out what makes a patriot.
WHAT ABOUT THE BLACKS?

Story by Sade Hale

It may be hard for many students today to visualize life in the 1960s and 1970s. Like every decade, the ‘60s and ‘70s were filled with American triumphs and tragedies. The May 4 shooting is a tragedy that members of the Kent State University community will never forget. But many students may never have heard of the Orangeburg Massacre or the Jackson State shooting.

A close up of the image of Ibrahim al-Kahafiz administering first aid to John Cleary that ran as the May 15, 1970 cover of Life magazine. May 4 Collection. Howard Ruffner papers and photographs. Kent State University Libraries. Special Collections and Archives.
It's Happened Before and It Happened Again

The May 4 shooting here at Kent State University wasn't the first tragedy where University students were killed by authorities for protesting, and it wasn't the last. The first shooting was the Orangeburg Massacre. On Feb. 8, 1968, three students were killed and 27 students were injured when South Carolina Highway Patrol officers shot and beat student protesters near the campus of South Carolina State University.

Two days before the Orangeburg Massacre, on Feb. 6, students from the historically Black College were not allowed to go bowling at the All Star Bowling Lane owned by Harry K. Floyd.

All Star Bowling Lane was the only bowling alley in town and was racially segregated. Only Whites were able to use the bowling facilities. That night, after violent tension had risen, nine students and a city policeman were injured.

On the night of the incident, about 200 Black students gathered to protest segregation at the bowling alley. A bonfire was set by students, and firefighters were called to extinguish it. State troopers also arrived. After a banister rail was thrown and struck a State Trooper, 70 law enforcement officers were called to the University. Journalist and history professor,
Jack Bass wrote in a 2003 addition of the Nieman Reports, the authorities “were armed with carbines, pistols and riot guns—short-barreled shotguns that by dictionary definition are used “to disperse rioters rather than to inflict serious injury or death. But theirs were loaded with lethal buckshot, which hunters use to kill deer. Each shell contained nine to 12 pellets the size of a .32 caliber pistol slug.”

After students had retreated from the bonfire area, they began to return. They watched as the bonfire was doused. Shots were fired by a patrolman attempting to warn students. But soon other officers began to fire their weapons. The students began to run. In the end, Samuel Hammond Jr., Henry Ezekial Smith and Delano Herman Middleton, an Orangeburg-Wilkinson High School student, were all killed. Twenty-seven students were injured including Louise Kelly Cawley who sustained severe injuries that caused a miscarriage a week later.

In 1970, Civil Rights activist, Cleveland Sellers, was arrested and convicted for starting the Feb. 6, 1968 riot at All Star Bowling Lane. Sellers served seven months in prison, but his sentence was shortened because of good behavior. In 1993, Sellers was pardoned by South Carolina Gov. Carroll A. Campbell, Jr.

Bass acknowledged the Orangeburg Massacre as the first violent incident of its kind, and the first social unrest at an American university that resulted in the protesters being killed. But the shooting received very little media coverage. Many people don’t remember or have never heard of the Orangeburg Massacre.

From our residence in Musselman Hall, we saw a cloud of smoke because students had set the Army barracks on fire ...

E. Timothy Moore

Massacre. Two years after the Orangeburg Massacre, four students here at Kent State were killed and nine injured by National Guardsmen during a Vietnam War protest.

In Four Short Days

On Friday, May 1, 1970 two student rallies were held at Kent State University. The first began about noon on the Commons at the Victory Bell, where students buried copies of the U.S. Constitution in opposition to U.S. involvement in Cambodia. Only a few hours later, Black United Students held a rally demanding the following:

“Enrollment of 5,000 black students by next fall quarter.” “A new black cultural center.” “An all-black faculty in the Afro-American Institute.”
In his book, “Involvement/2 Years Later: A Report On Programming In The Area of Black Student Concerns at Kent State University, 1968-1970,” Milton E. Wilson, Jr., the Dean of Human Relations, describes the BUS rally as “peaceful.” While fellow White students attended the rally in support of BUS and its demands, Wilson writes that they tended to respond “warmly to name calling with nightsticks and tear gas, police drove students back toward the Kent campus. By Saturday May 2, a curfew had been put in place and students could not leave the campus. E. Timothy Moore, Emeritus Associate Dean of Arts & Sciences and Emeritus associate

anger with the system as they perceived it.”

