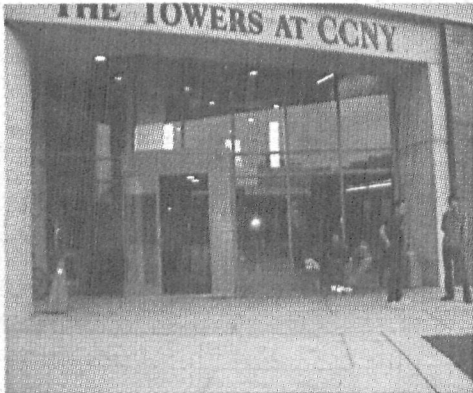


# The Paper

Medium For People Of African Descent Vol. 126 No. 2 October 2008

"So We Stand Here On The Edge Of Hell In Harlem And Look Out On The World And Wonder What We're Gonna Do In The Face Of What We Remember"  
-Langston Hughes

## At The Towers: The Silent Demonstration Against the Reprehensible Costs of Rent



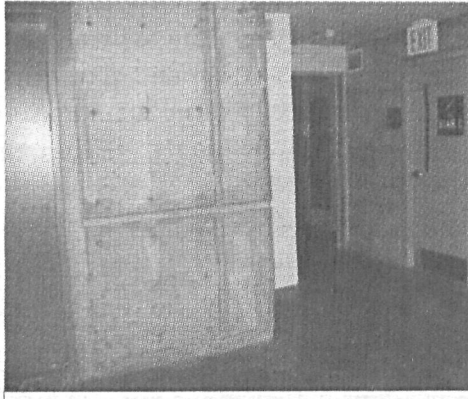
The Towers façade. As elegant as it may look, many parts still remain incomplete.

By: W. Okumu Owuor

Albert (not the real name) was filled with utmost joy when he first heard that City College was setting up The Towers. Then a High School senior, he felt relieved from the try-your-luck game of applying to a myriad of colleges all over the Country. Unperturbed that the only doubt he had about joining City College was cleared, he presented his application which was accepted. Two years later, after Albert decided to follow in the footsteps of his deceased father, who also attended City College, he had little to regret

about his decision, but he had very little to celebrate either. Like many of his colleagues, Albert later realize that he had chewed more than he could swallow and now as he chokes with pain, fumbling with words to express his disappointment, he finds it only proper to blame himself for his predicament. Albert quit the Towers' residence after one semester. But is it Albert's fault that his dream of having a safe residence close to school remained a pipe dream? Should Albert blame himself for the exorbitant costs of rent at the Towers?

We can't deny the importance of the Towers, neither can we refute the visible fact that it has opened its doors to many students, but the unfortunate thing we have to mention is that it has almost closed the same doors to the students who need them most. The sky-high costs for rent which are clearly incommensurate with the quality of life has presented a repelling picture of CUNY's pioneer student housing. Anecdotal findings show that not many students have



A section of the hallway and the elevators that still remains unpainted.

managed to stay at the Towers for more than two semesters. Even the out of state students only consider the place as a stop-over, where they can squat briefly before pressing on for more cost-efficient housing.

"Maybe that's the reason they christened this building, The Towers," a resident who declined to be identified for fear of victimization, disclosed when broached with the idea of the rent. Clearly wounded, she added, "The Towers are not necessarily for students who have a compelling reason to stay close to school but a 'ballroom' for well-to-do, fun-

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## TILL BILL PASSES

By Herb Boyd

People who may have been involved in unsolved murder cases during the civil rights era can no longer rest comfortably. The U.S. Senate, by unanimous consent, passed the Till Bill Wednesday morning on September 24th. Passage of the bill will establish a cold cases unit within the Justice Department, empowering them to pursue unpunished crimes that occurred from the time of Emmett Till's murder in 1955 up through an unspecified date in the future. "This is great news," said filmmaker Keith Beauchamp, "and I'm sure a lot of folks whose relatives and friends were victims during this period are pleased to hear

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## It's Not America... It's YOU!

By Jeff Delices

Comedian Chris Rock is one of many Americans to have answered or repeated the cliché question "Is America ready for a Black president?" Rock starred in the film *Head of State* about an African American that has won the presidency; however when he appeared on Black Entertainment Television (B.E.T.) and was asked, "Is America ready for a Black president", Rock answered "No." Ironically, Rock introduced Barack Obama at the Apollo Theater in 2007 and has openly endorsed Obama for President of the United State. Why is he and the public so quick to say "America is not ready for a Black president?"

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# Reflection

By Lindsie Augustin

The clock ticking closer to my prospective graduation day and I have reached a time of reflection. I have been running *The Paper* for three and a half years, and I must say I am exceptionally proud of what we have become. Marching to the beat of our own drums, we have always done what we thought was best and more times than not it has worked out in our favor. Primarily student based, we have counted on each other to get through the many obstacles that has been thrown at us as "the black paper" on campus. But we have had much help. With the guiding eyes of faculty members such as the late Gloria Bynoe Thomas, Professor Debbie Kennedy, Joyce Conoly-Simmons, and Maudette Brownlee in the SEEK Department, we have been able to keep our heads afloat. And now joining team of faithful supporters for *The Paper* are esteemed activist, author, historian and journalist Herb Boyd, who has taken the role of our new Faculty Advisor, and writer for the *Amsterdam News*, Daa'iya Lomax, who has offered her professional skills in editing *The Paper*. Offering

much more than a mediocre pat on the back; they are providing us with the encouragement, support, motivation, and the push we need to continue to be as influential and empowering as we are capable of being. We are eternally grateful to everyone who has helped us reach this point and who continue to be there for us as we push forward.

*The Paper* has always been home to a creative, exertive, and a forceful group of not only Black students on campus but anyone and everyone who has ever had something worth saying. Anyone who has made a conscious effort to change a situation that negatively affected not only them but everyone around them, and who has never been afraid to stand up and speak up. If you fit into this category, then there is no reason why you shouldn't join the paper that embodies this, and with our all-star team of supporters, there is absolutely no way you can go wrong.

Just when I thought it was us against the world, our dream team of mentors came along and lifted us up...so I ask...why not let them lift you up too. For more information about joining *The Paper* please see our ads throughout this issue. Your voice matters - Let it be heard here.

## The Paper

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*The Paper*

Wants to Hear from YOU!!

Articles and letters to the Editor are welcomed and can be submitted to *The Paper* for consideration. All submissions should be between 300-500 words. We look forward to reading what you have to say!

### OUR MISSION

For over thirty years *The Paper* has served as a medium through which students, faculty and members of the local community can communicate. As a publication for people of African descent, *The Paper* focuses on pertinent issues facing the Black and Latino community as well as issues that are of relevance to people of all races and ethnicities. In addition, this publication is a valuable resource for CCNY students and faculty for information on everything from scholarships to job opportunities. With increased membership and support from the student body, *The Paper* will continue to serve CCNY and the surrounding community.

## ATTENTION ALL REGISTERED VOTERS:

**Tuesday November 4th is Election Day**

**Regardless of who plan voting for, just remember to**

**VOTE!!!**

**Friendly Reminder: Leave all your Obama and McCain (if any) paraphernalia at home**

**You will be turned away for campaigning for a candidate at the polls!!**

**VOTE WISE.**

Continued from front page

### Till Bill Passes



Emmett Till

this. It will also help a lot of researchers, writers and filmmakers who have been diligently seeking justice and closure on these cases."

Beauchamp recently completed four hour-long documentaries about cold cases and the passage of the bill should help promote the series which was aired on TV One, from Oct. 5-8.

A few weeks ago the bill passed in the House version, which the House previously passed 422-2. It was reported that the bill would allocate \$10 million toward solving the cold cases.

The bill now goes to President Bush, who is expected to sign it. The Bush administration and Justice Department both have supported the legislation.

The bill is named after Till, an African-American teenager from Chicago who was beaten and killed Aug. 28, 1955, after he wolf-whistled at a white woman in Money, Mississippi. An all-white jury in Tallahatchie County acquitted Roy Bryant and J.W. Milam, who later, for \$4,000, confessed their involvement to writer William Bradford Huie of *Look Magazine*.

