

THE NUBIAN MESSAGE

The Afrikan-American Voice of North Carolina State University



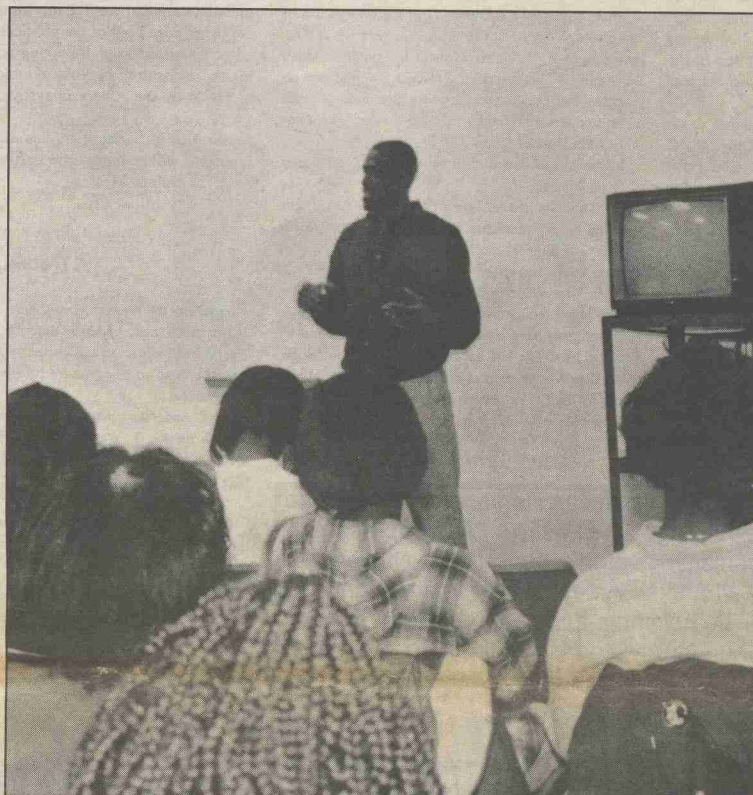
Volume 3, Edition 3

Established in 1992

October 6, 1994

Who Am I Revisited

by Shawna Daniels
News Editor



Hughes Suffren speaking at "Who Am I?"

Nerissa Adams/Staff

As Hughes Suffren played, "Young, Gifted, and Black," those who attend the "Who Am I?" session sponsored by the Afrikan-American Society of Physical and Mathematical Students knew they were about to learn something of themselves.

"Do you really know who you are? Do you know the essence of you? What can you be reduced to that will still be you?" asked Suffren, Assistant Afrikan-American Coordinator for Afrikan-American Student Affairs, to the audience.

If you went to Symposium and remember the Who Am I? sessions, you know the message: "People who know themselves want to learn more about themselves."

With the help of Kyran Anderson of the College of Physical and Mathematical Sciences and some audience members, Suffren gave to the audience of students from Apex High School, Enloe High School, and North Carolina State a brief, yet, strong history of Afrikans and Afrikan-Americans. Going back to Egyptian history, Suffren emphasized the strong understanding of mathematical and scientific concepts Ancient Egyptians had by using the building of the step pyramid (the world's first skyscraper) by Imhotep as an example.

Also, Anderson stated, "Columbus described wide-nose, brown-skinned, kinky-haired men travelling to South America" and pointed out that the thirteen Stone Heads of OLMEC in South America resemble Afrikan traders and warriors. The presence of these stone heads proved that Afrikans did not travel to

see Trade, page 2

see Language, page 2

Rwanda Unforgotten

by Nicole White
Reflections Editor

ed. note: All to often Afrikan Americans hear about happenings in Afrika and other countries and they are not all that sure about who exactly is involved. The purpose of this article is not to critique the situation in Rwanda, but to offer a little clarity to those still in the dark about some of its participants.

If you were glancing at a map of Afrika it wouldn't be hard to miss the country of Rwanda. Rwanda, which is located in the central part of Afrika, is about the size and shape of the state of Maryland. Overshadowed in size by its neighbors Tanzania, Zaire, and Uganda, Rwanda's civil war has thrust this country into the forefront of world news.

Rwanda consists of

two major ethnic groups: the Hutu and the Tutsi. They are often spoke of in terms of majority and minority; the Hutu being the majority and the Tutsi the minority. These two groups share a common ancestry and speak the same language.

CAMPUS BRIEFS

Friday, Oct. 7 at 7:00 pm in the Student Center Ballroom, the Black Finesse Modeling Group requires your attendance at its fashion show.

Saturday, October 22, 1994 from 10:00 am until 5:00 pm the "One World " Collective Bookfair, sponsored by Beacon Bookstore, Tribal House Bookstore, and NCSU AACC Library, will be held at the NCSU African-American Cultural Center. Participants are encouraged to purchase a book and donate it to the NCSU AACC Library. For more information, Call 878-9960.

Friday, October 21 from 11 a.m. till 2:00 the Student Mentor Association along with the Red Cross will sponsor Project Rwanda. This project involves sending aid to Rwanda through the Red Cross. All students and faculty are encouraged to donate as much as they possibly can. Later than night, a party will occur in the AACC at 9:00. Please attend.

The Afrikan-American Studies Club has been revived and they wish for all Afrikan-Americans to join once again. The new director is Dr. Victor Okafor, a visiting professor. To become a member contact The office of African American Affairs.

Correction

In the September 22, 1994 issue, The Nubian Message incidentally misquoted Ms. Anona Smith in the article "The Keys to Success" when she said that "these tests are not only . . ." The article should have read "that some people use these tests to prove that Afrikan-Americans are born with limitations." The Nubian Message sincerely regrets the error.

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Denying the Opportunity

by **Nakia Jones**
staff writer

Do you know how to change a tire?