At the time Moore was an 18-year-old freshman, pledging to become a member of Omega Psi Phi fraternity. He says he had to pledge for about 17 weeks and then had a two-week probation period. Before being “initiated in the fraternity as ‘Omega men,’” Moore says he and the other members who were pledging had to “wear dog collars and had to behave like dogs.” During the pledging process, Moore encountered guardsmen on campus, “because they were all over the campus.”

We have had guns in our community for a long time. As a young person, if we didn’t see it, our parents were telling us about guns. You know if you see someone with it, run the other way. We had been schooled on what to do around guns, but some of these White kids hadn’t.

Edward Crosby

and suggestions of violence.”

Later that night hundreds of students gathered in downtown Kent on North Water Street where an unplanned anti-war rally started. Two times during the rally, police cruisers driving by were hit with beer bottles. Soon a bonfire was started in the street as the crowd shouted anti-war slogans. The crowd of students proceeded toward the center of downtown Kent. Some students began to break windows of banks, loan and utility companies.

Because of the destruction in downtown Kent, the mayor of Kent, Leroy Satrom, “declared the city a ‘state of emergency.’” The mayor and the Kent police soon afterward arrived downtown. The riot act was read and the police continued to clear the area.


“We had to carry bricks as a part of the pledging process, and the

“From our residence in Musselman Hall, we saw a cloud of smoke because students had set the Army barracks on fire, which were in the vicinity of what is now the Art building.” Moore said. “They had set the Army barracks on fire and we were told when the police or firemen came to put the fire out that the hoses were cut and that the buildings burned to the ground. They were basically old Army barracks that were used as classroom space and were also the offices for the ROTC building, the Reserve Office Training Corp. That’s why the students targeted them, because they were very much against the military presence on the university campus and so that became a logical source for them to vent their frustration and
National Guard told us to put the bricks down because students had been throwing rocks at them. And so they didn’t want us carrying potential weapons. But, yes, we had to pass them just to get back and forth from classes,” Moore said.

After the shooting, the University shut down and everyone on campus had to leave. When Moore went back home to Cleveland, he says he did not discuss the shooting with his parents, because at the time he did know much about it. “My parents were just pleased that I hadn’t been shot, as most parents were. You know, again, those were tumultuous times when you had riots in major cities, so it wasn’t too much of a surprise for my parents,” Moore said. On July 18, 1966, a race riot had erupted in the Hough community in Cleveland that lasted for six nights. Throughout the riots, four Blacks were killed and 30 were injured. Some 2,220 Ohio National Guardsmen were called into the community to end the riots. The Hough Riots were one of numerous violent race riots of the 1960s, riots that Blacks knew all too well.

Overall, Moore said he enjoyed his time at Kent State. He graduated with a Bachelors of Fine Arts, Masters of Arts, and Masters of Fine Arts, which he said is the equivalent to a doctorate from The School of Art. (When Moore was a student, he said Visual Communications Design was called Graphic Design and it was in The School of Art.)

During his time at Kent State, Moore met his wife Debra Delacy Washington, who was also a Kent State student. Tim and his wife had two children: Elliot Moore and Candace Moore, who also attended Kent State University.

Journalism and Mass Communications professor Eugene Shelton was also student at Kent in 1970. Unlike Moore, Shelton was a 20-year-old sophomore journalism major. Shelton remembers not being in class on May 4, because one of his classes that day was in Taylor Hall. At that time the School of Journalism was in Taylor Hall. Shelton said if he had been in class on May 4, he would have
witnessed the shooting. “It’s something that has been with me ever since that day. It got to me. I was on this campus but detached from what was going on until it was all over. I was just not there,” Shelton said. The May 4 shooting was a horrible first experience for Shelton.