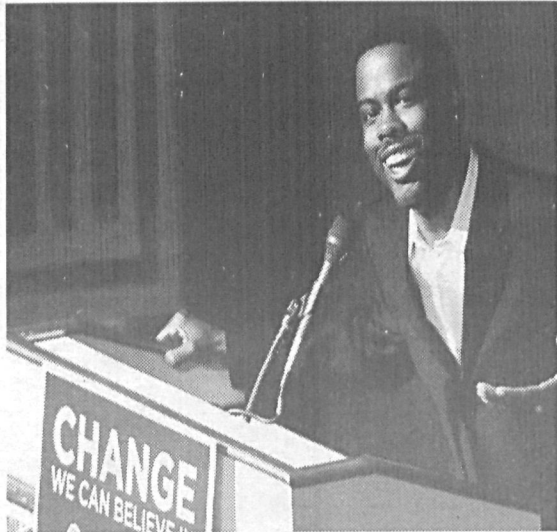
Originally Printed on September 25, 2008

*The Black World Today*

[www.tbwt.org](http://www.tbwt.org)

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## It's Not America...It's YOU!



Chris Rock Introducing  
Sentaor Barack Obama

People talk about a high risk of bodily harm to any Black man in leadership, especially of a political nature. Statements about the possibility of Senator Obama not lasting the full term or even making it to office are abundant when discussing how and why we are not ready. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X are examples given of what can happen to a person of African descent who dares to lead in America.

Let us consider that neither man was running for President of the United States when assassinated. A total of 4 presidents have been killed and 11 presidents were victims of attempts to harm, including the last 3 presidents, none of which were of African descent. History has proof; Presidents are always targets, no matter what their

race and Black men have been targets no matter political position.

Then there are those that named Bill Clinton as the first Black President. Eight years after he has left office I still hear at least three reasons still given for asserting Clinton the first Black president. The first reason is his appearance on "The Arsenio Hall Show" in 1992 where he showed off his skills playing *Heartbreak Hotel* on the saxophone. The second reason came as Clinton admitted to smoking "marijuana a time or two". The third reason shared is when the former so-called first Black president announced his plans to move to Harlem, his "Blackness" and "G-Pass" was raised and renewed.

There are many problems with these claims beyond their being extremely stereotypical. Clinton is not the only Caucasian person to play the saxophone, smoke weed, and live in Harlem. Black men can take a lot of credit for jazz and other genres that the saxophone is played and a white man like Kenny G is very well known for his talent playing the saxophone – does that now make him Black? Also other politicians have admitted to smoking marijuana publicly and privately without being deemed "Black." Moreover, African Americans are not the only people to smoke weed. Finally, his moving to Harlem, while it continues to be gentrified is not evidence of "Blackness" but more like a commercial for the rich and elite who want relatively cheap property. These stereotypes are being promoted by the very people they insult.

Audaciously while sporting a Barack

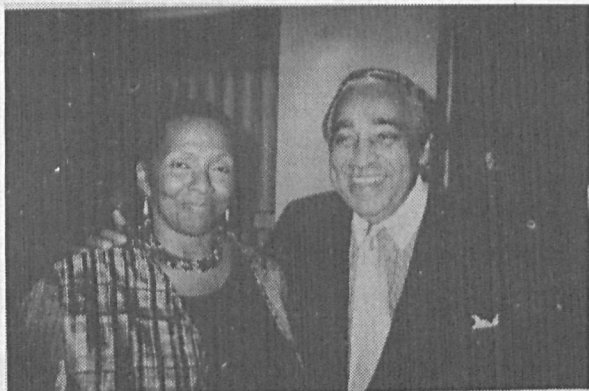
Obama t-shirt people say, "America is just not ready for a Black president". The *belief* that a Black man cannot accomplish what a white man can is the fuel in these arguments. Most Americans of all ages have strong ideas of what an African American can accomplish and Commander in Chief is not one of them. This leaves us of all ethnicities and races debating, arguing, and having endless dialogue about America's readiness.

Many will purchase the T-Shirts, buttons, and stickers because it looks cool. Who was the last president to have his face on so many t shirts? Yet the realization of an African American as president is still unimaginable for too many and so the debates carry on.

America is not one person; it does not represent one race, one party, or one man. It is "one nation" of people. One person's fears should not be covered up under the red, white, and blue. If a person fears being under the leadership of an African American male, at this time I think you can keep it to yourself.

African American men and women made priceless contributions to building the "land of the free and the home of the brave". From the very building of the white house to the *coltan* used in cell phones and computers. In this U.S.A. this year our African American presidential candidate is admired by millions of people of different nations around the world. The question of America's readiness should not be dignified with an answer. Rather, the question I ask is "Are you ready?"

*To celebrate and to remember  
Gloria Thomas, who made her transition last  
April, her friends and colleagues will gather  
from 4pm to 6pm, on November 18  
in Shepard Hall, Room 250.*



Gloria B. Thomas with  
Congressman Charles B. Rangel

*Those interested in participating in a video tape  
of reflections can contact us at  
The Paper for information.*

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# AUTHORIZED USE OF THE N WORD!

By Taqiyya Haden

That's how Joyce liked to talk. She was a good looking woman, Joyce was, with her green eyes and honey skin and pouty lips. We lived in the same dorm my freshman year, and all the brothers were after her. One day I asked her if she was going to the Black Students' Association meeting. She looked at me funny, then started shaking her head like a baby who doesn't want what it sees on the spoon.

"I'm not black," Joyce said. "I'm *multiracial*." Then she started telling me about her father, who *happened* to be Italian and was the sweetest man in the world; and her mother, who *happened* to be part African and part French and part Native American and part something else. "Why should I have to choose between them?" she asked me. Her voice cracked, and I thought she was going to cry. "It's not white people who are making me choose. Maybe it used to be that way, but now they're willing to treat me like a person. No—it's *black people* who always have to make everything racial. *They're* the ones who are telling me that I can't be who I am..."

They, they, they. That was the problem with people like Joyce. They talked about the richness of their multicultural heritage and it sounded real good, until you noticed that they avoided black people. It wasn't a matter of conscious choice, necessarily, just a matter of gravitational pull, the way integration always worked, a one-way street. The minority assimilated into the dominant culture, not the other way around. Only white culture could be neutral and objective. Only white culture could be nonracial, willing to adopt the occasional exotic into its ranks. Only white culture had individuals. And we, the half-breeds and college-degreed, take survey of the situation and think to ourselves, Why should we get lumped in with the losers if we don't have to? We become only so grateful to lose ourselves in the crowd, America's happy, faceless marketplace; and we're never so outraged as when a cabbie drives past us or the woman in the elevator clutches her purse, not so much because we're bothered by the fact that such indignities are what less fortunate coloreds have to put up with every single day of their lives -although that's what we tell ourselves- but because we're wearing a Brooks Brothers suit and speak impeccable English and yet have somehow been mistaken for an ordinary nigger.

Don't you know who I am? I'm an *individual!*"

The previous passage comes from Barack Obama's book *Dreams from My Father A Story of Race and Inheritance*. Although I have been very vocal about my strong distaste for the modern frequent use of "nigga" in any form, this excerpt is an example that may help clarify my position on the usefulness of the term in art and political or social commentary. It is one example

of how people use the term in an effort to evoke emotion and share a personal experience with their community knowing that we will get it.

Regardless of the ongoing debate about its origins the term "nigger" spelled and pronounced in a variety of ways, is a familiar influential insult and has a long history of being used to impose contempt upon Blacks and label us the inferior race. Children's nursery rhymes at one time included the term; the famous eeny meeny miney mo originally included catch a *nigger* by the toe.

So how did we get to this new era that has transformed the word into having a collage of meanings and how complete is the transformation?