Knowing how to change a tire was just one of the suggestions given to the women who attended the Alpha Kappa Alpha sponsored Self Defense seminar last Thursday, September 29. After being introduced by Ms. Cynthia Giles from North Carolina State University's Public Safety department.

Mr. Larry Ellis, a Crime Prevention Officer explained ways for women to keep themselves safer both on and off campus. Because, the best way to come out of an incident of assault is to avoid getting into one; therefore, students need to know their campus both geographically and administratively. They should be aware of the most well lit routes to their destination, locations of blue lights, and any bushes with legs. Students should also be knowledgeable of crime prevention services offered on campus, such as public safety patrols and the campus escort service.

Mr. Ellis emphasized the necessity for students, especially females, to take control of their lives. While walking on campus, know where you are going and walk purposefully and confidently. However, most crimes on campus happen around residence halls. At one point or another everyone has heard a "knock knock" joke. The response to "knock, knock" is "who's there?" Unfortunately, as pointed out by Mr. Ellis, the common response to a knock at a dorm room door is "come in." This is practically inviting an opportunity for violent crime. Dormitories need to be treated like homes. Doors and windows should be locked. Keys should be kept secure at all times and not lent out where they can be lost or copied. It is also good to know what is in your room that can be used for protection.

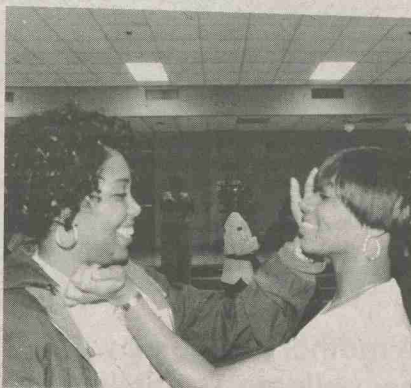
If you are a student lucky enough to be vehicularly advantaged you should also be aware of ways to be safe while driving. Lock your doors both when you get in and out of the car.

Always keep your gas tank at least half full. If you should break down on the road stay in your car. If someone stops to offer you help, give them a quarter and ask them to call the police—not your brother, mother or a friend.

In the event of a flat tire Mr. Ellis suggests that you learn how to change one. Attackers look for weak and defenseless victims. A strong, independent woman of the 90's changing her tire does not appear weak and a woman wielding a tire iron is not defenseless.

However, tire irons do not fit in the average purse. Consequently, Tom Sellow, Martin Hill, and Adam Schainblatt from Master Adam Schainblatt's United States Tae Kwon Do Institute along with Scott Francis and Wess Caudill from Progressive Martial Arts, taught the more than eager attendants of the Self Defense Seminar a few beginning moves.

Master Schainblatt's program concentrated on pressure points. These are locations on the body where the nerves end or cross. By striking or applying pressure to these points a victim of assault stands a chance of freeing themselves from an assailant's grip and escaping. The members of Progressive Martial arts taught the participants more aggressive moves such as punches and blocks. Both groups agreed that after you free yourself from your attacker the next step is to run. Sometimes, though, it is necessary to comply with the attacker—especially if they have a weapon. Above all, the most important thing to remember is to stay calm and in control.



Hallema Mitchell/Staff

The women of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. demonstrate the important techniques of self-defense.

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A Mother's Work Is Never Done

by Hallema Mitchel
staff writer

Momma can I . . . Momma I need . . . Momma I didn't . . . these are just a few of the phrases that mothers hear twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. At this point in our lives many of us can not imagine balancing a family and career successfully. Monday night the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., sponsored a truly enlightening program entitled, "A portrait of Black Women: Working Mother." The five panelist included Zelda Berryman, Dr. Brenda Allen, Dr. Gail Hawkins, Pate Smith, and Lisa Williams.

Zelda Berryman received a BS degree from North Carolina A & T in clothing and textiles and is employed with the Department of Registration and Records here at N.C. State. Dr. Brenda Allen is a coordinator of Afrikan-American students services in textiles. She is a graduate of Virginia State with a BS degree in Home Economics Education. Dr. Allen has also written and published several books.

Dr. Gail Hawkins received a BS degree from Florida State University, employed by the College of Management, and coordinator of Afrikan-American students in services in management. Pat Smith is a University of North Carolina—Greensboro graduate with a BS degree in Biology. She is employed with disability services. Lisa Williams is a counselor for battered women. She received a BA degree in Human Resources Development, and served in the US Army. She is now studying to receive a doctorate's degree.



Nakia Jones/Staff

A mother struggles with her children as she listens to the panel discuss .

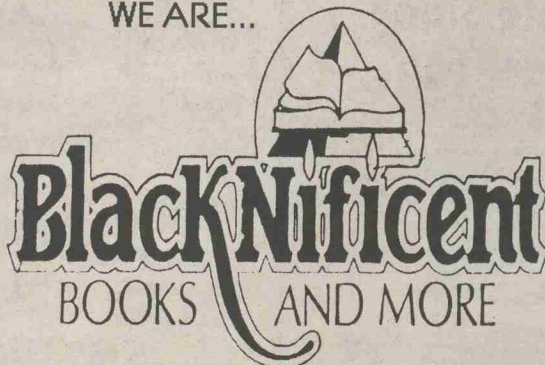
As the audience sat in awe as these women describe a typical day in the life of a working mother, each of the panelists agreed that being a working mother is no easy job. A typical day for a working mother begins about six in the morning and ends whenever the children are finished being taken care of.

The women advised that while seeking a spouse, choose someone who is easy to communicate with. It is important that each partner contribute 100% of themselves to keep the relationship prosperous and productive. Problems must be dealt with up front to avoid problems down the road. The mothers stated that in order to have a balanced and successful life, it must first be prioritized in order of importance. The arrangement is usually committing to religion, family and then career. The panels final tip was before we commit to anything whether, it is a career or a relationship, know who you are and what you want in life. The five working mothers' were a true source of information.