“I think that was the first time in my life when I was in proximity to experiencing the death of young people. A shooting, I had never experienced anything like that in my life. I had never seen anything like that. To be so close to it, but to be so far away. I would have seen it, if I went to class that day, but I didn’t.”

The Unidentified

Moore also remembers Black students being warned to stay away from the rally on May 4. The warning spread throughout the Black student community. “Most Black students did steer clear,” Moore said. “There were a few that were around looking but not really involved in the protest.” One of the Black students at the rally: Ibrahim al-Kahafiz.

At the time of the shooting, al-Kahafiz was known to some by the name Fargo, Brother Fargo or, his birth name, Dwayne White. He would change his name to Ibrahim al-Kahafiz later in life. In a photograph taken by Howard Ruffner, the editor of the Chestnut Burr yearbook, al-Kahafiz can be seen providing medical assistance to wounded student, John Cleary. Eleven days later, Ruffner’s iconic photo was published on the cover of Life magazine’s May 15, 1970 issue. The magazine did not identify al-Kahafiz by name.

To most people viewing this photo today, al-Kahafiz is just an unidentified student captured in a May 4 photo. Although he is reported to be an Ohio State University student in a 2000 issue of the Burr, Dwayne White (al-Kahafiz) was a Kent State student. Edward Crosby, former Pan-African Studies Chairman, director of the Institute for African American Affairs and associate professor of Germanic and Slavic languages, said al-Kahafiz was from Louisville, Kentucky and a National Merit Scholar.

In a November 25, 1969 issue of Black Watch, a former Kent State student publication published by BUS, article titled “Hell No We Won’t Go,” al-Kahafiz wrote a column expressing his views on Black Americans fighting in the Vietnam War.

“It is time Black men realize that every time we put on the khaki green of the army that we become the policeman of the world; that we are supporting, whether we ever fire a bullet or not, OUR enemy, OUR oppressor, the same man who is sucking the blood of Black babies in Harlem, Hough, McElridge, to oppress,

But we really do have a connection with Jackson State...
... so we always do remember and read a chronology of Jackson State and feel a real deep connection with those issues.

Idris Syed

kill, get rich and fat off other men of color. Whether the fight is in Kent, or Korea, it is the same devil, blond hair, blue eyes, pale skin and a pocketbook for a heart.”

Al-Kahafiz ends his column by writing, “Black people’s oppressors are not in Viet Nam but Shaker Heights; not in Korea, but Kent. The beast’s greedy hands extend the world over but its heart is here in America. Our fight is like our oppressor, is here. So when the time comes—let it keep on going and say, ‘Hell, no! we won’t go!’”

He signs the article with the name Fargo.
The Decision

After seeing the guardsmen, Crosby decided to warn Black students to stay away from them because they were armed. Staying away from the guardsmen would prevent Black students from becoming possible targets. He said he was especially concerned about some of the Black students who wore berets and leather jackets a style very similar to that of the Black Panther Party. Crosby believes many of the Black students at Kent effortlessly heeded his warning to stay away from the National Guards because of their experiences with and knowledge of violence.

"What had happened to many of these White students was they didn’t have riots like they had in Cleveland or in Detroit or in Chicago or on the West Coast in Los Angeles. They had never been around for that nor had they read in the newspapers about it. Here in Cleveland,
Kofi Khemet, a Kent State alumnus and son of Crosby, was in middle school in 1970. Once he was in high school he began to hang out on campus. He said he spent more time on the Kent campus because his high school wasn't interesting, and he was more interested in changing social situations for Blacks. Khemet knew of al-Kahafiz, and says al-Kahafiz played a significant role in the creation of Black United Students. As the Co-Chairman of BUS, al-Khafiz was a very vocal BUS member on campus. The name Dwayne White can be found in multiple Daily Kent Stater and Black Watch articles. Khemet also says al-Kahafiz played a major role as a BUS leader in the formation of the Pan-African Studies Department and the Cultural Center. Crosby said he doesn’t know how May 4 impacted al-Kahafiz. Just exactly how May 4 affected al-Kahafiz may never be known because he died several years ago.