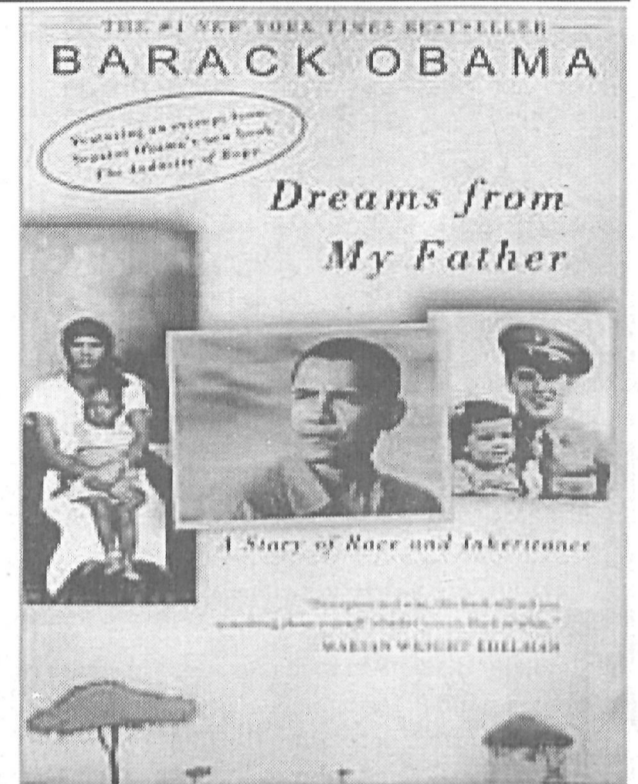
The argument for the use is the claim that the community decided to redefine a word that has caused so much pain. The attitude is that it can't hurt as much if I am using to identify myself by my own standards. "Yeah I am that *nigga* and it doesn't mean what the bigots mean anymore." Similar to saying you can't fire me because I quit. The late Tupac Shakur gave the word the acronym "Never Ignorant Getting Goals Accomplished."

It is clear to me the word has taken on new definitions in the world of entertainment, specifically the African American bred Hip Hop culture. I have been guilty of using the word when listening to the few songs I enjoy or retelling jokes. Most people are not aware that original rappers did not participate in this use to sell records, perhaps it wasn't necessary or the values of rappers have shifted from a culture of expression to make money at any expense. We also do not take note that Richard Pryor after years of using the term in his stand up stopped using it after he returned from a trip to Africa. He basically said he didn't see any *niggas* there so wouldn't perpetuate that image of Blacks.

Regardless of the variety of meaning the word has taken most times I hear it and I still cringe, especially as it is so casually thrown around in learning institutions, subways and buses. I relate to people who view the use among Blacks as symptomatic of self-hatred or the verbal version of Black on Black crime. Unfortunately others often negate or ignore the power of words.

A dilemma we face is the "permission" granted to all cultures of color using the term yet plainly stating "I'm not Black!" Instead they divisively identify as Dominican or South Asian as examples commonly found in our particular community. If you don't identify with the people why has permission been granted to you and what ultimately excludes whites?

Concerns are further spurred by knowledge that a large portion of the population continuously use the term as a racial slur. As judges, public policy makers and other officials become more aware of the growing ambiguity, I worry it will be more difficult to prosecute bigots who voice the term. It is already difficult,



although possible to legally charge a person with verbal assault. Within the United States Blacks are the people that most hate crimes are committed against. How are we to convict our perpetrators with hate crimes when the retort could easily be "I didn't mean it like that"? Non racist whites who admire and long to be like their favorite entertainers are faced with the urge to use the word freely and I have been aghast to watch them do it in circles of "safe friends" that won't criticize them.

I believe sensitivity to the word would be increased if we had conversations with the older generation of America to hear personal accounts of the pain it still causes them. Having been a victim of physical violence accompanying the word I admit this personal experience solicits anger in me. My firm belief is sticks and stones may break my bones and a single word can open a wound of the heart that may never heal.

Although I do not condone casual use of the term and do hope there is a day it goes out of style, I am not a complete eradicationist. I choose to not associate myself with people who are comfortable saying it every third sentence at least. For me this shows a lack of vocabulary, creativity and uniqueness to use a word that is at least 500 years old when we barely use 80's slang anymore. It is something to consider that no other group has adopted their racial slur as part of their lingo to address each other.

There are times I have found the word to be the only one to convey a message as I did when reading this passage. Along with the use of the term this excerpt in general can open up streams of conversation on self identity. My support for Barack Obama was never at risk, still this book added to my conviction. I strongly advise reading this book. It may not touch you the way it has me but keep in mind you are reading the words of the first Black male major party presidential nominee in the history of the United States of America.

In closing, I, Taqiyya Haden deem this authorized use of the term.

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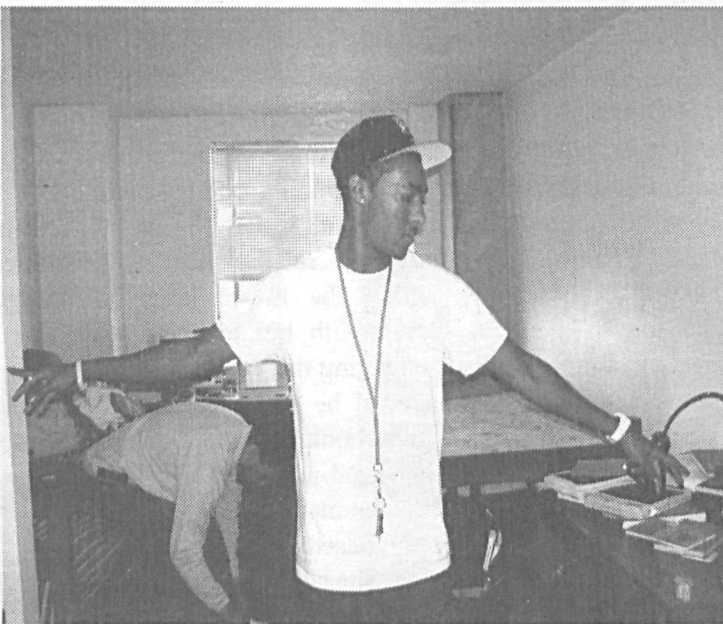
## At The Towers: The Silent Demonstration against the Reprehensible Costs of Rent

loving kids." It is not common to hear such harsh words coming from a student but definitely she is not the only recruit to the ever-growing category of students who are seeing their dreams of having a comfortable stay at the Towers fizzle up into a sheer mirage. Rumors have it that there are two groups of students residing at the Towers; the first group is that of students who 'have to' while the second group is composed of the students who 'just have' and are therefore not squeezed by the rent at the Towers. While the first group views the Towers as quiet haven for constructive academic work, their counterparts on the other hand view it more as a social spot where they can organize small get-togethers and vocally chit-chat the whole night. Nobody is against or worried about that. What confuses the students is the initial purpose of the Towers. Was it created to help deserving students or just with the wanton motive to extract more coins from the unsuspecting students?

This is the BIG Q: Are the Towers serving the purpose for which it was built? The Towers management was very defensive when interviewed on the issue. They stuck to their guns and insisted that they were not profit-motivated and that the cost of rent was well in proportion with the quality of facilities offered at the Towers. They could, however, not say whether the Towers had fulfilled the purpose for which it was built referring me rather to the Office of Student Affairs which could not be reached for a comment. But as it stands, the words of President Williams at the opening of the Towers seems irrelevant today. The president said that: *Some of our students want to live closer to the Campus because they spend long hours working in the laboratories and design studios. Making housing available on Campus gives them an affordable alternative to late night subway rides back to their outer boroughs.*

Presently, the least expensive room at the Towers goes for \$830 per month. Keep in mind you this is a two bedroom suite shared by four residents. Not only that, the bedrooms are very tiny comparable to the cockpit of a two engine plane. The management still racks up

approximately \$3,300 from the four residents per month. Even though most of the utilities are provided, this cost is still too high for an area with compromised security and for a residence built on the platform of assisting needy students. Comparing it with the tuition we pay makes it sound even more illogical. To give you a candid understanding, the Towers' two bedroom suite is almost similar in size to a normal one bedroom house which runs for about \$1000 to



*Student in The Towers demonstrating how he can almost touch both walls in his room, which he shares with another student for \$830.00 per month.*

\$1500 in this locality. Even without the utility costs included, this is still cheaper. After all how much electricity does a student who is always away working for long hours in labs and design studios consume? A student who probably comes tired in the night, eats Chinese food and feeling hot, gets a cold bath before retiring to bed until the following morning for a repeat of the same schedule. Maybe talk of the few treadmills in the gym that in any case are always unoccupied. The truth is that the few niceties offered at the Towers are not in any way close to the amount of money paid for them. While they are almost indispensable for a healthy student fraternity, they should not be pushed forth as the pretext for overcharging students who are already having enough of a lagging economy.