A fish is as free as he wants to be . . .
as long as he doesn't leave his fish bowl.
To be free means to have psychological freedom.

Anonymous

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Educational Mission to Ghana

During the past five years North Carolina State University has provided opportunities for the exchange of faculty, staff, and students between NCSU and countries in West Africa. In the spring of 1994 a working team of 31 NCSU faculty and staff visited Ghana and established linkage agreements with the three Ghanaian institutions. In keeping with these agreements, the mission of NCSU, and the efforts to internationalize our campus community, NCSU is offering an educational excursion to Ghana.

The purpose of this educational mission is to provide participants with a first-hand opportunity to observe and interact with Ghanaian people on an academic, cultural, and professional basis. Such interaction will provide experiences that examine the legacy of the African peoples and explore the significance of Africa's role in today's world. It is also intended that participants will return to actively encourage future involvement in the NCSU sponsored study abroad opportunities in Ghana.

The trip will take place January 2-13, 1995. The cost is approximately \$2600 which will include airfare and all expenses in the country. The cost of a passport, immunizations, visa, and miscellaneous expenses is not included in this fee. NCSU has committed funds to support \$1300: please inquire at 355 African American Cultural Center (515-5210) for further information concerning scholarships. There are approximately 29 spaces available for undergraduate and graduate students.. First year students will not be able to participate in this excursion:

Students who meet the following criteria will have the greatest chance of selection:

- 1) Demonstrated leadership and commitment to the university and peers through on-campus involvement in student government, Chancellor's advisory board, service organizations, etc.
- 2) Commitment to supporting and promoting future study abroad endeavors and sharing the experience with fellow students upon return. Each participant will be expected to submit a research paper of at least 5 pages related to their subject major (or minor). This paper will be due within six weeks of return.
- 3) Genuine interest in African culture.
- 4) A GPA of 2.25 or above.

The application includes one letter of reference from an NCSU faculty or staff. The application deadline is October 14: due to the limited time available to obtain passports, immunizations, etc, no late applications submittal will be allowed. Participants will be notified of their acceptance by October 21. Applications are available from: 355 African American Cultural Center, Student Center Annex, Box 7318, NCSU, Raleigh, NC 27695-7318; telephone: 919-515-5210.

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Black Finesse

Black Finesse Modeling Group is a newly formed organization at North Carolina State University. By using the techniques of modeling, Black Finesse is dedicated to increasing its member's poise, confidence, and personality. Membership is open to all regularly enrolled students who have a desire to increase their self-confidence through modeling. Members of Black Finesse Modeling Group learn many techniques, such as proper posture and eye contact, that can be useful in both their personal and professional lives.



Stacy Lettsome/Staff

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What Moment

**What hour must come and pass
dare we accept the moment's truth**

**That of which the cruelty
of unmasked hate
suffocates our youth.**

**What day shall erase
or sunset declare
the eclipse of displaced decoys**

**What moment?
This moment!
Shall black Men emerge from black boys.**

Kim Devonne

Dear Brother

Take it upon yourself, dear brother—to teach them
to stand and sit, to kneel and bow to the Creator,
to entertain and to love your Ebony Queen,
to move and breathe and maintain your very being
ALL beneath a naked foot, and yet to rise

Take this burden as it has been inscribed upon your active mind
since the days of golden empires and mighty Afrikan nations,
since the moments of agony lying in your own blood, sweat and urine
for an eternity upon the Ship,
since the degradation of your naked mother's body, raped before your very eyes
... and your sister's too, before she was sold away.
since the humiliation of your brothers who were mated with the women of the House
for the purpose of free labor production, since their brutal beatings in quest of the
manhood training they thirst for so impatiently,
since the breakdown of love, intimacy, trust,
marriage, and family among our people

Speak to them! Make them listen! The lives of our children are at stake, dear brother.

You must understand that we see each other as "things" still—we destroy each other as a
result of "The Trade". Open your eyes and see that these days are a part of the contract.
When our people were bought, somehow later generations were written in—as a clause
of some kind.

Through trickery, we too have been purchased, and at times we recognize that our life is
not our own to design ... and we wonder why.

Unseen forces manipulate better judgment. We, too, have been purchase. Believe it!
Can you not see how we have been treated since we arrived. Of course you can. Even
those of us who feel we have "arrived" have forgotten where we have "arrived" from. To
be Afrikan is, to some, a curse and a slap in the chemically processed head. Plead
with them, dear brother.

Make no apologies, either, for we have found the clause in the contract—the code which
paralyzes thoughts and emotions and feeling and basic unity. Tell them to believe in
themselves. Make them call and response, "I know self-control. I know myself. I can
communicate. I shall speak up and rebuild my families. I am proud. I am worthy."

Speak up, Black man, as in the days of glorious kings and strategic warriors—
commanders, leaders.

And yes, speak up Black woman, elegant queen woman of virtue, mother of all that is
and shall be.

Then extend your hand out to your brother whose vision may still be under contract.
Touch his heart with brotherly kindness and love, release his mind from his forefather's
bondage.

Teach him that he, too, as is every man, an Afrikan.

Stimulate your mind. Let a heart of peace be your bodyguard and an intelligent,
informed view of your positive "self" be your counselor.

With love, dear brother.

Always me, Sis.

K. Devonne Williams

WHEN I KNOW THE POWER OF MY BLACK HAND

**I do not know the power of my hand,
I do not know the power of my black hand.**

**I sit slumped in the conviction that I am powerless,
tolerate ceilings that make me bend.
My godly mind stoops, my ambition is crippled;
I do not know the power of my hand.**

**I see my children stunted,
my young men slaughtered,
I do not know the mighty power of my hand.**

**I see the power of my life and death in
another man's hands, and sometimes
I shake my woolly head and wonder:**

Lord have mercy! What would it be like...to be free?