Eleven Days Later

After the May 4 shooting, Crosby says his job became easier. “The University was very skeptical about doing anything to Black students that would start them to scream and holler or demonstrate because the University had to live down the reputation of having four White students killed on this campus,” Crosby said. “So they were skittish about anything that might bring an outburst from Black students. Maybe I should have said ‘somewhat easier,’ because I still had to fight for things, but it was a little easier for the president or the vice president to say yes to things. If Black students got mad, that would be another problem they had to deal with, so they didn’t want to deal with those problems.” Years later BUS’ demands for a Black cultural center were met. In 1972, the Center of Pan-African Culture permanently moved into the building now known as Oscar Ritchie Hall.

But for Black students at Jackson State University, a historically Black college in Jackson, Miss., things didn’t get easier. Eleven days after the May 4 shooting, a Jackson State student and a high school student from Jim Hill High School were shot and killed. Twelve other people were also injured at the student protest. According to the “African American Registry,” a non-profit education organization, students at Jackson
State were protesting "racial intimidation and harassment by white motorists traveling Lynch Street, a major thoroughfare that divided the campus and linked West Jackson to downtown, as well as May 4." It is said the riot was started by a small group of students after a rumor spread that Charles Evers, the mayor of Fayette, and his wife had been killed. Charles was the brother of civil rights activist Medgar Evers, who was murdered by Byron De La Beckwith on June 12, 1963 in Jackson, Miss. Soon the Jackson police were alerted by White motorists who said rocks were thrown at them as they traveled up Lynch Street.

Several fires were set, and soon firefighters, accompanied by police, arrived to extinguish them. While the National Guardsmen on campus had weapons with no ammunition, the same couldn’t be said for Jackson city police and Mississippi State police. As the city and the state police advanced toward campus, their weapons were loaded and ready. According to the “AA Registry,” “several students allegedly shouted ‘obscene catcalls’ while others chanted and tossed bricks at the officers, who had closed to within 100 feet of the group.” A few minutes after midnight, May 15, police opened fire on Jackson State students, killing Phillip Lafayette Gibbs and James Earl Green, a high school senior.

The University was very skeptical about doing anything to Black students that would start them to scream and holler or demonstrate because the University had to live down the reputation of having four White students killed on this campus.

Edward Crosby
I think that was the first time in my life when I was in proximity to experiencing the death of young people. A shooting, I had never experienced anything like that in my life.

Eugene Shelton

The Fight Continued Today

Idris Kabir Syed, May 4 Task Force faculty adviser and Pan-African Studies professor, believes there has always been a connection between Kent State, Jackson State and the Orangeburg Massacre. “There have been multiple shootings at colleges that are related to Civil Rights and anti-war issues. But we really do have a connection with Jackson State mainly because it happened ten days after Kent State and in certain ways it was related to the student unrest issues that occurred because of Kent State. They’ve also always been connected. So we always do remember and read a chronology of Jackson State and feel a real deep connection with those issues,” Syed said.

“We have always felt a connection between not only Jackson State, although Jackson State is probably a closer connection with us, but also with the shootings that occurred in 1968 [Orangefubg Massacre].”

The May 4 Task Force’s main goal is to commemorate all 13 students shot at Kent, but each year the May 4 Task Force commemorates the victims at both Kent State and Jackson State. Syed said the organization also has a secondary goal to address the social justice issues that students were fighting for at that time. He believes the same issues are still worth fighting for today.