It is surprising that even with the high

cost, a number of the walls at the Towers are still unpainted to date and the students also have to bear with the faulty fire alarms which cause unnecessary scares time and again. Let me be clear, my motive is not to pointlessly castigate the Towers rather I'm only echoing the silent demonstrations of the students who would otherwise be branded as whining obnoxious little brats where they to voice their own feelings.

During an interview, the Director of the Towers management agreed that there had been non-CUNY students residing at the Towers at one point but could not confirm the commonplace perception that some NYU and Columbia University students were still using the facility. On the cost of rent, and other amenities, she insisted on comparing the Towers to other college residential buildings and not apartment rooms. But are all these college buildings located in an area with compromised security like the Towers? What about their tuition costs, should we not compare that, too? Just to let you know, there were shootings just behind the Towers at 130th street some weeks ago. No Towers' resident were involved. When asked about that, the Director remarked that CCNY was only responsible for security within its perimeters and referred me to NYPD for any security matters outside the school's virtual fence.

After this harangue, a number of things still remain troubling: Many like Albert will be forced to opt out of the Towers for cheaper but more dangerous residential facilities in the spookiest parts of Harlem while others will be totally scared off. Most of these will be the seriously needy students who bet on the affordability of City College to bridge them to their foreseeable success. Probably some of these students are also the ones who spend hours in labs and design studios and have close to their hearts, the passion to positively impact their localities and society. But for now, many of these same students have either been locked out or distracted from a swift leeway to their benefit-all future. You may disagree with me, but I find something wrong with this notion.

Have a poem or short story you want to share with CCNY?

Send it to The Paper!

All submissions should  
be emailed to  
[thepaper@ccny.cuny.edu](mailto:thepaper@ccny.cuny.edu)

We look forward to reading your work!

## BEAUTY SHOP TALK



With Taqiyya Haden

Welcome back to Beauty Shop Talk, this time Beauty Shop Talks Teens.

After reading our first issue the ladies told me they loved the fact that their voices, being predominately Black women, were being highlighted. The clients that read the article as well as the rest of *The Paper* were impressed. I had informed them of *The Papers'* ongoing struggles that at times left two young Black women on their own to keep us in print. The women at the salon are all too familiar with hard work that goes without praise so they commend our senior and copy editor.

As Black women we are very familiar with the term "however," and while we may want to give complete praise for the work of another Black woman, sometimes certain things just do not sit right. Both Porsche and a few of her clients took notice of the term "did up." Some ladies took issue with being referred to as "folk." After listening closely to what they were saying I came to the conclusion that it did indeed sound condescending and more street than Porsche and her clients relate to.

After being awarded their own personal style based on Porsche's ability to know not only what looks good but what they will be able to maintain in their unique lifestyle, women often say "Yes, this style is perfect for me!" and anyone would agree. The slang terms "did up" or "getting your hair did" just does not capture the feelings of clients when they leave the salon. Ebony Design is just not Latifah's Beauty Shop, no offense to the Queen at all we love her! Don't worry ladies, we know the difference.

Ebony Designs is a community and the space allows for networking, building new friendships and strengthening existing relationships. These relationships extend past clients and staff easily trickling into family, open to all including the young teens today. Porsche has met many youth connected to her clients and staff in some way which brings us to the teens of Ebony Design.

For privacy I will not use the names of our first two teens. Teen 16 became a regular face at Ebony Design while she was an employee of an African American woman that had taken interest in positively influencing the life of the young lady. The stylish teen was living with her grandmother because of problems with her own mother. Most of us had issues with parents while facing adolescence and as women we are especially sympathetic to the mother daughter dilemma. However when it was discovered that this teen was not attending school regularly and would potentially have to repeat a grade the ladies

were not pleased to say the least.

We were frustrated knowing that this came about strictly based on attendance and was not a reflection of her academic ability; as when teen 16 was rude to a customer at the business, she needed to be let go; ironically the woman she insulted was a school teacher. Nonetheless, even after being dismissed she was assured her employer along with the ladies of Ebony Design were still invested in her future. The ladies offered support and valuable resources but it seemed for the most part teen 16 was not interested in accepting these offers. At times she outright ignored these experienced and wiser women that continued to reach out. We all unconditionally accept her although we do not condone her lack of determination, we continue to care and remain confident in her progress.

The ladies of Ebony Design collectively maintain an open door policy for this and other teens in hopes of interrupting the commonly trodden path of self destruction that many youth walk.

Knowing Porsche's relationships to celebrities especially within the music industry the son of a client, shared with her his goal to become a rapper. While engaging the young man in conversation Porsche asked if he had a thesaurus. He did not know of the great book at the age of 19. Instead of just shaking her head and dismissing him as hopeless, as many adults would, Porsche purchased a thesaurus for the young man. She later reported he went everywhere with it. We were delighted to hear that since we all know the world of rappers and our young Black male population at large could use a new vocabulary.

We have love for all the teens that pass through and one of our favorite teens is piano playing songstress Karina, a faithful Ebony Design client. She was signed with Def Jam at 16 and you may have heard my personal favorite "16 @ War" from the album titled *First Love*. She sings about parental relationships, gender disrespect, and peer rivalry to name a few issues in a clever lyrical way. She also sings about the unruly habits of teens and adults for that matter like smoking and wearing clothes that don't fit to fit in.

Having met Karina I would describe her personality as respectful and just plain sweet. Even though she's a young celebrity Karina maintains a humble disposition rarely seen among teens. She is very studious and her favorite subject is Math. Karina has recorded songs in 7 languages broadening her fan base, challenging herself and showing her intention to be amongst the greats in her industry.

Karina is of Dominican descent yet relates to the larger Black community here in the Americas. She maintains a sense of Latina pride while discouraging cultural division between people of color. These characteristics are to be respected and admired. I wish Karina continued

success. Her music is an inspiration and offers a valued resource to adults and teens aiming to understand and love each other. Check out her page [www.meetkarina.net](http://www.meetkarina.net)

Many concerns regarding teens today include drug use, lack of interest in school, growing up in a culture of disrespect, drug use and practicing unsafe sex. These issues easily follow us into young adulthood. As women who have successfully dealt with similar issues the ladies of Ebony Design want to offer an ear, a hug, and encouraging words of advice to the youth that are coming up behind us.

This is not an easy task with teens often being on the defense or non responsive. It has not been effective to preach to or reprimand teenagers every time they admit to less than desirable behaviors. Discipline has its place, usually the home. When we attempt to speak to young people we try to take a non judgmental approach and honesty is encouraged.

In the salon everyone continues to brainstorm and put ideas into practice and I'm sure in many homes, schools and other environments for adults to bridge the gap between themselves and teens.

Beauty Shop Talk looks forward to congratulating our new president Barack Obama next time. For me he is already My President! I cannot wait to hear the ladies respond to the results.