**But when I know the mighty power of my black hand
I will snatch my freedom from the tyrant's mouth,
know the first taste of freedom on my eager tongue,
sing the miracle of freedom with all the force
of my lungs,
christen my black land with exuberant creation,
stand independent in the hall of nations,
root submission and dependence from the soil of my soul
and pitch the monument of slavery from my back when
I know the mighty power of my hand!**

Lance Jeffers

Delphinus' Triumph

*Beneath a midnight sky's blanket
Into your eyes i stare
& point 2 the light of the moon
2 place a sunflower in your hair.*

*My hand against your face,
I stroke your smooth, brown skin
In hopes of receiving an embrace
So that our love may begin.*

*Let not Heaven's gentle tears
Lead us 2 shelter 2 soon.
4 i'd die than sacrifice
Your loveliness in this light of the moon.*

*Rather,
Here is where i would like 2 remain,
Making wishes upon the stars with u.
But any are in vain,
4 mine have already come true.*

Danny Wilson



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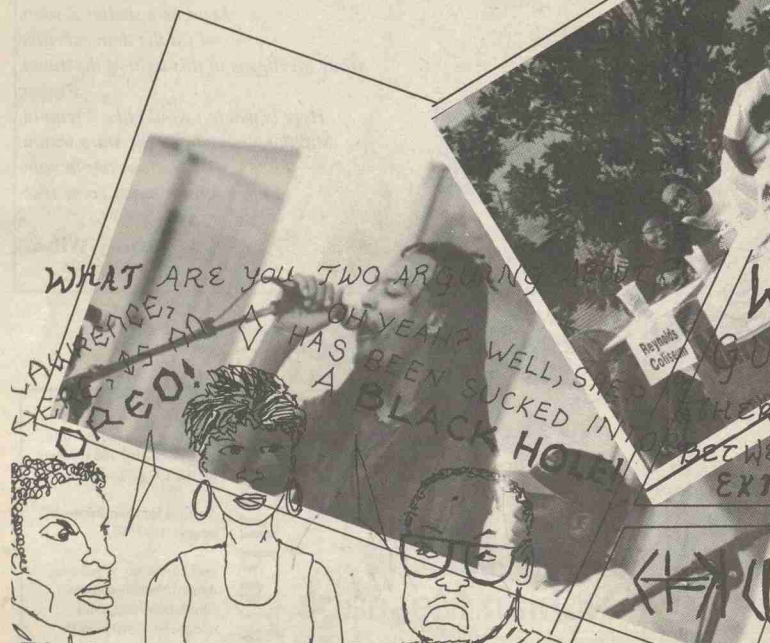
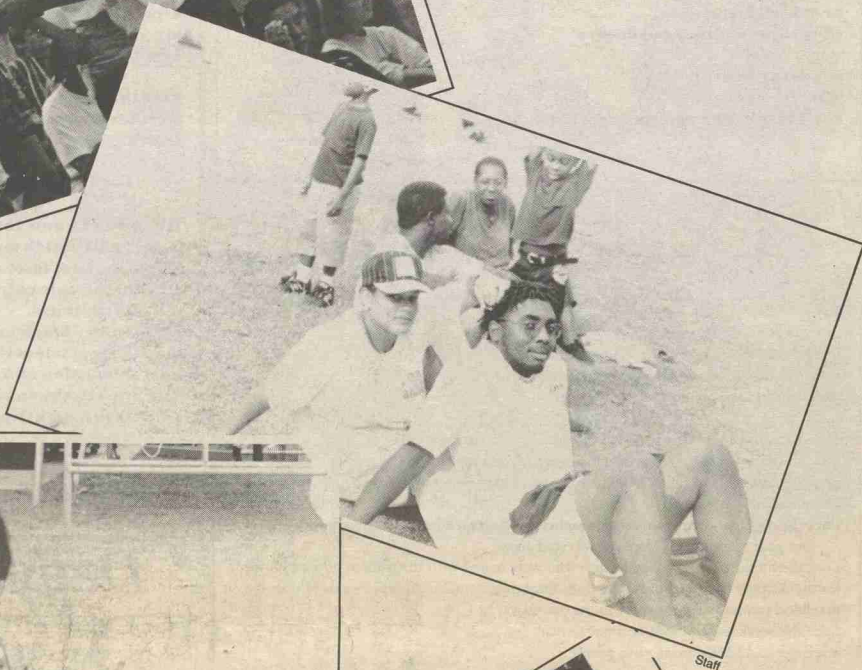
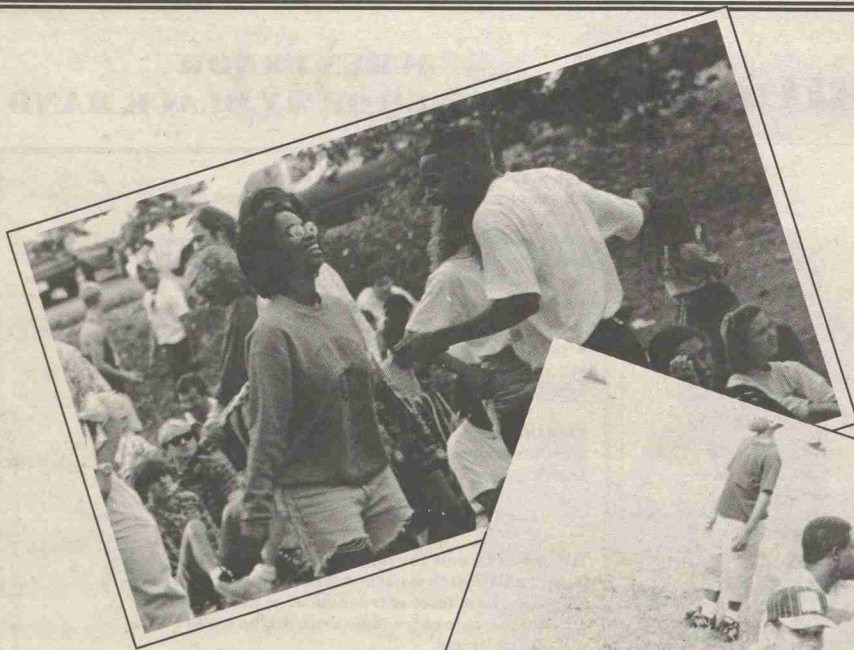
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As a result of the continuous compliments given by the readers of The Nubian Message, we have decided to make this a permanent page in all issues