“Part of commemorating and remembering is to understand the social justice issues that are connected to what those students were fighting for back then, because they are equally relevant today,” Syed said.
Idris Kabir Syed sits under the pictures of the four fallen students that hang in a room on the first floor of the Library dedicated to the event. Photo by Dylan Diblik.
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ARE WE LIVING IN A POST-RACIAL SOCIETY?

Story by Humberto Gutierrez Jr.

Humberto went around Kent State's campus to ask students what they thought were the most common stereotypes for the African American and Hispanic races. After asking approximately 50 students, he put together two lists of the most common stereotypes mentioned and lets us know what he thinks.
AFRICAN AMERICAN
STEREOTYPES

1. All Black People Are Loud.
   In my group of friends I have noticed that most of them are loud. That being said, most of my friends are not Black. To me, being loud is part of one’s personality that the environment induces.

2. All Black Women Wear Wigs, Weave, Extensions, Etc.
   As if! No matter what race, women are able to wear extensions and wigs. Though people commonly relate fake hair to Black women, there are many who embrace their natural hair.

3. All Black People Like Watermelon, Chicken, Kool-Aid.
   Personally I love all three, but common sense tells me that not everyone does. Although some Black people are said to find these foods more appealing, there is no proof that they love it any more than the next person.

4. All Black People Can Sing.
   There have been some remarkable Black singers in our day. But, unfortunately, like any other race, not all Black people have the ability to sing. Everyone has his or her own special talent, whether it is singing, dancing, or acting.

5. All Black People Can Run Fast.
   Practice makes perfect! This stereotype is similar to “all black people can sing.” Some people are naturally born with talent and some work hard to increase it. African Americans are not born with any advantages that other races do not have the ability to gain. Everyone is born considerably the same, aside of genetic mutations, which isn’t race specific.

HISPANIC
STEREOTYPES

1. All Hispanic People Have Big Families.
   Hey! I may have a pretty big family, but that proves nothing. Some could argue that my parents just wanted a big family. Haven’t you seen that show “19 kids & counting” or “Jon & Kate Plus 8”? Now, those are pretty big families. Last time I checked, those families both consisted of White parents? Ok, maybe one of those parents is half Korean, but still this stereotype is way false.

2. All Hispanics Are Catholic.
   Since when does religion become a stereotype? My parents may have raised me Catholic, but at the end of the day it all depends on what I choose to believe in.

3. All Hispanics Can Speak Spanish.
   Like English, Spanish is a language that is taught and learned. Ultimately, Hispanics growing up in America don’t have the choice to learn Spanish. English is our country’s form of communication. Not every Hispanic can speak fluent Spanish, but maybe elementary or even some high school Spanish.

   Is it only Hispanic women who can clean? Have women of other races advanced, leaving Hispanic women behind? This stereotype is simply false. It’s not only Hispanic women, or even women in general, who clean, but men as well.

5. Hispanics Over-Pack Their Cars.
   When I hear this stereotype, I think of clowns packed into a tiny car. Being Hispanic I have never been the object of this stereotype, even coming from a household of eight. Although there might have been times when every seat in our mini-van was filled, my parents were strong advocates of seatbelts, so over-packing the vehicle was never allowed.
After asking about stereotypes, I asked these students what their thoughts were about whether we are living in a post-racial society. Before explaining what a post-racial society is, I received some pretty stunning feedback. Most of the students answered, “Yes, we do live in a post-racial society.” I found it odd that the same people who were able to list stereotypes, without hesitation, also said we are living in a post-racial society.

“Urban Dictionary” defines, a post-racial society as “a term used to describe a society or time period in which discussions around race and racism have been deemed no longer relevant to current social dynamics.” Watching the reactions on people’s faces at hearing this was a bit amusing. Students were quick to justify or change their original responses.

According to the Kent State Student Body Profile, the undergraduate ethnicity profile breaks out in this fashion:
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