## EVENTS @CITY

EVENT	<b>BLACK SOLIDARITY DAY</b>
DATE	Mon, Nov 3
TIME	4:00pm - 5:00pm
ADDRESS	160 Convent Avenue/ NAC Building/ Hoffman Student Lounge
PHONE	212- 650 - 5002
DESCRIPTION	Join a discussion of how Black culture enriches our college and our community
ADMISSION	Free
EVENT	<b>CURRENT ISSUES AND CHALLENGES FACING SCHOOL AND DISTRICT LEADERS IN EDUCATION IN NYC</b>
DATE	Mon, Nov 17
TIME	6:00pm
ADDRESS	25 Broadway/ 7 <sup>th</sup> Floor
PHONE	212-925-6625
DESCRIPTION	Presented by Joyce R. Coppin, Distinguished Lecturer at the CCNY School of Education. Simulcast in the Rifkind Center Conference Room, NAC 6/316. The Distinguished Lecture Series runs thru Dec 15. Each public lecture will focus on aspects of the interdisciplinary relationships between the sciences, humanities and the social sciences.
ADMISSION	Free
URL	<a href="http://ccny.cuny/cwe">ccny.cuny/cwe</a>
EVENT	<b>FUN FLICKS: MAKE YOUR OWN MUSIC VIDEOS</b>
DATE	Thu, Nov 20
TIME	2:00pm - 3:00pm
ADDRESS	138 Street Convent Ave/ NAC Building/ Hoffman Student Lounge
PHONE	212-650-5002
DESCRIPTION	Come & learn to create your own music video.
ADMISSION	Free

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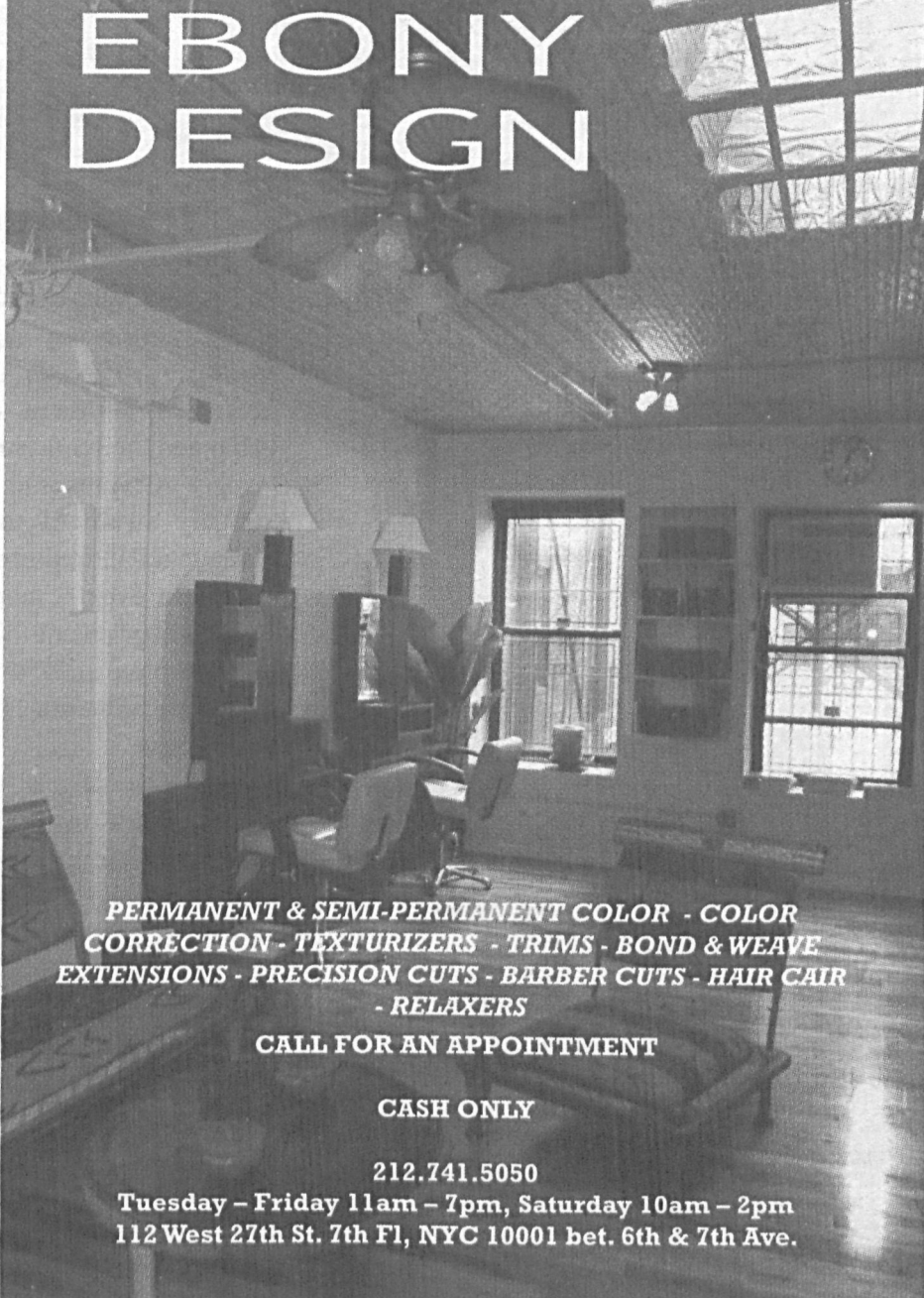
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## "What are They Really Recruiting For?"



By Jenifer De Boer

A career fair primarily for engineering students was held in the Shepard Hall building here at The City College on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. Among the companies present was the largest weapons manufacturer in the world, Lockheed Martin. Despite autumn's light chill and high wind a small yet dedicated group of student protestors gathered outside. These students are part of a national chapter of the Campus Anti-war Network (CAN) and were protesting the presence of these and other military recruiters on campus.

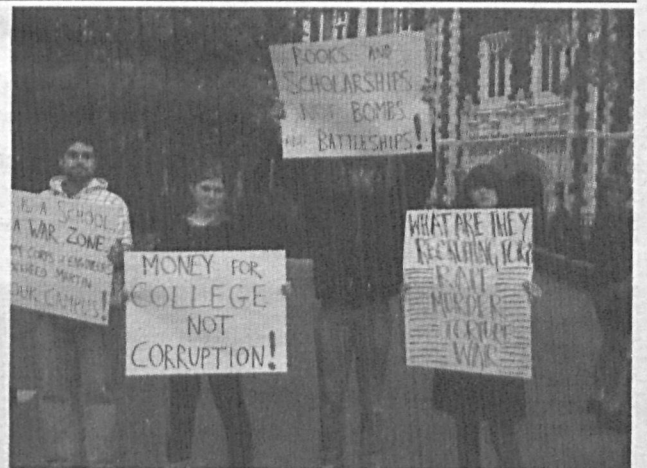
A student's father came out to the protest and made it known that: "Lockheed

Martin has the healthiest bottom line in the industry." Lockheed Martin typically lures young engineering and other technical major students with a competitive salary to work on development of better arms (via an internship) which will be used in the current Iraq war and other wars around the globe.

Hoisting signs that read, "Books and scholarships, not bombs and battleships!" and "What are they recruiting for? Rape, murder, torture, war!" the protestors attracted attention.



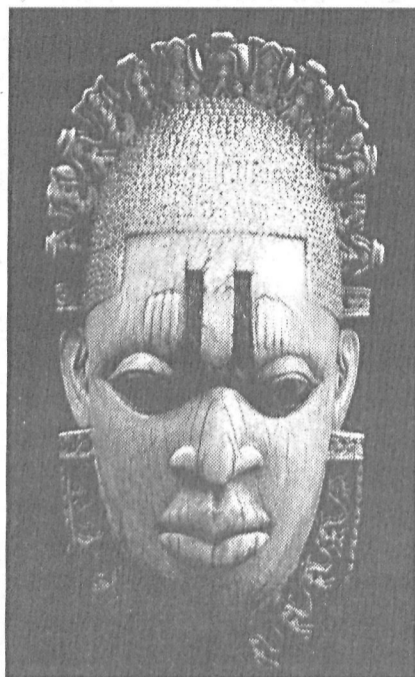
A female student passing by on her lunch break between classes stopped to talk with some of the protestors and told them, "I wasn't aware there were recruiters on campus. I'm here to go to school, not to Iraq."



At the beginning of the Fall 2008 semester CUNY began implementing budget cuts. As a means of replacing some of that budget, The City College accepted money from the military to recruit on campus. The students protesting handed out fact sheets from the Iraq Veterans Against the War website (IVAW.org) titled "The Truth About What Recruiters Promise," and shared vital information with other interested passer-bys.

If you are interested in learning more or becoming more involved with the Campus Anti-war Network, attend a club meeting on Thursdays during club hours (12 p.m. - 2 p.m.) You can also e-mail can@ccny.cuny.edu for more information.