Photos by Tangela Gray

abstract 194

Children of the Sun

by **Danny Byers**
staff writer

***Author's Note:** Before I begin, I'd like to send a long overdue thank you to Dr. M.Z. York of the Holy Tabernacle Ministries for enlightening me on the vast amounts of knowledge that I spread throughout the Opinions page. Also love goes to my brother Dr. Rev. Alphonso J. Woodall of Greensboro for taking many long hours relay ing a lot of that precious knowledge to me.

A few issues ago, I did an article entitled, 'From Kingly to Kinky Crowns, ' in which I wrote about the importance of our hair. In this particular article, I introduced the notion that we are the 9 Ether descendants of the original people who are called Ether, Ethiopian, or Kushites, the original Asiatic Watusi and Pygmy tribes. This article is sort of a follow up to the hair story.

Amon Re, Horus, Isis, and Osiris were all Egyptian Gods as we know them today. What you may not know is that they were human just like us. They were viewed as 'Children of the Sun' and considering the fact that we are descendants of them, it to, should seem reasonable to state that we are Sun Children as well. Although this could be deemed a worthy argument in any Discrete Mathematics course (P->Q, Q->R, Thus P->R), my argument goes a lot deeper than just acknowledging the fact of our Divine birthright.

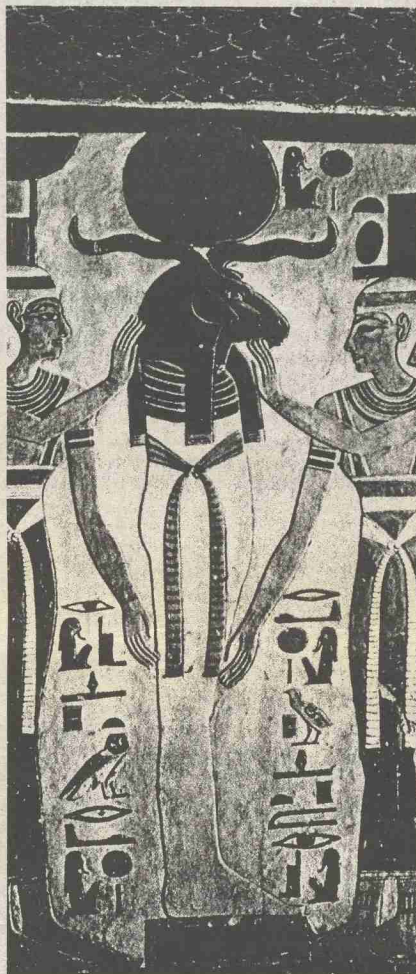
By stating that we are children of the sun, I am also meaning we are the only race of people that can live directly under the sun without developing any severe case of skin cancer. The sun is seen as our friend while to others it is a dreaded enemy. Our skin and hair makeup is entirely different from those of Caucasians, in ways such that we have an abundance of melanin in our bodies for protection from potentially harmful sun rays. Melanin is a pigment produced by cells in the epidermis called melanocytes that strengthens as well as darkens our skin.

If you check up on your history, You'll notice that everything was based around the Sun; eating, working, etc. Back then, there was another calendar system used before our current. The Ancient Israelites used a solar calendar, but was later changed to a lunar one.

Why was this done? What was the fear of the solar? The answer lies within you. The fear was brought about by your solar plexus. Now you're probably asking, 'why was the solar plexus feared?' They feared the fact that it contains a fire; a fire that burns inside you and me. The Ancient Babylonians knew about it, the Ancient Egyptians knew about it, the Ancient Ethiopians knew about it, the Ancient Mesopotamians knew about it, yet in the case with all of our rich history and knowledge, the information has been lost or hidden. The Europeans will never tell you about it. Here's a few questions that you should ask yourself.

When people drink etheric or ethyl alcohol, what is their first reaction? It burns, or they feel heat inside. If you had a grill with fire on it, and you pour ether alcohol on it what happens? It flares up. If you take your hand and put it in front of your mouth and breathed out, what is it that you feel? You feel heat, of course. If you were dead and the breath was no longer there, your body would become cold. Somebody does not want us to know that there is a fire inside of us. From the Book of St. John in the Bible, it states: "the light shineth in the dark-

sun. So when you identify the great light as the sun, I want you to tell me, people of the sun, where is the lesser light? That light is inside you. There is an actual fire burning inside you. Our hair serves as a receiver of energy that flows throughout the universe, as it did for Samson in the Bible. It is our strength. The thing about our hair, is that is very much as alive as we are. Everything in nature that is alive grows up towards the sun, for instance: People, trees, plants, etc. When we go out in the sun our hair draws up and gets kinky(kingly). This is how we get charged with energy from the outer sun.



picture taken from Gods and Myths of Ancient Egypt

Re and Osiris united, between Isis and Nephthys.

"And he told her all his heart, and said to her, a razor has not come upon my head, for I have been a Nazarite to

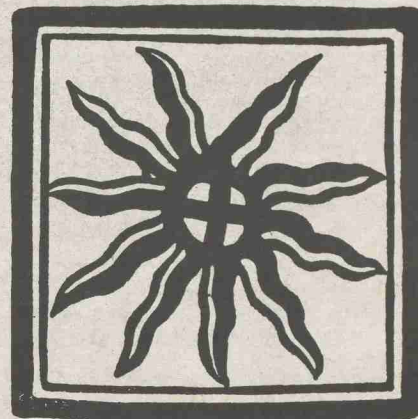
Elohim from my mother's womb: If I am shaved, then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man." (Judges 16:17)

Here's a little common sense test for you. In order for you to light a fire you need what—oxygen. In order to sustain life you need—oxygen. When fire burns, it gives off carbon. When you exhale, you give off carbon. So when oxygen burns a certain substance it gives off carbon, and if you breathe in oxygen and in return expel carbon dioxide, something must be burning inside, just put two and two together.