# THE PAN-AFRICANIST INSTITUTE



## SCHEDULE OF SESSIONS

**Session 7** – The Giant Awakens: Pan-Africanism and the Global African Resistance Movement [October 30]

**Session 8** – African Women: Unsung Heroines of the African Liberation Struggle [November 6]

**Session 9** – Africa Needs a New Woman and Man: The Challenge for Commitment Toward Organizing the African Masses [November 13]

**Session 10** – Toward The African Revolution: Pan-Africanist Parties, Mass-Cadre Leadership, and Revolutionary Ideology [November 20]

**Session 11** - Toward The African Revolution: Pan-Africanist Parties, Mass-Cadre Leadership, and Revolutionary Ideology [cont'd] [December 4]

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## African Indigenous Spirituality: It's Not a Thing of the Past!

By Easter Z. Wood

The trans-Atlantic slave trade – and its lesser-known counter part, the intra African slave trade that took place between Southern and Northern Africa – changed the world in irreversible ways. While we as Africans and African descendents are largely aware of the fact that our original languages and cultures were changed as a result of these events, many of us seem relatively unaware of one of the most important changes imposed on us as a people: the denial of the right to continue our indigenous spiritual practices.

The Black Church has, no doubt, been a vital institution to the African American community and many of our greatest Black leaders have come from the Christian (and Islamic) tradition. Nevertheless, the history of how we as Africans – both on the continent and the Diaspora – came to be Christians, Catholics and Muslims is largely an ugly one filled with violence, slavery, and, most detrimentally, the denial and demonization of our indigenous traditions. Both enslaved Africans brought to the Americas and those remaining on the continent were taught to believe that indigenous African

spiritual practices were primitive, backwards, and inherently inferior to the revealed religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam and that in order to be true human beings we had to convert to one of the above. Those lessons have certainly been well-taught and well-learned, as many continental and Diasporic Africans still hold these views and many still look upon indigenous African spiritual practices with fear and apprehension.

Despite the attempts to obliterate African indigenous spiritual practices during the slave trades and colonial periods, many Africans did manage to bring sacred traditions to the Americas with them. Through the years and against heavy opposition, African descendents in the “New World” have maintained many of the practices of groups like the Yoruba, Bantu and Akan, from which many of our ancestors hail. Yoruba-based Ifa as well as Ghanaian-based Akan, some indigenous Senegalese traditions and others are practiced in the in the United States. Yoruba-based Lucumi and Congo-based Palo Mayombe are practiced in Cuba, Puerto Rico and the United States. Congo-based Vodoun is practiced in Haiti. Yoruba-based Condomble

and Umbanda are practiced in Brazil. Yoruba-based Shango Baptist is practiced in Trinidad and the list goes on. The traditions have taken on different names and adaptations depending on their locations, but their very presence here in the Americas speaks to the strength of the traditions and the resilience and determination of the ancestors to maintain them.

African indigenous spiritual practices are also still maintained in a big way on the African continent, and many African descended peoples in the United States make pilgrimages to West Africa and the Caribbean each year to become initiated as practitioners in these traditions. In some cases, the ancient traditions have been blended with Christian, Islamic – and particularly Catholic – practices



*A shrine inside the sacred forest grove of Oshun, an important Orisha (deity) in the Yoruba pantheon. The grove, situated outside of the city of Oshogbo, Nigeria was declared a world heritage site by UNESCO in 2005, underscoring its cultural value and the importance that African indigenous spiritual traditions still hold in the world.*

and shrouded in secrecy out of necessity in order to maintain them, since they were often banned under slavery and colonialism. Despite the blending that has taken place, African indigenous spiritual traditions are still viable in their own right and there is a definite push to remove the non-African influences and bring the traditions out of secrecy, as it is no longer necessary.

African indigenous spiritual traditions are not a thing of the past: they are still alive, well and being practiced by Africans and African descendents around the world every day. The philosophies behind these practices have become the subject of study at many of the most prestigious American universities like Harvard, Berkeley, Temple, Yale and right here at the City University of New York. There is still much ignorance and sensationalism around African indigenous spiritual traditions, but misinformation is being challenged by scholars and practitioners alike from around the world and the vitality of African philosophies and world-views are being brought to the forefront through research and scholarship which is promising. While a good majority of African and African descended peoples will more than likely remain members of our adopted religions, we do at least have the option of learning about the rich spiritual traditions of our ancestors and practicing them openly and freely if we so choose. Whether or not we decide to become practitioners of African indigenous spiritual traditions, recognizing their value and validity and, most importantly, giving them respect pays homage to those who came before, and that is something all of our religions and traditions can agree on.



# From The Shelf...

By Eric Jackson

*With one of the most contentious Presidential elections coming to an end, the questions that come are: "why change?" "Is America ready for a Black President?" and the list goes on. To really understand why change may not be such a bad thing after all and to get a look at the big picture and to raise some even more serious questions, you are challenged to peruse these titles...*

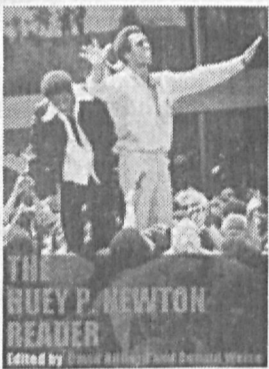
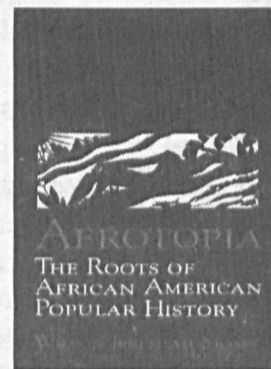


**Chancellor Williams, *The Destruction of Black Civilization: Great Issues of a Race 4500 B.C. to 2000 A.D.*, (Chicago: Third World Press, 1987).**

*Williams' book serves as a testament to the power that history plays in the development of a people. We live in an age where our history has been systematically castrated from our minds, obliterated from the annals of "popular history," and ostracized from public discourse. Williams begins with a comprehensive historical account of Ancient Africa showing how its cultures, political, and economic systems served as a precursor for modern society. Williams' masterful interpretation of history does not present a romantic nostalgia, but instead gives us a sobering account of how bourgeois society has made a concerted effort, likened to that of vampires, to dually extract any evidence of Black influence and contributions to modernity and to annihilate Blacks as a people. What is also significantly amazing about Williams' work is that he shows this thesis being carried not only in the past, but in the late twentieth-century as well. With a history filled with triumphs, tragedies, and challenges, Williams offers prospects for change. In short, Williams' work shows how when you eradicate a people's history you eradicate their self-respect and self-esteem therefore ceasing any prospects for self-development.*

**Wilson Jeremiah Moses, *Afrotopia: The Roots of African American Popular History*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1998.**

*Wilson Jeremiah Moses is Professor of History at Penn State University and his work can be classified as a critique of African American cultural theory. "Afrocentrism," "Afrocentricity," "Modernity," "Anti-Modernity" are concepts that are explored. While his use of prose is wonderful and his mastery of the English language and knowledge of history is without question, Wilson's analysis and methodology – while well organized – are both sloppy and inconsistent. Concepts such as "Afrocentrism" are heinously mishandled. Even hazier is his treatment of African scholars, particularly City College's own Dr. Leonard Jeffries and Dr. Ron Karenga who have undoubtedly made vast contributions to the field. "Ordinary African Americans sometimes fail to understand why it is that serious academics dread being associated with the intellectual thuggery of Leonard Jeffries and Ron Karenga" (Moses, 240). As a historian who has published such books as *The Golden Age of Black Nationalism* there was an obvious disregard for a plethora of history that has set precedents for the work of Dr. Jeffries and Dr. Karenga. From the artsy cover to the crafty book and chapter titles, a tantalizing and engaging read was thought to be on the way. Sadly, there was much to be desired.*

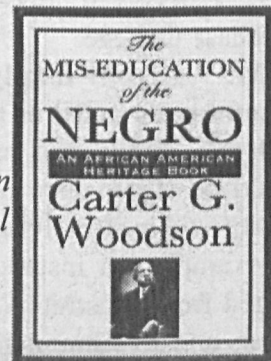


**Huey P. Newton, *Huey P. Newton Reader*, (New York: Seven Stories Press), 2000. David Hilliard and Donald Weise, Eds.**

*Most public discourse on the Black Panther Party has likened this organization to a bunch of angry Pit Bulls frothing at the mouth. David Hilliard and Donald Weise have put together a collection of the writings from the Black Panther Party archives that show how the Black Panther Party had a systematic approach to Black liberation and the philosophical underpinnings thereof. It is chockfull with the Panther's views on major political issues of the time including: Vietnam, Feminist movements, President Nixon, affirmative action, environmentalism, etc. These collections of writings illuminate that Self-defense was the agenda – not rabid militancy. This anthology does justice and gives balance to the legacy of the Black Panther Party, shedding a powerful burst of light on an organization that really tried to live up to its motto of "power to the people."*

**Carter G. Woodson, *Mis-Education of the Negro*, (North Carolina: KHA Books), 2000.**

*Woodson's read is a must-have for all and an essential for any bookshelf! Woodson first published this work in 1935 and the same issues that plague Black education and the Black mind still exist today. "When you control a man's thinking you do not have to worry about his actions. You do not have to tell him not to stand here or go yonder." Woodson book reminds us in these times why the battle for the mind is paramount.*



# Spending Time with Local Harlem Artist

By Naeema J. Muhammad

**V**isual artist Dionis Ortiz is not even thirty and has already made his mark in the art community. Born and raised in Harlem of Dominican immigrants, he frequently exhibits his work in group and solo shows and runs his own business. Fortunately, Mr. Ortiz had time to answer a few questions about what it means to be a Harlem artist in this day and age.

**NJM: How did you decide to become an artist?**

**DO:** Becoming an artist is something I grew into. Growing up I had difficulty in focusing on my Academic studies but in art I was able to understand the process. My instructors would create sample portrait paintings and I would mimic what they did in my own work. My ability to know how to paint is a gift and I felt being an artist is what I am meant to be.

**NJM: What medium do you work in most of the time?**

**DO:** I currently juxtapose traditional painting with digital art. Meaning I hand paint images on to giclee printed surfaces such as paper or canvas. The giclee printed images are computer generated collages made from photographs I have shot in the community and images I find on-line. I want to show how digital art is a viable process in the fine art world

**NJM: How has your identity as a Harlemiter and a person of Dominican Descent influence your work?**

**DO:** Being that I was born and raised in Harlem within a Dominican household, I felt it left me in the middle of these two worlds. I grew up confused about who I was. I was treated differently, so I carried myself in a different manner. Dominicans would tell me I was American and not Dominican. And although I was well received within the African-American community I felt I could not relate because my cultural background was so different. The only common ground was the neighborhood we lived in. Exploring these two places allowed me to understand myself, my environment and the members of the community and how it encompasses both American and Latino culture.

**NJM: Where did you go to school?**

**DO:** I received my BFA from SUNY Purchase College.

**NJM: Was your family supportive of you becoming an artist as a career?**

**DO:** My family was as supportive as they could be. They were not aware of how an artist could make a living. I had to show them by example, for instance my art instructors varied from illustrators, designers, teaching artists and art administrators. As I grew they started to see and understand the various

possibilities and professions I could go into.

**NJM: What has been your greatest accomplishment so far?**

**DO:** Executing a body of work entitled "Migration" and having it showcased as my first solo show through space provided by Columbia University. It allowed me to move forward in proposing future projects, because people were able to see my ability in executing a body of work that is relevant.

**NJM: What have you been working on lately? What are your future projects?**

**DO:** I am continuing to develop the "Migration" series and become further involved with my identity and my experience growing up in Harlem, including how others are affected by their upbringing in their community and how they

identify and relate with their own environment and their family's cultural background. I am also experimenting on finding other surfaces to print onto to keep things interesting and fresh.

**NJM: What would you say is your mission as an artist?**

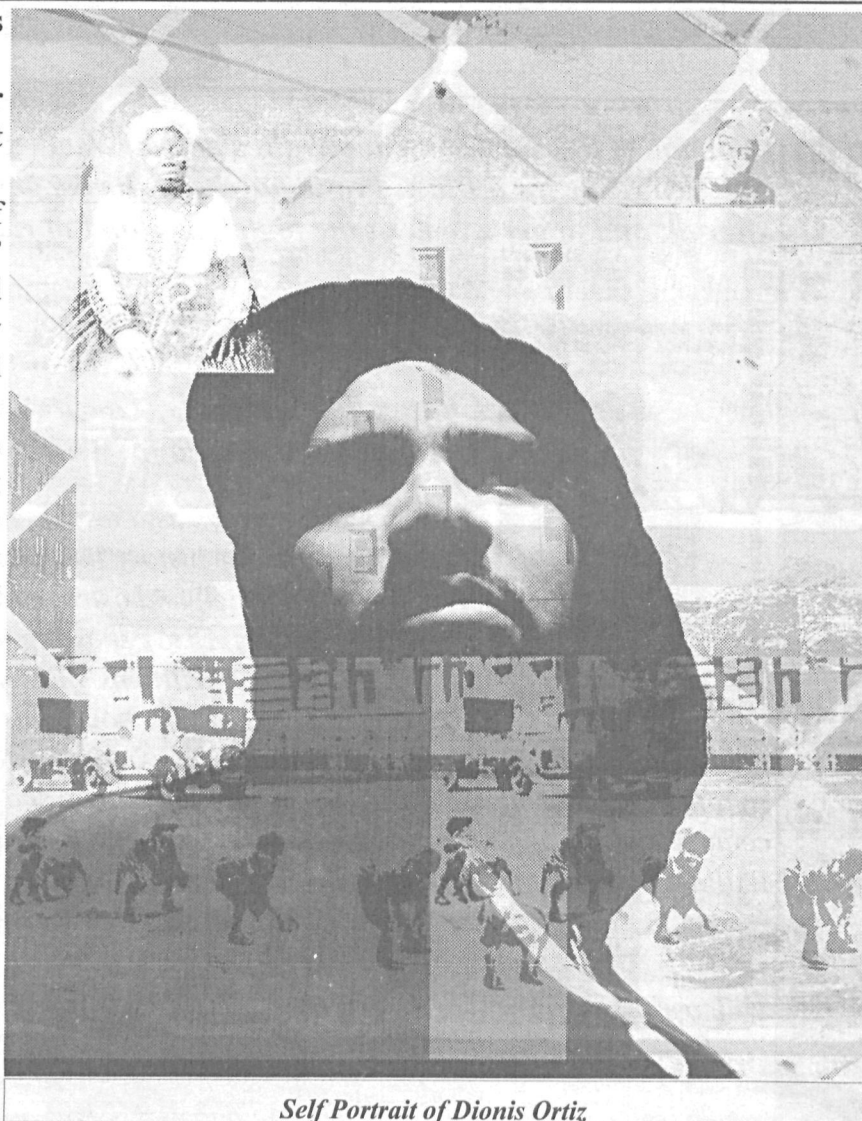
**DO:** To be become an established artist where I am making a living from my artwork and to build a long lasting business through my gallery (Inspiration Fine Art) where I can continue to support artists in their artistic careers. I want to always utilize my abilities and ideas to maintain longevity in the arts.

**NJM: How did you come to establish Inspiration Fine Arts gallery? What kinds of Artists do you showcase?**

**DO:** I started IFA in July of 2005. I wanted to do something that would help showcase my work and tie in my experience in working with various galleries. Starting a business is something I was working myself up to. IFA exhibits the works of local emerging and established artists, and is dedicated to supporting works that are innovative, engaging and inspired by personal experiences and a high level of cultural awareness.

**NJM: What advice would you have to offer aspiring artists?**

**DO:** Learn how to manage and promote your own artwork. Do not wait for someone else to do all the work for you, do it yourself. Work with people that are like-minded and can help you achieve your goals; develop a team. And have your art applicable to as many different



Self Portrait of Dionis Ortiz

kinds of people in different fields, so your work can be utilized in a variety of ways. This way your art is always in demand.

**NJM: How did people respond to your solo show MIGRATION at Columbia University?**

**DO:** I received many positive responses. People from the community were able to reflect on the various images and scenes I displayed in my work. They were able to see the connection of cultures. It made them think about the challenges of migrating to a new place.