You will never be taught this in school. What you will be taught, however, is the circulatory system, and the respiratory system and how the two combine to cause the fusing of liquids into gases inside of our lungs.

If you look up Kreb's cycle in an encyclopedia, you will find out when you eat food and chew it up, you transform it into liquids which go into your system and gets into your blood stream. The liquids then find themselves arriving in your lungs and then as you breathe there are little nerves that trans-

form the liquids into gases or in other words the liquids ignite. This is what you see. The next time you go to the supermarket and buy a fresh (meaning fresh blood is still seen at the bottom of wrapper) piece of meat, come home and open the package where your hot frying pan or barbecue grill awaits you. Drop



the meat onto the pan and watch what happens.

A large flame will whoosh up in the air before you and then it will calm down. Some people say this happens because of the liquid and the oil, but this is not true. The flame arises because inside the blood of animals there is an acid that can transform itself into something that can be ignited. There are many medically documented cases where people have mysteriously caught on fire. Even today scientists can not explain spontaneous combustion. To the Muslim world, The Koran refers to that light inside us, that fire, as naarsamun or smokeless fire [El's Quran 15:27]. Naar- not nawr because the first light that He created in the Book of Bereshith(Genesis) was not the sun. In Genesis 1:6, God said let there be light, right? That light was not the sun. He later on created the sun if you continue reading (Gen. 1:14-15).

That first light was to take us out of a state of darkness. Up until recently, darkness has been translated as something bad. Maybe, just maybe, because of the color of our skin. They say darkness and blackness is evil and bad, yet the Bible states that the Almighty existed in some state and then created light. Now the Muslim world make a mistake.

They say Allah is the light, but it says in the scriptures Allah created the light. Now if He created the light, how could He be the light? Unless, of course, He created something in His image and after His likeness. And that light that He created in His image and after His likeness is the light inside you. Stop looking for His image and likeness to be your skin color, hair, nose, ears, mouth and eyes. Begin by looking inside yourself. This where you will find the answer; the light that is in man, the true light.

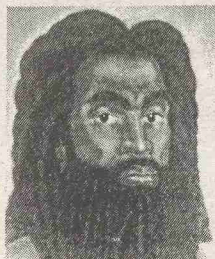
"There was the true light, even the light which lights every man, coming into the world." (John 1:9)

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or refer to the D.H. Hill library for these books, or subjects:

Kreb's Cycle
Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt by Erik Hornung
Man and the Sun by Jacquetta Hawkes
The Samson-Saga by Abram Smythe Palmer
Gods and Myths of Ancient Egypt by Robert A. Armour
The Respiratory System by Reader's Digest



Samson

ness but the darkness comprehendeth it not." (John 1: 5)

In the Book of Bereshith or Genesis it says, "He created two lights, the greater light and the lesser light." (Gen. 1: 16).

People often mistake these two great lights as the sun and the moon, but this is not correct. The moon does not have any light. It is non-luminous and receives its light from the

How Can We Sing Our Songs in a Strange Land?

by **Joanne Dowdy**
Visiting Instructor

The letters come at me, spewing forth from a dragon's mouth, so many mangled bodies floating on a field of white. There is not much that you can do to defend yourself. Words are your own worst enemy. Every letter falls dead, unresponsive and still, as the next letter takes its place quietly, orderly, like so many grave stones at the military cemetery. The sense of stifling oppression builds up after a very little interval.

All along you are talking to yourself, or rather, your self is speaking in the idiom of feeling, intuition and stomach contractions. The speaker continues to hurl black bodies, curled into letters, into the air. The hope is that you, the listener will swim upward from that lake of orderly black matter and respond in an "intelligible" manner. All the while that you are swimming around in the sewerage, dead history, dead mothers, dead cultures, all floating around your eyes and ears, threatening to engulf your throat and render you dead on arrival at the "answer". Can anyone guess what it is like to translate into a foreign tongue every blessed thought or emotion that ever crosses a person's consciousness?

As Vietnamese Monique Truong says:

A voice that must travel through hostility and disbelief, disbelief that the "American language could come out of the mouth of an "Oriental" and a "chink," is one quickly hushed. If it manages to survive, it is a force at once driven and haunted by the pounding heart and the acidic adrenaline of fear.

"I am sitting in Silence, Not in Ignorance"

The fear of being rebuffed is only equal to the fear of not having the words to say what you mean. It is the exact feeling regardless of the background that you come from.

Those of our ancestors who had the great advantage of speaking just as their fathers did, had the privilege of luxuriating in a field of familiarity. Letters float in a sea of warmth and ancestral intonation caressed the ear. The design of the "master" letters did not lacerate their tongues. The unending dilemma of choosing to be numb to the pain, as the words bumped and scratched over the insides of the mind and the tongue, did not inhibit the need to communicate. "Other" was not representative of "loss" or "displacement" as in the transla-

tion to "erasure" or "unintelligible" verbiage. Language did not conspire to leave them feeling that all of their history was being made into a bad foreign movie, with subtitles that had very little bearing on the truth of the pictures on the screen of their lives.

Life isn't kind, and the history of the prisoner is one of accommodation. The cell has to be made into a home, the guards have to be transported into well-intentioned relatives, the curfew hours are just so many precautions that careful parents put in place to insure that their "children" do not come to harm. So the letters stand here on the page, sentinels keeping watch over the entire Afrikan Diaspora. Every thought is monitored, every emotion is spruced up and slapped into submission, so that all the other listeners understand the living subtitles.