**NJM: Is it a financial hardship making a living as an artist?**

**DO:** Yes, because to find an audience that collects your own type of work is not easy to develop. But that only means you have to broaden your outlook on how to make a living as an artist.

I am an art handler and through my gallery I provide services such as installation, art packaging, inventory management for galleries, collectors, and art handling companies. When I sell work I earn a commission through each sale. I apply my skills as an artist in as many venues as possible to continue to make a living.

**NJM: Who are your greatest influences?**

**DO:** My greatest influences are artists such as Romare Bearden, Charles White, and Emmett Wigglesworth.

You can check out Mr. Ortiz on his website at [www.dionisortiz.com](http://www.dionisortiz.com)

## Expressions

### The Great Hip Hop Debate pt. 1

This Debate was held at a funeral  
 Here we will show reverence  
 Starting with the Attendance  
 of these Lyrical Street fighters  
 Every rapper and MC alive....even the ghost writers  
 All here in hopes to cash checks  
 But Ever since Hip-Hop's Death  
 Its all about who's next  
 The Dj says 'blame the created'  
 The fans scream 'blame the Creator'  
 Lovers blame the haters while  
 Ginger Bread Kids play the Baker  
 Cook it up raw and sweetened with sex  
 sour from fame we all fail the taste test  
 Masks hides the Disgust till it becomes our face

Producers say we know the math's done all wrong  
 But we are faceless from wearing this mask so long  
 Now the nationless people  
 are the fatherless without faces  
 Dumb it down till Treasure can come from no paces  
 north, south, east, west stuck in a loop-  
 Pay the Cool for being the Coolest to free chilly  
 like a Little weapon, Carter 3 shot A Millie

Order! -can I make a suggestion?  
 about protection of gold-  
 "Rap it up" yells a stripper from a poll, !Objection!  
 -and diamonds during fist fights

Sure just shoot her in the stomach  
 hit, kick, flip um, fail um like a subject  
 unlike grades  
 I feel good when a beat drops  
 Now its lies when he talks  
 Truth is the Boondocks

Too many voices...  
 Rap was born  
 peace died  
 See how peace dies  
 Jesus on a necklaces  
 even he cry's  
 blood diamonds replace eyes  
 when watches have better qualities than these lives

Too many voices  
 Screams and shouts were unified  
 Hip-Hop faked it death to be fresh  
 while niggas wanna stay fresh to the next point of no return  
 Debates the facts, but not all facts are truth  
 Speechless because cool is the new noose

"I call Nas and his next album to the booth"

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### Ancestral Story

Magnifying my importance,  
 I hold the records of those who lived before me  
 Not realizing I am nothing if they are nothing.  
 I see their life and death,  
 Their blood painting their memoirs on walls.  
 I call it art.

Who am I to drink coffee and turn the pages on their  
 unending story,  
 To dance on the cobblestones that bridge their history.  
 How do I translate the word that calls my father's heart?  
 Centuries overwhelm me.

And to exaggerate my importance, I categorize.  
 Indian man. White man. Black man. Man. Woman.  
 Woman, who birthed me.

Gave me names she couldn't call me by outside.  
 Whispered dreams I couldn't recall in the daylight.  
 Watered the ground with tears I couldn't understand  
 Chanted prayers that lit up the night.

Who am I to forget my mothers' stories,  
 To read her stories in books written with unsympathetic  
 hands,  
 To gawk at her religion,  
 Stand in line to view her shrines,  
 Her pathway to God shrouded in glassy museums.  
 To learn about my mother from someone who didn't know  
 her.

How do I not know her when I touched her,  
 Came from her,  
 Carry her inside my very blood. I  
 Who am I to forget?  
 Who am I that I never knew?  
 I claim not to know this man who looks like me.  
 I see his face inside my own,  
 And I shrink from the crescendo that rises in me.  
 Call him names.  
 Every name except Father.

Who am I,  
 If not his daughter,  
 Building bridges with the paper that records their story.  
 Bridges that lead to glory.

-Karen Wright

## 2010 World Cup: Eye on South Africa, Eye on the Future

By: W. Okumu Owuor

Soccer may not be a very popular sport in the United States but there is something about the next FIFA World Cup that is nabbing many people's attention. In 2010, the World Cup will go to Africa for the first time in history. An estimated 2.7 million people will be turning their eyes to Africa as a whole, and South Africa in particular, and Africa will gain the attention of the West for reasons other than the shock at the atrocities such as war or famine. This time, the faces will not be furrowing with amazement at the failure of poor African leaders, rather they will be awed by the futuristic status of the African state of South Africa. It is one of those rare occasions that people will see a different Africa on television not that of scorched houses and sweaty half-clothed refugees, rather people will be seeing an ultra-modern lifestyle similar to what might be seen in New York City. Sights like sky scrapers kissing the blue African sky and sleek cars darting down equally sleek highways may be surprising to some, but this, too, is Africa.

It is undeniable that South Africa is bound to benefit in many ways from this seminal event both economically and socially. The one month event will give South Africa a chance to showcase the best that Africa can offer. In terms of culture, people will not miss the sight of the rich African customs that are only heard of in fables and spectators will also have an opportunity to see that Africans are not "backward" or "barbaric" as some have made the world believe. The event will also give an opportunity for the Africa's economic giant to display its tourism attraction sites which include world class beach resorts, six star hotels and



amazing collection of game. Not only South Africa but other countries in the region are also expected to gain attention as they will be hosting the training centers for various teams.

According to Swiss Business Hub in Pretoria, South Africa will amass an estimated total of 4.6 billion Rands (US\$510 million) for the 2.72 million ticket sales, and the number could exceed that. That value is however pales in comparison to other business opportunities that will arise due the influx of foreigners during the one month period. Employment opportunities are bound to rise partly salvaging the hopes of

a nation that despite the large mineral deposits has seen its job opportunities dwindling. In a nutshell, the hosting of world cup does more than satisfy the conscience – it illuminates the hopes and synergizes the confidence of a continent that is often derided for incompetence and backwardness and pitied for struggle

and strife with no recognition of the positive strides that have been made.

These positive strides are proven in the very fact that South Africa is even hosting the World Cup, the world's most glorious soccer event, in 2010. This is a remarkable score for a black nation that was grinding under the reprehensible system of apartheid what seems like just the other day. This major stride of ending apartheid has helped to shatter the stereotypical mentality often held by the Western world, and there are hopes that South Africa's hosting of the World Cup will further break down barriers and change the trite clichés associated with the continent and her people.

## SPORTS

### Upcoming Games

(All dates are subject to change)

#### Men's Basketball

11/19	Men's Basketball	Yeshiva	8:00pm
11/22	Men's Basketball	Cortland State	1:00pm
11/25	Men's Basketball	Rutgers Newark	7:30pm
11/29	Men's Basketball	St. Joseph's LI	12:00pm
12/2	Men's Basketball	Lehman College	5:00pm
12/5	Men's Basketball	Hunter College	7:00pm
12/8	Men's Basketball	Mitchell College	7:00pm
12/13	Men's Basketball	SUNY Purchase	1:00pm
12/29	Men's Basketball	Gallaudet University	3:00pm
12/30	Men's Basketball	William Patterson	1:00pm

#### Women's Basketball

11/14	Women's Basketball	UMASS Boston Tip Off	TBA
11/15	Women's Basketball	UMASS Boston Tip Off	TBA
11/25	Women's Basketball	Rutgers Newark	5:30pm
11/29	Women's Basketball	St. Joseph's LI	2:00pm
12/1	Women's Basketball	Polytechnic	7:00pm
12/5	Women's Basketball	Hunter College	5:00pm
12/8	Women's Basketball	Mitchell College	5:00pm
12/29	Women's Basketball	Gallaudet University	1:00pm
12/31	Women's Basketball	USMMA Kings Point	1:00pm

#### Women's Volleyball

11/1	Women's Volleyball	Ramapo	TBA
11/1	Women's Volleyball	Scranton	TBA

#### Women's Fencing

11/9	Women's Fencing	Vassar College	10:00am
11/20	Women's Fencing	Queens College	6:30pm
12/7	Women's Fencing	NIWEA	TBA
		Invitational	

#### Women's Soccer

11/4	Women's Soccer	Yeshiva	8:00pm
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