Have you noticed how very few of the letters actually stand up? The "T" and the "L", have a good shake at independence. But the "b" and the "d" are pregnant, they are anchored by their swollen bellies, clinging to the general height of all the other young members of the alphabet. The "m" and the "n", the "s" and the "r" will never see life the way the other, naturally outspoken letters do. And this view of the world has become second nature to the point that there will never be another reality for the letters of the lower case! If anyone knows differently, I would like to hear about it, because the view of the world from my pen is often bleak.

I can already hear the defenders of the "Alphabet Republic". After all, the verbose will interject, there is great freedom in discipline. Look at how uniformly those letters line up. They don't have to be told to stand, stoop or crouch, spoon fashion, so that there is no space between each other. And then when there is space, you have just a hair's breath, whatever that is, so you can squeeze yet another disgruntled word in next to the previous one. Of course, there is no protest from these words, they belong to the power of the pen. The power only coming from the intellects that have long since juxtaposed exclusivity with privilege.

The format of words on paper reminds the discerning "reader" of those who survived the Middle Passage. In the holds of the slave ships that came from the west coast of Africa, a history of language was stored in tact. By the time the travelers on those ships came ashore on the coasts of the American continent, and the Caribbean, a whole world of chaos and anarchy was set loose. The language symbols that had once made sense

in the minds of the slaves began to be erase. There were new sounds inscribing themselves on the immigrants' consciousness. The touch of the whip against the flesh made indelible designs of meaning in the minds of the slaves, sentences that will never be recorded on the pages of the new nation's history. But who could read lashes, forced penetration, cuts from iron chains and atrophied muscles from the cramps of immobility. The eye has to see so that the heart might believe. English, Spanish, French and Portuguese words have no meaningful place in the transposition of Middle Passage emotion.

Have you ever noticed how rattled a person gets when someone screams at them? Have you ever noticed how the eyes bulge and the breathing gets short, or completely arrested? Have you ever let your mind "read" the signs of abuse that register on the respondent's gestures? No one looks for those guideposts unless they are sensitive to the nature of domination and its effects on the subjugated. You see, it takes many, many centuries of absolute certainty that a nation has evolved the most eloquent way of communicating meaning among it's members in order to attain the level of absolute conviction to inflict its culture on others. In such a trained response to "other" there is very little opportunity for the obvious to make itself felt in the exchange of meaning. People who don't see anything except their reflection in things and people all the time, tend to miss the codes of meaning that other people develop to interpret their existence.

Subjugated speakers, bereft of their Mother tongue, have to find a new language system to represent their history in this new land. For the survival of the new nation, communal suffering must not lose the meaning along the way to a representative language. We have to create a republic of meaning. If our letters bend or stoop, reach out or up, it must be as a result of the experiences that we mean for them to reflect. Ours must be a codified system that sounds the tones of our history long before the Middle Passage and reflects the sweep on our existence in this strange land. We need a syntax that captures the fragmented perspective that we have grown through, and are still defying in our response to life. Ours must be a democratic republic, a language that lets us reflect our Mother tongue and our Father tongue, and give voice to our children.

Power concedes nothing without demand. It never will. Find out just what people will submit to and you have found out the exact amount of injustice and wrong which will be imposed upon them; and these will continue till they have resisted either with words or blows or with both. The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those who they suppress.

Frederick Douglass, 1849.

Afrikan Consciousness in White Mask

by Juma
staff writer

What does it take to develop an Afrikan consciousness? This is one of the many questions being asked today in Afrikan-American communities. We are affecting our environment around us by demanding not only more representation but truer images of what we are as Afrikans. We are looking at history and demanding a rewriting of the books and telling of the stories not to glorify our community, but to simply state the truths of the times. The facts have been hidden by those who care to glorify their culture and maintain their position. To create such a hegemonic view of reality suits them fine, it is their way. And when we demand equality, they give us their definition of justice, their definition of freedom and their definition of equality.

We have seen their definitions of such concepts put into play in South Afrika, the Philippines, Haiti, South America, and the United States just to name a few. The results speak for itself. Some do recover but at what cost to themselves and their families. For those still looking for hope in their oppressor's eyes, they will probably die first.

The stories must be told by those who care to see more than just themselves. These individuals are not trying to win the Nobel Peace Prize or recognition from the so-called "Greater Society". Their job must be to erode the societies built on lies and to restructure reality with knowledge of its past that is not comfortable for those who live and prosper under such lies. They will not only attack the European world for its major role in engineering such an elaborate tale of who's who in history but they will go even further into our own communities.

The European's guilt is nothing new to us or to even them. For some it is a way of life and for others, they have no overt knowledge of its privileges but their attitude is "why mess with a good thing". The latter have a genuine or self-imposed ignorance on what truly happened. They accept some things were done against other races but have no measure of the extent. They are not willing to look at the extent of damage done not only to our psyche but to their own. To be so puffed up over a heritage and culture that is founded on such well-placed lies that when exposed, will reek havoc with those who still possess a conscious.

Theirs is a dilemma that will be discussed in a later date but my main concern is our conscious. The development of this Afrikan Conscious is not something to take lightly. Some have changed their names, others their garb, and still others their spiritual direction. The knowledge of self is a powerful thing that allows only two true paths acceptance or denial, or does it. For those developing their core identity on the grounds of campuses all across the U.S., there is a splintering of the soul taking place.

When it comes to separating the role of our responsibilities to our self and our Afrikan community, we are being asked to center our identity into our community to have within ourselves no boundaries. This is the Afrocentric way of thinking so unlike the rugged individualism of the west. This Afrocentric thinking creates in us an individual who takes a greater role in his/her life to be connected within the sphere that is our own ancestors, ourselves, and those to be born.

In developing this conscious we have to examine the masks that have hidden our soul. These white masks, as I call them, are remnants of the early shackles that have been embedded in our minds and in our souls. These masks go before us and announce who we are before we even arrive. They have existed in our community for decades in many forms: religious affiliations, personal names, child-rearing, family responsibility, and self-denial. Any one of these could be a paper or a book in of themselves. But, the mask that I want to unveil is one we

see every day on campuses across America—Greek Life.

I do not pose this point of view to start conflict which it will but to spark reasonable dialogue on the future role of these institutions in our community. If the question was put to the history of these organizations there could be a valid reasoning for their existence. They have provided at times for our community and represented us well. I will not deny them that. I respect them for their presence then and now. But are they presently losing focus? Yes. Are they losing touch with the community? Yes. Are they becoming more elitist and pompous in their ways? Yes. But, they are not the only ones in this boat rowing upstream against the roaring rivers of change in our communities. Their company is cozy, established, and also in great need of re-structuring—the various churches, the NAACP, the Urban League, and the CORE. They have put themselves so far out to grasp the greater communities and the intergrationalist ideas that they have lost their way in their own home.

Some greek chapters are so busy worrying about the next step show or dance that they can see no real immediate problems that they could deal with in their own community. Some chapters parade around so detached from our core reality as a community that they can only see the hazing, the token greek paraphernalia, and their precious colors as their most immediate concern. These chapters use to be the exception (or were those only the images we were taught), but now they have become the rule. The decent chapters that do exist exert a strong presence though. They are respectable and disciplined and are noted for such in the communities they exist in. But, what do they bring into the minds of those who are influenced by them, is that which precedes their arrival and stays after they are gone—their names.

Many organizations in the Afrikan community need to be refocused and restructured to deal with the present problems in our community. As I spoke earlier, the biggest problem with the greek community are not their programs, but the way they define themselves—their name—which goes before them, before they can even speak, their white mask is. By white mask, I want to give a very clear picture here. When you think of the greeks, you do not see the fertile lands of Afrika or the faces of our vast people. When you think of the greeks, you do not see the slave ships of the 1800's or the bodies of our ancestors lining the ocean bed. When you think of the greeks, you don't see the Negro soldiers of the Civil War or the protesters during the Civil Rights era. You do not see Egypt(Kemit), Mali, Sudan, Songhai, or even South Afrika. None of these things come to mind.

But what you do see are white faces. You see some of the most famous plagiarist our history has known. In the arts, sciences, maths, philosophies, and many other fields they have told the world their story of how they have created and founded our reality while being taught themselves from the mouths and institutions of our people. Even the greek letters, as they are titled, are not greek but Phoenician. You would think that Afrikan-Americans would make this point known, but they do not. Our people preceded them by thousands of year. The issue of time and accomplishments are a joke when looking at the greek culture and our own. There had been in existence ninety-two pyramids in Egypt and thirty-three in Sudan a thousand years before there was ever a Greece. The establishment of so many great civilizations as were in the Afrikan continent had come and gone and risen again thousands of years before Greece had even been a thought; but, we will smugly put on this white mask and allow it to speak for us.

Our children do not see or perceive our Afrikan consciousness in length and breath because of this white mask which defines us. They see Alpha Phi Alpha, Omega Psi Phi, Delta Sigma Theta or Alpha Kappa Alpha in which they, like the members of such groups, get a proud feeling in their chest when the words are spoken. It reminds me of Al Jolson theater pro-

ductions'. How some white actors would paint their faces in black make-up and smile, grin, and buck dance portraying stereotypes of our people at the time. I am going before the world, our community and our children and saying look at my Afrikan pride and my Afrikan consciousness through a white mask or even more bluntly look how white I can be.

Then when those who do look to define themselves in their Afrikan consciousness realize the role the Greek civilization has played in taking credit for that which they stole from our ancestors. How will they view your organization for carrying such a name? How should you view them for defining you in such a way, those of you involved in such groups? You speak of pride and honor of what greek life has done for our communities throughout history, but by claiming someone else's heritage—which is a lie and a slap in our ancestors and our own faces. What does that say about your own pride in your own heritage?

Being the next generation we are our ancestors future and our children's present world. We must take charge of what has been done to our minds and in our bodies throughout time. We must reshape our world to take into account our presence on what we define as reality based on the truths uncovered. We can not rely on our ancestors or parents' struggle and strives to define us know. We will stand on their shoulders and reach for new heights.

Their teachings must be taught and their contributions must be shaken loose from the earth in which they were buried and learned. Esteem must be placed in our children's hearts with bold power not deluded through any masks. The

When we define ourselves we do not go to the ancestors of the white race or their children and ask who we are or for them to represent us. We go to our mothers, our fathers, our grandparents and our ancestors and allow them to reflect back to us who we are. To do anything else is to be a fool!

future of my communities will be powerful, those images that lie against our nature will be swept away or we will not go forward boldly, but buck-dancing side ways.

I can not see Kappa Alpha Psi, Sigma Gamma Rho, Zeta Phi Beta or Alpha Kappa Psi defining brother and sisters in our community in the future. That which is greek in our communities will pass away not with marches or sit-ins or even tempered debates but with a silent and powerful wave. We take no pride in fighting to possess something that is a lie to our nature as does not belong to our spirit. These organizations will sit down and look at one another and carry out this mandate with heads held high. These groups will not be dismantled but re-structured. Their new names will be a mark of this. No longer will they be reflections of their own puffed up egos, but bold and humble trailblazers in defining what Afrikan consciousness is.

footnote1: In places where I or my is used instead of ours or we, I do not apologize because there is no I or me in an Afrikan community.

footnote 2: In many places throughout this paper the word greek is written in lower case; this is not a mistake. For what the greeks have done through plagiarism and thievery or what has been done through them by the destruction of our history, puts them in a position where they do not deserve to be made significant or respected.

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